

The GlassLink Process

Internet Order Management Solution

Increase efficiency and eliminate mistakes by automating order processing

Glass Group announces GlassLink 4.0

The GlassLink Process now offers fabricators a complete, customized solution for automating order processing. GlassLink has been working for Glass Inc in Denver for the past year and was recently installed at Northwestern Industries in Seattle, Washington. These fabricators have made significant investments in automated processes and understand the cost savings to be gained by using the GlassLink Process.

A careful analysis of glass buyers ordering methods has revealed two types of customers with regard to their computer sophistication:

- Customers who have software capable of generating and transmitting purchase order information in electronic file format.
- Customers who do not have software that can send ordering information electronically, in most instances phoning or faxing their orders.

Linking to your larger, usually higher volume customers who can transmit an order file is a simple process. Our wizard based translation module simplifies the translation of commonly used file formats. GlassLink can be translating files and importing orders into your order entry system in minutes without expensive programming.

Linking to your many smaller customers who phone or fax orders that often are hand written and difficult to read now has a simple solution. GlassLink 4.0 POMS is a Purchase Order Management System we created for glass buyers who do not have software capable of exporting purchase orders.

The GlassLink 4.0 software is customized for each fabricator's product and service offering. The orders created by GlassLink use your terminology and product descriptions. You freely distribute GlassLink 4.0 branded with your company identity to your customers. Your customers send orders to you with a single mouse click via the Internet, ready for import into your order entry system, eliminating errors and costly manual data entry.

GlassLink 4.0 updates its files automatically

The new GlassLink Process features a new module, GL Maintain, which keeps a master data file at your location. GlassLink checks with GL Maintain each time your user starts GlassLink and verifies the user has the most current copy of the master data files. With GL Maintain, you simply keep the master data file updated with your current product and service offering and all your customers systems are automatically updated by GL Maintain.

GlassLink is fully integrated with Alfak2000

Alfak2000 is a widely used and highly respected order processing and control system produced by Albat + Wirsam North America (A+W). GL Convert is fully compatible with fabricator systems using Alfak2000 to process orders. For fabricators using other systems, GL Convert is adjusted to produce files your system is capable of importing. With the GlassLink Process, this adjustment only needs to be done once and you can link with all your customers. This is so much easier, faster, and far less expensive than programming for each customer.

The GlassLink Modules

- **GL POMS** – Purchase Order Management System
- **GL Translate** – Translation of customer file formats
- **GL Convert** – Conversion to EDI Import format
- **GL Maintain** – Product File Maintenance Module

The GlassLink Process automates order processing requiring fewer people, eliminating costly and time consuming data entry errors and greatly reducing the cost of processing purchase orders for all GlassLink users. The GlassLink 4.0 Process now offers glass fabricators a complete Internet based, automated and customized order processing solution.

See inside for case studies of fabricators using the GlassLink Process.

Northwestern Industries Installs The GlassLink Internet Purchase Order Processing Solution

The Problem

Northwestern Industries (NWI) is a large glass fabricator providing insulated, tempered, and fabricated glass primarily to the Western United States regional market. Additionally, they produce laminated glass, screen printing and provide a variety of finishing capabilities. As with all companies in the glass business, they are faced with extensive competition and a fluctuating market for their products and services; costs are rising; labor is difficult to acquire, train, and retain; and pricing is extremely competitive.

The NWI GlassLink Process

links to all types of glass buyers:

- Large & small tempering buyers
- Large & small insulated buyers
- Laminated, mirror & fabricated glass customers
- Window companies, glass shops, commercial glaziers, OEM, shower and mirror installers, etc.

Northwestern Industries is constantly seeking ways to reduce labor costs, improve efficiency, eliminate costly errors and increase productivity. NWI had recent success in their production area in addressing these issues with the purchase of newer, more efficient and productive shop control software. Coincident with their efforts in the shop, Glass Group began discussing with Northwestern Industries how they might improve the efficiency of their order fulfillment process.

The Solution

Northwestern Industries recognized they needed a modern ordering system that would integrate with their new shop control software to maximize the efficiency and lower the cost of their order fulfillment process. In addition, NWI was interested in utilizing the Internet to increase the accuracy, speed and productivity of the order fulfillment process. NWI uses the ALFAK2000 order processing and control system offered by ALBAT + WIRSAM North America Inc. (AWNNA) that includes the EDI module, allowing them to link electronically with their customers to receive



Orders are received by ALFAK2000 from GlassLink over the Internet.

purchase orders, over the Internet, and send confirmations.

Glass Group offered to work with NWI to link the GlassLink Purchase Order Management System with the ALFAK2000 EDI system. During this process, the translation module was improved allowing easy conversion from any system capable of exporting purchase orders to the ALFAK2000 EDI format. As a result, the GlassLink process is able to link both large and small customers from all segments of the glass industry to transmit orders reliably and quickly via the Internet.

Internet order processing solution:

- maximum efficiency and control from streamlined business and production processes
- easy conversion from any system capable of exporting orders to the ALFAK2000 format
- simple and automatic translation and transmission of data between fabricators and their customers

GlassLink Purchase Order System is a software solution that is given by the fabricator to his customers that do not have software systems capable of creating purchase orders that can be transmitted electronically. Using the GlassLink process, all NWI customers will be able to easily create, manage, and transmit purchase orders, over the Internet.

“Modern ALFAK2000 Order Processing System is integrated with GlassLink Purchase Order Management System”

Basically, the order entry function has been transferred to the customer and the entire ordering process has become much more automated and efficient with a significant reduction in costly errors.

The Results

Currently, a large NWI insulating and tempering customer is using GlassLink to create and manage their purchase orders and transmit them via the Internet to NWI. Additional large tempering customers are in the process of being linked directly through the translation module to the ALFAK2000 system. This eliminates order entry time and errors from these large customers who generally submit large, complicated orders daily. Order entry errors at Northwestern Industries are eliminated for customers ordering with GlassLink.

What is GlassLink?

- It is a process for transmitting purchase orders between glass fabricators and their customers.
- The glass fabricator provides the GlassLink software to its customers at no cost.
- All customers can now create, manage and transmit purchase orders, via the Internet, directly to the fabricators order system.

In addition, customers who place smaller but more frequent orders and lack sophisticated systems capable of exporting purchasing requirements are now able to create and manage their purchase orders with the GlassLink software and transmit via the Internet. NWI is able to extend their cutoff times to customers using the system as orders do not require the lengthy processing time of manual order entry.

More business, not more manpower

At this early stage, there has been no reduction in head count due to the installation of the system. However, the efficiencies gained by utilizing the GlassLink process will allow for increased business with no additional personnel as the system is rolled out to include additional customers.

“Competitive realities of glass fabrication business lead to seamless Internet order processing solution.”

Glass Inc Installs The GlassLink Process

Glass Inc is a medium sized fabricator providing tempered, insulated and fabricated glass from Denver, Colorado to a regional market. They own the newest of six tempering ovens in Colorado and a variety of glass fabricating and finishing equipment. Glass Inc recently installed a semi automatic insulating line.

As with all companies in the glass business, Glass Inc is faced with extensive competition and a fluctuating market for their products and services; costs are rising; labor is difficult to acquire, train, and retain; margins are shrinking and pricing is extremely competitive.

Glass Inc is constantly seeking ways to reduce labor costs, improve efficiency and productivity, and eliminate costly errors. They had recent success in their production area in addressing these issues with the purchase of newer, more efficient and productive equipment. Coincident with the efforts in the shop, Glass Group began discussing with Glass Inc's owner how they might improve the efficiency of their order processing.

Glass Inc recognized they needed to start with a modern order processing system that would integrate with the new equipment they had purchased to maximize efficiency and control of their production process. In addition, they were interested in utilizing the Internet to increase the efficiency of the order fulfillment process. They purchased the ALFAK2000 system from ALBAT+WIRSAM North America Inc. (AWNA) that included the EDI module allowing them to link electronically with their customers to receive orders, send confirmations and invoices via the Internet.

Glass Group offered to integrate the GlassLink system with Glass Inc's ALFAK EDI system. During this process, a translation module (GL Translate) was created allowing easy conversion from any system capable of exporting orders to the ALFAK2000 EDI format. Since GlassLink uses a tagged data XML format, and has built in Internet communications capabilities, the translation and transmission process is simple and automatic.

Reality for glass fabricators:

- Extensive competition and aggressive prices
- Fluctuating market for products and services
- Difficulty acquiring, training, & retaining labor
- Rising costs and shrinking margins

What is GlassLink?

- GlassLink is a Purchase Order Automation System.
- Smaller customers create, manage and transmit orders.
- Larger customers are linked directly to the fabricators order entry system, without programming, by GlassLink.
- Processing expense and costly errors are eliminated.

Customers enter orders directly

GlassLink is a purchase order management application that is given by the fabricator to his dealer customers that do not have enterprise systems capable of creating purchase orders electronically. These dealers are able to create, manage and transmit purchase orders, receive confirmations and invoices and eventually will be able to process invoice payments electronically.

Essentially, the order entry function has been transferred to the customer and the entire process has become much more automated and efficient with a corresponding reduction in expensive errors.

Currently, a local insulating fabricator without tempering capabilities is using GlassLink to create and manage their purchase orders and transmit them via the Internet to Glass Inc. Two large window manufacturers have been linked directly through the GL Translate module to the ALFAK2000 system. This is resulting in a significant reduction of order entry time from these three large customers who generally submit large, complicated orders daily. Operator errors at Glass Inc have been eliminated for these customer's orders.

In addition, customers who place smaller but more frequent orders and who do not have sophisticated systems capable of exporting purchasing requirements are now able to create and

manage their purchase orders with the GlassLink software and transmit via the Internet. Glass Inc is able to extend their cutoff times to customers using the system as their orders have eliminated the lengthy processing time and verification of manual order entry.

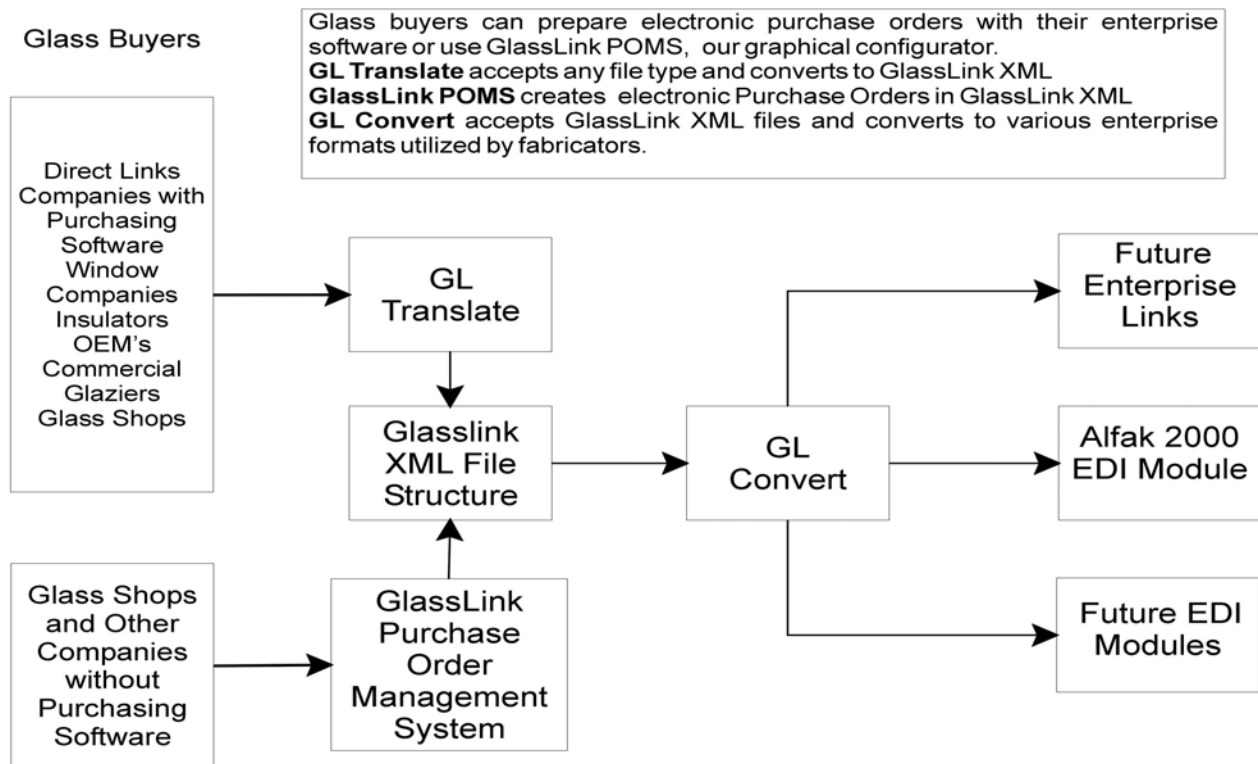
More business, not more manpower

At this point, there has been no reduction in manpower due to the installation of this system. Daily savings of 4 to 6 man-hours have been achieved. However, as the utilization of the process expands to more customers, manpower requirements for processing orders will be reduced allowing increased business with no additional personnel, fewer errors, and no expensive programming.

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Large customers placing large multi-line orders; Small Customers placing orders with one or two Items; Customers with Software; Customers who need Software; the **GlassLink Process** has a solution for all glass buyers that automates the ordering process, eliminates errors and substantially lowers costs for the fabricator and his glass buying customers.



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