

Buyer Portal for Improved Retail Efficiency

Enhancing retail operations with an intuitive buyer portal that seamlessly integrates with existing business systems.

Overview

The buyer portal offers a user experience (UX) tailored for key business roles such as buyers, planners, assistant buyers, and executives. With streamlined workflows and intuitive design, the portal enables users to manage purchasing decisions, monitor inventory, track orders, and interact actively with suppliers.

Client Profile

A US-based discount closeout retailer with supermarkets that offer discounted, overstocked, and closeout products from name-brand and private-label suppliers.

Business Challenge

Setting up a buyer portal involves several complex challenges that include integration and real-time data access. The portal must seamlessly integrate with client systems like SAP and MSTR, as delays or errors can disrupt operations. Synchronizing these systems is crucial for managing purchase orders and adjustments as discrepancies and incorrect pricing can arise if data isn't aligned. Additionally, a poor user experience can lead to frustrated buyers, missed orders, and lost sales.

Business Requirement

The client wanted to implement a user-friendly buyer portal that seamlessly integrates with their existing ecosystem. They engaged QBurst to develop and enhance the technical build of new releases, in addition to developing and maintaining core functionalities. Required services include UI/UX design, UI development, backend API development, unit testing, DevOps support for packaging and deployment, and quality assurance.

Qburst Solution

We utilized an iterative design process to replace their existing AS400 system. The enhanced buyer portal provides an improved user experience, streamlined business activities, and better visibility.

Data Processing and APIs

- **Talend Jobs:** These jobs extract data from the SAP HANA Sidecar and load it into a local MongoDB instance for application display. The job execution frequency varies based on business requirements, ranging from every five minutes to once a day.
- **APIs:** Read Operations fetch data from SAP HANA and deliver it to the requesting application and Write Operations push data back into SAP S/4HANA.

This architecture ensures efficient data flow while balancing real-time and batch processing needs across applications.

Integration with Internal Systems

- **Robust API Integration:** Developed a standardized API architecture to ensure seamless integration between the portal, SAP, MSTR, and other systems, supporting real-time data flow and large transaction volumes.
- **Testing and Validation:** Regular testing and validation of integration points were performed to identify and resolve issues before they impacted business operations.

Managing Purchase Orders and Items

- **Developed User Interface:** Created an intuitive interface for buyers to easily create and edit purchase orders.

Buyer Experience and Engagement

- **User-Centric Design:** Focused on ease of use, simplifying workflows, streamlining processes, and ensuring that users can easily create new items, place orders, and track past purchase orders.
- **Optimization:** Optimized the portal for mobile, enabling buyers to make quick decisions on the go.
- **Training and Support:** Provided ongoing training, tutorials, and real-time support to help buyers navigate the portal effectively.

This approach enabled seamless integration of modern systems, enhanced functionality, and improved user satisfaction, ultimately driving business efficiency and customer engagement.

Key Features

Real-Time Inventory and Pricing Visibility

- **For Buyers and Planners:** Ensures seamless access to up-to-date inventory levels, product pricing, and supplier data. The portal provides alerts for stock-outs, order discrepancies, and pricing updates.
- **For Executives:** Offers high-level visibility of inventory across all stores, allowing them to track product performance and identify trends.

Purchase Order Management

- **For Assistant Buyers:** Streamlined order creation and tracking capabilities, including batch order processing, order history review, and quick updates to existing orders.
- **For Buyers and Planners:** Manage and approve purchase orders, track supplier deliveries, and ensure that inventory replenishment aligns with demand forecasts.

Supplier and Vendor Management

- **For Buyers:** Provides easy access to a centralized list of suppliers and vendors, with provision to negotiate prices, review past orders, and adjust purchase terms.
- **For Planners and Assistant Buyers:** Offers insights into supplier performance to ensure consistent product availability and identify potential supplier issues.

Reporting and Analytics

- **For Executives:** Customizable dashboards provide KPIs such as sales trends, inventory turnover, supplier performance, and order fulfillment. This enables informed decision-making based on real-time data.
- **For Planners and Buyers:** Reporting tools for sales trends, product performance, and demand forecasts help align purchasing strategies with market conditions.









Collaborative Tools

- **For All Users:** A system for communication and collaboration between buyers, assistant buyers, planners, and executives. These features include chat functions, shared calendars, and document storage aligned across departments.

Intuitive User Interface (UI) Design

- **For All Users:** A user-friendly design tailored to the specific needs of each role. The interface is simple, responsive, and easy to navigate, reducing the learning curve and boosting productivity.

Technologies Used

 mongoDB MongoDB	 Azure DevOps	 talend Talend IDE	 .NET
 Apigee	 React	 MSTR	 SAP

Business Benefits

- **Decreased Complexity and Effort:** Simplified workflows and clear navigation paths enable users to quickly access tools and complete tasks, increasing productivity and user satisfaction.
- **Automated Manual Processes:** Automating tasks such as purchase order creation, inventory tracking, and price adjustments reduced human error and ensured consistency across processes, freeing up time for more strategic activities.
- **Reduced the Number of Screens and Clicks:** The portal consolidated key functionalities into fewer screens and intuitive workflows, enabling users to complete tasks with fewer clicks, reducing cognitive load and enhancing the overall experience.
- **Supply Enhancements and Functionalities:** Enhanced supply chain visibility allowed buyers to make informed decisions regarding product sourcing, order quantities, and stock management. Real-time updates on stock and supplier performance improved product availability and reduced delays.

- **Real-Time Insights:** Visibility into inventory, sales, and supplier data in real-time empower decision-makers to make informed purchase decisions. Features such as trend forecasting and supplier performance tracking optimized inventory management and improved operational efficiency.



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