Onepak Provides Electronics OEM with Global Platform for Takeback Management

In the course of operating their commercial and consumer takeback systems, large original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) in the electronics industry are tasked with managing thousands of shipments using dozens of service providers who offer everything from logistics services and shipping kits to data sanitization and environmentally conscious asset disposition.

Even as state regulations grow more onerous with the spread of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) laws—which obligate OEMs to take back a certain percentage of the material they produce for consumers at the end of product life—the internal business practices and technical infrastructure to manage these processes are often lacking.

The Challenge

Coordinating that vast inflow and outflow of gear—some bound for recycling centers, some for refurbishment and/or resale—presents a significant management challenge.

Despite the technical complexity of these takeback initiatives, even some of the largest global players manage these programs the old-fashioned way: with endless streams of emails and spreadsheets charting individual pickups and deliveries.

This antiquated process presents a resource strain on most companies, making reporting difficult and mistakes considerably more likely. Why? Because this haphazard system is both wildly inefficient, inconsistent, unscalable and fails to establish proper accountability for all stakeholders.

Onepak was asked to build a global reverse logistics platform for a top-tier

multinational electronics OEM more than a decade ago. The OEM wanted an efficient, more visible way to manage both its global commercial takeback program and its US consumer program, the largest consumer drop-off effort in the country, with hundreds of drop-off locations plus an extensive mail-back program. The OEM had been operating this sprawling takeback system with employees frantically trying to keep up using spreadsheets, phone calls and emails.

The Solution

Accountability and efficiency are the very essence of a global platform that manages and monitors all reverse logistics operations in real time. It includes the ability to provide granular reporting of key performance indicators for that company.

From that client request, Onepak built its sophisticated OEM Takeback Management System, which includes automated end-to-end accountability and visibility into thousands of discrete activities. Today, that Onepak client uses a fully automated process to manage global commercial and consumer programs that are infinitely scalable.

Before the Onepak Takeback Management System was launched, the OEM needed six full-time employees to manage its US consumer program. With the platform in place, a now much larger US program is managed by a single employee, or 1/6th the manpower previously dedicated to that task.

The Advantage

The OEM uses a cloud-based global platform that integrates data feeds from all service providers, allows users access to their own view to update orders, and offers a real-time dashboard of every activity. The platform offers the ability to:

- Operate with multi-language, multi-country, multi-cultural capabilities to support global use.

- Manage data sanitization / destruction, logistics and environmental partners using configurable routing by program, country, state or best price.

- Provide access to a common data set for all stakeholders. Monitor the performance of individual service providers according to their individual service level agreements.

- Manage state-by-state requirements and compliance with differing extended producer responsibility laws.

- Manage and report on an individual commodity basis (Covered Electronic Devices) for state level compliance reporting.

- Provide permission-based access to document storage, retrieval and management (such as certificates of disposition, proof of pickup or delivery and settlement) including file and data validation.

- Perform real-time logistics tracking that includes both parcel and freight shipments.

- Leverage prebuilt reporting options including real-time dashboarding, reconciliation reports, pending and late reports, and performance reports, all with drill-down options to the individual logistics dispatch level.

- Create configurable and customized reports, including cost, with the ability to schedule report delivery on any cadence.

- Create individual alerts and notifications to stakeholders and partners at the dispatch level.

- Automate alerts based on configurable triggers.

- Manage role-based user access with user administration.

- Manage partner administration.

- Place orders directly on the platform or via integration with the platform.

- Offer asset valuations based on partner values provided.

- Manage billing, settlement and reconciliation on the platform.

- Manage internal customer billing / payment options.

With this automated takeback system, OEMs can access real-time data on the performance level of their partners or on their own performance against their goals. Dashboards allow them to quickly see what's in the pipeline, access reports, and more.

It's often said that you can't manage what you cannot measure. This tool opens a broad new vista for electronics OEMs to digitize manual processes and create a scalable, manageable solution for their enterprises.

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