



Just A Moment...
IT Commentary

Collaborative Commerce

by Leon A. Enriquez

The e-marketplace is where potential suppliers and customers of the supply chain participate and collaborate for the buying and selling of products and services. In today's competitive environment, collaborative commerce enables a company to take advantage of the existing supply and distribution channels. For instance, your company can quickly trace product availability through your supply chain.

Collaborative commerce is even now becoming a key focus of many companies within a similar industry sector. Why this sudden interest in collaborative commerce? To answer this question in a straightforward way: collaborative commerce enables a company to optimise the value chain from end-to-end. In other words, collaborative commerce makes a company more competitive and therefore, more profitable.

With collaborative commerce becoming a business necessity, due emphasis should be paid to the ways in which companies can collaborate to achieve their common business objectives. For such enterprise, their business strategy should involve the following areas: use technology as an enabler; focus on collaboration in all areas of your e-commerce activity; and formalise structures to enhance collaboration internally as well as externally.

Here software integration can help the collaborative commerce support process. For example, a typical collaborative software offering can facilitate things like online meeting capabilities, and inter-company workflow management. Such tools are helpful but more importantly, the effort is dependent more on the collaborative skills of people who work in the company.



Note also that companies need to collaborate and address the challenges that help to build the common solutions needed to solve the business issues of the e-marketplace. For example, this may involve a shift to a more collaborative mindset when dealing with business partners, suppliers, customers and even competitors. The basic idea here is to focus on how each company can leverage the collaborative environment and work more closely with the other companies. By so doing, each company can benefit and thus fulfil the basic requirements of the collaborative commerce process.

Company relationships in the collaborative cycle can then be formalised in order to seal the relationships in a synergistic way. Ultimately, for collaborative commerce to really succeed on a big scale, it is necessary that companies may need to re-think how they view their value chain, i.e., their business partners, customers and competitors.

The correct attitude that will help a company achieve better progress in collaborative commerce is to embrace a new mindset. Here, everyone is your potential partner. Undoubtedly, formalising your business relationships will take time and commitment on your part. The end-result is that your company will benefit from the relationship that collaborative commerce brings to your overall business process or backdrop.

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