

Looking at "Beyond Simple SaaS" written by Scott Koegler:

"Over the last few weeks, I've heard a bit of rumbling about advanced uses of EDI data to deliver information in formats not usually associated with traditional EDI applications. Who knew that EDI could be useful for more than processing orders? After a few readers sent email queries about a press release from SPS Commerce, about some upcoming service offerings, I decided to investigate further, to see if what they were touting might be the real thing. One of the interesting propositions SPS has put forward is its ability to deliver analytics to its customers without the customer having to do any additional work, or collect any additional data."

So what's new? To me, that is what EDI is all about anyway.

A program in the 1990's by New York State (called "Motor Voter") is an example of unusual and new uses for EDI. The X12 280 transaction set.

Not every state-local project requires the creation of a new national data standard, but New York State's Electronic Voter Registration project did produce standards for the transmission of voter registration information that will be used all across the country. This project was started by local officials in the Monroe County Board of Elections who applied for and received a grant from the State Archives to hire a technical expert housed at the NYS Forum for Information Resource Management. The expert, using New York State needs as a guide, chaired a national ANSI working group to select EDI protocols, encryption protocols, software, platform, and Internet capabilities that allow for the standardized electronic transfer of voter registration records.

The Electronic Voter Registration project team was faced with a challenging task: the seamless communication of information among disparate computer systems employed by the State Board of Election, the local Boards of Election, and the State Departments of Health and Motor Vehicles. While employing Electronic Data Interchange to handle the application-related interface issues, the project team originally expected to use Value Added Networks (VANS) to actually transport the transaction records from one computer to another. Under this traditional method, companies lease lines into a central site supported by a for-profit VAN. The VAN transfers records from a client which is sending EDI transactions to the intended recipient. Both the client and recipient must be members of the VAN and the service charges are considerable. During the project, the team wondered whether the standard TCP/IP protocol of the Internet might be employed as a replacement for VANs. The team was able to demonstrate that such a system could be developed using electronic mail and the MIME protocol along with standard encryption methods. The result was a workable solution which used emerging world-wide technical standards to accomplish their goals at reduced costs.

- * Decrease time needed to register address changes, party enrollment, and voting eligibility
- * Decrease data entry errors due to repetitive manual entry
- * Decrease the flow of paper between local Boards of Election, and the State Departments of Motor Vehicles and Health