



Coastal Sunbelt Produce Shines with PO Automation



Coastal Sunbelt is one of the largest distributor of produce and dairy in the Mid-Atlantic region. They supply produce to hundreds of customers in Virginia, Washington DC, Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Passionate about using organic, fresh and local produce from the best farms, Coastal Sunbelt has its heart in the right place. The company has a strong sense of values and strives to give back to their community with weekly charity donations.

Their logo is symbolic in many ways, but has a pineapple, which is a universal symbol of hospitality and recognizes the industry they serve. "Tall and majestic, it represents our strength and our ability to meet customer needs in a demanding and changing environment." One segment of Coastal Sunbelt's customers are hotels, which includes hotels that utilize BirchStreet's strategic partner, Avendra (North America's leading procurement services provider serving hospitality-related industries). Many of BirchStreet's customers use Avendra and Coastal Sunbelt to buy their produce, such as Four Seasons Hotels & Resorts and Omni Hotels & Resorts.

The Old Way

Coastal Sunbelt's drive to provide excellent customer service, on time deliveries and fast payments to their growers, helped them to see the importance of automation and a faster flow of data. For their customers using BirchStreet's cloud-based procure-to-pay and eProcurement solution for automated ordering and connecting to suppliers, they knew that having a purchase order integration would speed up their processes. Originally, Coastal Sunbelt would receive and email notification that there was an order. They

would open the order in their email and manually go into BirchStreet to view the order and print it. Then, they would manually enter it into their system to process the order. This was so time consuming that they had a dedicated customer service representative to process BirchStreet orders.

A Fresh Solution

"One of our goals was to streamline the order process for our customers," stated Lindsey Marks, Manager of Hotel Division at Coastal Sunbelt Produce. She helped to get the project of PO Integration completed so that the purchase orders received from customers automatically went into their order entry system.



Marks explained how produce is a very difficult industry because of the continuous price fluctuations and seasonality of products. With approximately 3,500 product items, updating their pricing and availability is crucial to the business and customers. Now, with the integration in place, accepting electronic orders have simplified Coastal Sunbelt's business processes.

In fact, Coastal Sunbelt's dedicated BirchStreet customer service representative now has been given other customer service responsibilities. The company estimates a time reduction of two to four hours per day, which is up to 50% time of one employee. Efficiency and time saved in manual data entry is a clear result for this company, who is on the forefront of technology and best practices.