What Are Your Options for EDI?

When it comes to managing EDI at your terminal, you have a few different options. Below are the four different approaches in the marketplace for managing your EDI.

Option 1: In House

Many companies that exchange EDI deploy an in-house solution in their data center, centered around a commercially available EDI translator that processes EDI documents for one or several back-office applications. While this option seems to offer maximum flexibility and control, purchasing and maintaining an EDI translator is expensive. Add to that the cost and responsibility of keeping qualified EDI professionals on staff who are able to keep up with the technology, government regulations, and customer requirements. Meanwhile, you have a terminal to run. Instead, you're busy managing an IT team and trying to win new business to pay for your EDI resources.
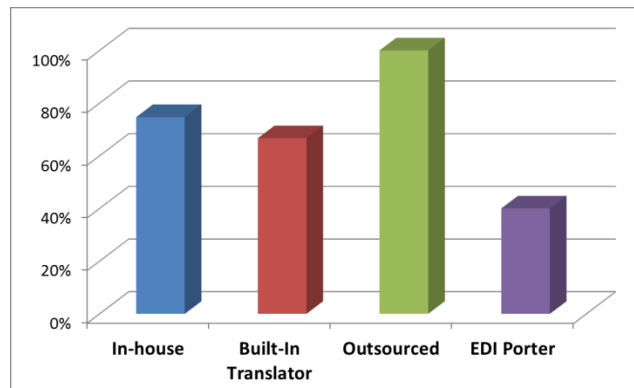
Advantages of EDI Porter

- No upfront investment in costly infrastructure
- Quick startup
- Lower ongoing costs
- Insight into EDI activity with visibility tools
- Scalable as your business grows
- Solid track record for accuracy and industry knowledge

Option 2: Built-In Translator

Some business applications that rely on the exchange of EDI come with modules that promise to be a comprehensive EDI solution. In most cases, these modules fall short of their promise. Either the EDI module is very limited, requiring an additional EDI translator to make up for the module's shortcomings, or the solution is so complex that it's really no different from a stand-alone translator. In either case, this approach doesn't solve many of the challenges you face with an in-house EDI solution.

Cost Comparison

Tideworks' EDI Porter slashes EDI costs by over 50% compared to other options.

Option 3: Outsource

The challenges and cost of EDI are motivating many companies to outsource EDI to a managed service provider. With the economies of scale a managed service provider offers, outsourced EDI can result in cost reductions. However, depending on your volume, this isn't always the case. Plus, a managed service provider who handles EDI for thousands of clients in different industries most likely doesn't know the terminal operations business. This lack of knowledge results in added cost and wasted time for the terminal operator.

Option 4: EDI Porter

Tideworks' EDI Porter is the latest solution available to help terminal operators with EDI. Unlike other options, EDI Porter includes program management services that allow businesses to truly forget about EDI and all the related software tools, integration, and regulatory changes like M1. Plus, the cost comparison speaks for itself. The graphs on the right chart the costs for EDI Porter compared to other options at a 300,000 TEU per year terminal. You'll see that EDI Porter costs less than half of other options.

EDI Porter vs. Alternatives

	In-House EDI	Built-In Tranlator	Outsourced	Tideworks' EDI Porter
No EDI infrastructure or translator required			●	●
No EDI staff required			●	●
Pay as you go			●	●
Quick startup				●
Scalable as your business grows			●	●
Industry expertise	Depends	Depends		●
Program Management Services			Limited	●
Visibility Tools	Depends		Limited	●
AMS/Compliance Enforcement				●

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