



Lobster



## TO JAPAN AND BACK

Epson Europe Electronics GmbH uses Lobster\_data for its international data exchange needs

**Anyone who operates worldwide needs transparency. That way, they can serve their customers via the fastest delivery routes, offering the shortest delivery times, whilst being able to confirm their stock levels throughout the whole of Europe. These are all requirements part of everyday life in a multinational corporation like the Japanese-owned Seiko Epson Corporation, and their subsidiary, Epson Europe Electronics GmbH, which recently started working with Lobster\_data.**

The brand names of parent companies Seiko and Epson need no introduction, as the Group has been one of the world's largest manufacturers of printers, scanners, digicams, PCs, notebooks, projectors, POS systems, industrial robots and high-quality watches for decades now, also producing electronic components, such as time-measuring equipment, semi-conductors and sensors.

As a marketing, engineering and distribution company, Epson Europe Electronics GmbH is the Japan-based Seiko Epson Corporation's European headquarters for electronic equipment. The company's philosophy is to not just sell quality products, but also to support its customers in all technical and logistical aspects as best they can through a European-wide network of distributors and Epson Technology Partners. Epson Europe Electronics GmbH employs around 50 people and is responsible for the Group's sales and marketing operations throughout Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

"We always rely on the latest product data, which is sent to us directly from Japan", explains Abderrahim Wahabi, the company's IT Director in Munich. "We need to be able to manage our sales and plan order quantities and deliveries for our customers. Anyone looking for a product can see which products we deliver and where they're available". In order to be constantly up-to-date in Munich, data has to be transferred daily from the Group's main server in Japan, before being imported to the system in Munich. This process used to be very complex. In Japan, data from their ERP program would be exported in Excel format and then made available on the server. In Munich, an employee would have to log in every day and download the data. This always led to complications, like the server being unavailable, files becoming damaged during the export, or the data transfer not being able to successfully complete. In Munich, two different formats are needed - one in XLS format for Sharepoint and one in CSV format for Unix. This data can then be accessed by Epson's customers.



To streamline the process, Abderrahim decided to seek out a solution that would automate the file transfer process whilst ensuring the integrity of the data. Lobster\_data was soon selected and installed on the computers in Munich. “Ever since, our data downloads run without issue”, says the IT Chief. “The possibilities to make adjustments are enormous”. For Abderrahim and his team, that’s especially important. The reliability of data being available has improved significantly, as Lobster\_data automatically time-controls data on the Japanese server and converts it to the required formats.

“If the Japanese server goes down, I get an automatic email from the system so I can do something about it”, explains Abderrahim. “We can now also be certain that the data our customers see via Unix and Windows isn’t corrupt, because Lobster\_data would flag up any such issues. The system converts the data entirely error-free. Overall, the time and effort we need to put into this process has dropped significantly”.

In the meantime, Epson Europe Electronics has discovered even more applications for the system. Abderrahim plans to use Lobster\_data to ensure all data, whether sent or received, is processed on a separate server, meaning Lobster\_data will take care of the data conversion required. Until now, another EDI provider has received the data via FTP and mapped it to customer formats. “We will take care of these data transfers and others via Lobster\_data in future. This will ensure everyone receives the data they want in the format they need. The flexibility and reliability of the system is what convinced us to take this next step”.