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DIRECTOR OF THE EXPORT  
PROMOTIONS BUREAU



# Bangladesh Export Promotion Bureau Streamlines Textile Trading with the US

## Integration and EDI Solutions from GXS Speed Up Export VISA Processing in Bangladesh

### Corporate Profile

#### Bangladesh's Export Promotion Bureau

The United States is the biggest importer of Bangladeshi goods, with imports worth over US \$5 billion to the Bangladesh economy. Textiles, both materials and finished garments, comprise over 70 percent of Bangladesh's exports to the US. As the US operates a strict quota for imported textiles, Bangladesh has to regulate its exports. It has therefore set up the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) to oversee international trading activities and manage its valuable export business.

The EPB issues export licenses or VISAs from the US-allocated textile quota to Bangladeshi manufacturers and exporters. US Customs Service (USCS) regulates trade between the US and other countries and has implemented a system for monitoring VISAs called Electronic VISA Information System (ELVIS).

### The Business Challenge

#### Improving Communications and Eliminating VISA Fraud

In 2000, Bangladesh started to experience problems with the textile quota restraint levels recently negotiated with the US government. Popular categories were filling and the Bangladesh government records showed fewer exports than the related US reported imports. After extensive review, it was found that unauthorized VISAs had been issued to release merchandise. A manual system was implemented to ensure that only authorized VISAs were used to release merchandise. This system required VISAs to go through the Bangladesh Embassy in the US for review before the US could accept the VISA. In turn, this process increased workloads and created delays, often by several days, in clearing consignments of Bangladesh textiles in US ports.

The use of illegitimate VISAs caused several category restraint levels to be embargoed and caused millions of dollars in lost revenue to Bangladesh and their textile exporters. “We knew matters could not continue and we had to look at implementing a system to enable our bureau offices to communicate directly with US Customs,” said GKM Towfique Hassan, Director of the EPB. Today, Bangladesh is a participant in the US ELVIS program that uses EDI to transmit government-to-government VISA information. EDI and



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#### GXS SOLUTIONS USED:

- Application Integrator™
- EDI\*EXPRESS<sup>SM</sup>

the ELVIS program help reduce the instances of VISA fraud and make entry processing more efficient, while reducing the amount of revenue loss for Bangladesh.

## The Solution

### Streamline Operations with Real-Time Electronic Information

The EPB needed to be able to communicate more effectively with USCS and its ELVIS system. Other countries exporting textiles to the US, that had experienced similar problems to Bangladesh, had already adopted an EDI solution from GXS to integrate ELVIS with their own internal systems. This solution, based on GXS’s EDI\*EXPRESS<sup>SM</sup> Service, a secure, reliable document exchange service, and Application Integrator™, a powerful, intuitive mapping and application translation tool, has been proven to establish real-time electronic communications between textile exporting countries and USCS.

EDI\*EXPRESS is used extensively by enterprises worldwide to reduce administrative costs, streamline operations and provide near real-time information. Specifically designed to support electronic trade, EDI\*EXPRESS securely transmits documents to business partners anywhere in the world, removing delays caused by geography and time zones.

Application Integrator provides any-to-any data translation, platform independence and rapid implementation. Using Application Integrator, EPB can send data via the Internet or value-added network (VAN) in a range of formats and automatically translate the data into the format required by the receiving organization.

This GXS solution has enabled EPB to transfer a range of export documents related to VISAs and export documentation from their in-house applications without having to worry about compatibility with USCS’ systems. Application Integrator has seamlessly integrated the Bangladesh Oracle-based VISA processing system in the Dhaka and Chittagong offices, as well as the Exporters Association VISA application system with USCS’s ELVIS system.

## The Results

### VISA Processing Cycle Cut by 20 Percent

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As well as eliminating fraud, EPB has reduced VISA processing cycle time by 20 percent and can track VISAs issued in Bangladesh until they are cleared in the US. Before using Application Integrator, it was impossible for Bangladesh to send VISA information to USCS in advance of the delivery of exported goods. Now, the EPB can pre-register goods with USCS to facilitate easy clearance upon delivery. Consignment clearance time has decreased from four or five days to a matter of just four to eight hours.



### BANGLADESH'S RESULTS:

- VISA processing cycle time cut by 20 percent
- Consignment clearance reduced from four days to four hours
- Improved trade relations with the US
- Fraudulent VISAs eliminated 100 percent
- Better trade communications
- Enhanced exporter efficiency

US Customs offers the ELVIS EDI program to countries having VISA systems for exporting textiles to the US and that comply with Customs and CITA requirements. During the past several years, the use of EDI for the ELVIS program and related VISA processing has proven to be a highly efficient online method of processing entries with VISA requirements and minimizing VISA fraud. Customs encourages other countries with VISA programs to request participation in the ELVIS program.

Bangladesh has now joined other textile exporting countries in its ability to communicate seamlessly with US Customs, radically improved business opportunities for exporters and reduced paperwork and workload for the VISA processing authorities.

### GXS Solutions for Countries Exporting to the US:

In collaboration with the US Customs Service, GXS implemented the US Customs standard interface that is based on IBM MQ Series (message oriented middleware). It provides an event-driven communication method, integrating GXS's EDI services and the US Customs' ELVIS system. This service architecture provides a reliable and fault tolerant application level interface between GXS's services and US Customs' applications. With the addition of MQ connectivity into its EDI services, GXS opens the door for exporting countries to take advantage of a real-time transaction capability with US Customs. Thus the exporting countries are now able to use existing connection capabilities to EDI\*EXPRESS and benefit from a pro-active delivery and receipt of data with US Customs, eliminating the previous delays with zero impact on their existing technology investments.

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#### About GXS

GXS is a leading provider of B2B e-commerce solutions that simplify and enhance business process integration and collaboration. Organizations worldwide, including 75 percent of the Fortune 500, leverage GXS' GS1 certified global interoperability and supply chain execution solutions. Active in the global standards arena, GXS offers solutions, powered by the Trading Grid<sup>SM</sup>, that enable customers both large and small, to connect with global partners, synchronize product information and optimize the execution of supply chains. Headquartered in Gaithersburg, MD., GXS provides sales and support to businesses and their partners worldwide. For more information about GXS visit [www.gxs.com](http://www.gxs.com).