

# 21<sup>st</sup> Century Customer Service

## What You Should Know About Manufacturer Extranets

***HDeXchange***

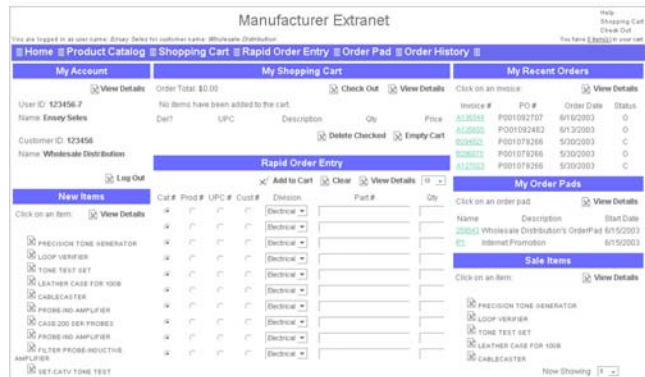
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## Manufacturer Extranets

are private, password protected, web sites that allow distributors to retrieve information specific to their account; Information such as negotiated pricing, product availability, or order status.

There is tremendous potential within these tools. However, most of this potential is **trapped**.



## Current Extranet Environment

### Win/Win Proposition

Manufacturers and distributors alike gain from extranet usage. Distributors win with access to information that is 3 to 5 times faster than the telephone. Manufacturers win with lower customer support costs.

### Widely Available

Over 35 manufacturers offer extranet services today with more on the way. These manufacturers represent over 80% of the purchase volume in the heavy duty wholesale channel.

### Low Usage

Despite the fact manufacturer extranets are well received, they are not widely used. Over 80% of distributors questions are still answered over the telephone, even for manufacturers with extranet offerings.

### Security Gaps

There are as many different approaches to managing extranet access as there are manufacturers. Most of these approaches put the individual employee in charge of which sites he or she will use. All of the various approaches put the users in control of their passwords. When employees leave to go to work for a competitor, **they take access to your proprietary information with them.**

### A Solution

HDX SiMAN, the Supplier- Info Manufacturer Access Network and associated services unlock the potential currently trapped inside manufacturer extranets and puts you firmly in charge of your proprietary information.

## Why don't your employees use manufacturer extranets?

**Awareness:** Often times, front line employees are not even aware which manufacturers have extranets

**Hassle:** Researching each manufacturer's sign up procedures, completing the sign up process, keeping track of all the resulting passwords, and keeping the passwords current are all mini-projects; most front line employees won't undertake.

**Familiarity:** Every manufacturer's site looks, feels, and functions differently. As a result, employees can only get familiar, and therefore comfortable, with one or two sites. Employees won't use tools they are not comfortable with.

**Inertia:** The telephone has been the default tool for getting manufacturer answers for over five decades. Changing deeply ingrained habits requires a focused effort.

**Management Emphasis:** In the current environment, you cannot encourage employees to use just one tool. Rather, you are faced with 20+ separate tools and no means to monitor anyone's usage. As a result, the decision of whether or not to adopt best practices is left up to the individual employee.

## How Can HDX SiMAN® Help You?

### Supplier-Info Manufacturer Access Network

**Awareness:** HDX SiMAN users are presented with a manufacturer menu each time they log in. No need to wonder who has an extranet or what functions each site offers.

**Hassle-Free:** HDX SiMAN provides single sign-on access to all manufacturer sites. Users only have one password to keep up with.

In addition, the HDX SiMAN service provides you with total extranet access management. The changes associated with new hires, transfers, and terminations are automatically communicated to all your suppliers. HDX SiMAN delivers hassle-free extranet access.

**Familiarity:** HDX SiMAN includes navigational assistance to take users directly to the answers they're looking for. They no longer have to be an expert in using a site to be comfortable turning to the Internet for answers.

**Management Emphasis:** The comprehensive usage reports in HDX SiMAN will allow you to monitor the adoption of best practices all the way down to the individual level. You will have the tools to determine which of your employees need additional attention.

**Security:** With HDX SiMAN, users only see their single sign-on password. The manufacturer issued passwords used to access each site are held in escrow. As a result, when employees leave, they can't take their access with them. Your proprietary information stays secure.

