

Building a Feature-Rich B2B Partner Portal for Driving Growth and Cost Savings: A Mendix Case Study



Case Study



The Challenge: Transforming B2B Operations for a Multinational Corporation

The case study concerns a multinational corporation called “the company” for confidentiality purposes. With operations spanning 100 countries worldwide, the company has established itself as a major player in various industries, including non-ferrous metals, viscose filament yarn, cement, chemicals, branded apparel, and more. Employing over 100,000 employees both directly and indirectly, the company is on the Fortune 500 list and generates annual revenue of over \$50 billion.

To address the company’s need for a centralized platform enabling vendors to place orders, access order history, and perform other essential tasks, the company developed a B2B partner portal. However, during the development process, the company encountered significant problems. Its attempt to create the internal portal faced performance issues, integration difficulties, and data quality concerns. These are common challenges and often result from miscommunication between business and IT and using fragmented tools. After the failed attempt, the need for a feature-rich, dependable partner portal was even more critical. The company urgently needed to improve communication, sales reporting, and supply chain management for its affiliated dealers and end consumers.

Possible Approaches for B2B Partner Portal Development

The company considered two options for developing a B2B partner portal:

- **Traditional Software Development.** This approach allows customization but often leads to higher costs, longer timelines, and failure. Extensive planning, development, and testing can cause delays and increased expenses.
- **COTS software or Software as a Service (SaaS) solutions.** This option offers pre-built solutions that are cost-effective and quickly implemented. However, they may lack flexibility and require businesses to align their processes with the software’s capabilities.

Given the previous portal failure and the need for a timely solution, the company was cautious about traditional software development due to its high cost and lengthy time commitment. They explored COTS software and SaaS but had concerns about customization and flexibility. The company looked at other approaches to address performance, data quality, and compatibility. The goal was to create a comprehensive and efficient B2B partner portal while considering cost, time, and malleability.

CMMC Maturity Levels

After careful consideration, the company selected IntraSystems Advisory Division to build its B2B partner portal on the Mendix custom platform. Leveraging Mendix's agnostic design, we ensured compatibility with numerous ERP systems, facilitating a smooth transition and streamlined operations. In addition to developing a website, we created two mobile applications that provided on-the-go access to critical data for the sales team. The platform also incorporated comprehensive sales dashboarding, offering real-time insights into order history, invoicing data, user achievements, and other pertinent information.

This consolidated reporting capability empowered the sales team to track performance, analyze trends, and plan campaigns, enabling data-driven decision-making. Overall, the custom platform on Mendix exemplified the company's commitment to enhancing communication, streamlining operations, and delivering value by providing a tailored solution that facilitated data-driven decision-making, improved efficiency, and enhanced customer service.

Implementation Success and Benefits

Implementing the custom partner portal utilizing Mendix's Low Code platform yielded remarkable results for the company. Our solution, developed at a significantly lower cost of approximately \$100,000 compared to the typical price of \$250,000, exceeded expectations. Moreover, the custom platform approach significantly reduced development time, ensuring efficient and timely results. Integrating advanced analytics empowered the sales team to make data-driven decisions, improving sales performance and heightening user satisfaction. Leveraging Mendix's seamless integration with the company's existing ERP systems, the platform extended the lifespan of legacy systems while adapting to changing business requirements. Streamlined communication and real-time sales data accessed through the sales dashboard enhanced operational efficiency. This case study serves as a testament to the effectiveness and value of custom platform development in achieving cost savings, accelerated development timelines, and enhanced outcomes. Overall, the tailored solution provided by Mendix's platform perfectly aligned with the company's unique requirements, showcasing the immense benefits of this strategic approach.

Overall Viability, Lessons Learned, and Future Considerations

IntraSystems Advisory Division successful B2B partner portal development on Mendix's agnostic platform demonstrates the feasibility and practicality of custom platforms. It effectively addresses integration, performance, and data quality needs while delivering significant cost savings and faster time to launch compared to traditional approaches. The platform's agnostic nature, compatibility with multiple ERP systems, and extensibility make it valuable for streamlining operations across sectors.

Key lessons from this case study include the importance of clear communication, agility, user-centric design, and continuous improvement through data analysis and user feedback. Moving forward, the company can explore expanding the platform's capabilities with emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, and predictive analytics. Leveraging the platform's architecture and design principles can help address other operational challenges and create solutions for different departments or business functions.