

# SERVING THE WORLD'S RAILWAYS WITH SUPPLY CHAIN COLLABORATION



We are now benefiting from process improvements within the material controller department with more efficient allocation of resources, vendor self-service and collaboration in a consistent way.”

Carly Wright, Continuous Improvement and Innovation Manager, Unipart Rail



## Challenges

- Manual supplier interactions and duplication of effort
- The need to improve data governance and remove out-of-date information from the order book
- A lack of automation in the order expediting / material controller department



## Solutions

- it.mx Direct Spend portal<sup>ADD</sup>



## Benefits

- Streamlined supply chain processes and increased efficiency in the procurement department through effective allocation of resources
- Improved collaboration with suppliers through vendor self-service
- Increased data accuracy and seamless integration to SAP ERP



## Why NTT DATA Business Solutions?

- Knowledgeable team comprising procurement and SAP expertise
- Talented consultants who understand business requirements
- Attractive price point and experience of delivering supplier efficiencies



**Industry:** Service Provider

**Products:** Provider of engineering, manufacturing and supply chain management solutions

**Employees:** 700 (2019)

**Turnover:** £149m (2019)

**Website:** [www.unipartrail.com](http://www.unipartrail.com)

## Delivering Operational Procurement Improvements

Unipart Rail addresses the challenges of the rail industry across the asset lifecycle by working collaboratively with their partners to deliver technology and supply chain solutions that improve performance, reduce risk and cost. Part of the Unipart Group, the global business brings together manufacturing, logistics and consultancy in a set of products and services that create imaginative solutions for its customers.

Maintaining close relationships with vendors was a key requirement for Unipart Rail that led to the introduction of a supplier engagement programme to work with strategic partners. The need for an improved supplier experience was identified as a priority requirement that led to a review of supplier interactions and the recommendation to invest in a SAP Supplier Portal.

Unipart Rail also wanted to optimise supplier relationships and improve data accuracy by allowing suppliers to gain direct integration with their SAP system. Additionally, Unipart Rail wanted to introduce automation to streamline processes and allow the procurement department to focus on more value-add activities. After an in-depth review of supplier portals, the it.mx Direct Spend<sup>ADD</sup> Portal was selected due to its seamless integration to SAP ERP and its attractive price point. The Portal enables relevant SAP data to be shared with suppliers with a single SAP technology that sits on top of the existing SAP platform. This ensures a single data set with SAP data flowing seamlessly between the Supplier Portal and SAP. This allowed for a quick implementation with unnecessary integration costs removed, with the direct connection to SAP.

The Supplier Portal went live in October 2020 and has already been rolled out to 350 vendors which accounts for 40% of the order book. Unipart Rail has seen improvements to supply chain collaboration with vendors now interacting with a modern self-service portal. The material controller team who deal with vendors on a day-to-day basis have also realised efficiency gains with the removal of manual non-value add work.



The Supplier Portal has been positively received by vendors who can now see instant updates about their orders. Carly Wright, Continuous Improvement and Innovation Manager, Unipart Rail commented, "With change requests now updated in real-time and direct access for vendors, the accuracy in the order book has improved. We have also reduced the number of overdue purchase orders as a result of our improved tracking." Moreover, the procurement team is benefiting from internal efficiencies and savings in administrative costs from the supplier self-service capability.

The COVID-19 pandemic caused a great deal of disruption in the rail supply chain and although this was not the driver for the project, Unipart Rail was able to quickly streamline supplier interactions with the introduction of the Supplier Portal. This helped to maintain high levels of availability through close partnering and collaboration across the whole of the supply chain. Due to the success of the initial implementation, future plans include rolling out the portal to all suppliers (1,000+ vendors).

Want to know more?  
Do not hesitate to contact us:

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