Forum™
Makes Supply Chains Lightning Fast

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Forum
Makes Supply Chains Lightning Fast

Executive Summary

....

3

White Paper

Over the last few years hundreds of companies have greatly improved their performance through superior Supply Chain planning and execution. Today, many companies are building on these foundations and are turning their supply chain competencies into a formidable competitive weapon. Supply Chain Management has become a subject of huge interest in recent years.

Interest in Supply Chain Management is growing because:

- Significant revenue and profit gains can be made from successful supply chain initiatives that reduce inventory, improve efficiency and help serve customers better and faster.
- In the face of ever increasing competition, organisations feel it is important to build reliable & sustainable processes with focus on strong relationships with customers.

Executive Summary…

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Modern technology is offering new and better ways of addressing supply chain management objectives. Internet-based technologies have enabled development of significantly more robust, cost-effective and comprehensive solutions in this domain as compared to other alternatives.

SIFY has developed a solution under the brand name '**Forum^{TM}**' that offers a unique way of enabling smooth supply chain operations & end-to-end visibility using the Internet. Forum^{TM} offers comprehensive functionalities, is easy to use and is highly scalable, is suitable for deployment in large, complex supply chains. The solution is based on a deep understanding of customers' businesses and is being deployed by various leading organizations.

Forum™

Makes Supply Chains Lightning Fast

About SIFY

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SIFY Limited (NASDAQ: SIFY) is the largest integrated Internet and eCommerce services Company in India, offering end-to-end solutions with a comprehensive range of value-added products and services.

SIFY has key strengths in corporate services (B2B) which include corporate connectivity, network and communications solutions and integrated e-Solution, such as consulting, execution, management and hosting.

The Company's network services, data center operations customer relationship management and eLearning services are accredited ISO 9001:2000. SIFY's consumer portal, www.sify.com is one of the leading portals in India.

In keeping with its pioneering efforts in Internet and e-Commerce, *Forum™* from SIFY is designed to equip businesses with a simple, yet effective tool for managing the forward supply chain.

About Forum™

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Forum™ is a revolutionary software that connects supply chain members through the internet, help implement a **continuous replenishment** mechanism, help **reduce inventory** levels, **cut operations costs** and makes channel members **more efficient**. It is a kind of software that can be easily rolled out in any distribution network.

Forum™ has an in-built Financial & Inventory Management software that members of the distribution network can use to perform their routine operations like ordering, invoicing etc. It has a host of powerful features like **Automatic Generation of Purchase Orders** that would make inventory management really simple.
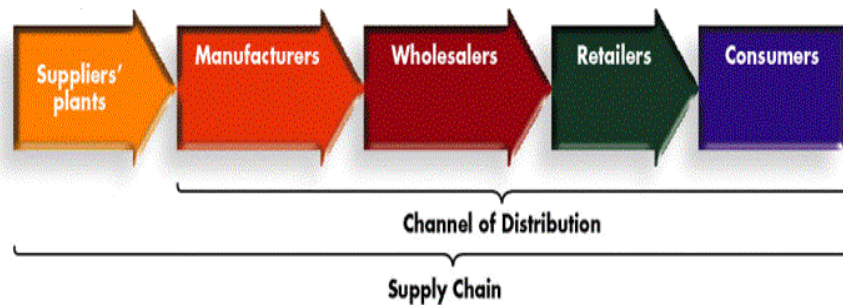
Further, *Forum™* helps supply chain members to **exchange business documents** including Purchase Orders, Invoices, Stock Statements etc. F*orum™* can also be integrated with any ERP through appropriate Middleware.

7

The Supply Chain

Forum™ is a revolutionary solution addressing the need to establish seamless connectivity with supply chain partners. Its leading edge technology platform enables complete supply chain visibility even as it ensures least interference with the existing organizational IT infrastructure.

Additionally, its open architecture enables rapid deployment and integration of new IT systems as technology and needs evolve. SIFY has taken care to ensure that the system is designed for scalability, interoperability and security while assuring a low Total Cost of Ownership.

Client Applications

A Micro-ERP:

This enables supply chain participants (Clearing & Forwarding Agents, stockists /distributors, wholesalers, retailers) to manage their purchases, sales inventory and Financial accounts. The micro-ERP also has comprehensive reports on all these areas including trade credit etc.

An interface between the Micro-ERP and the Internet:

This extracts and updates business data in the Micro-ERP. It manages electronic exchange of business documents with trading partners through the Internet. The business documents follow the XML framework and are encrypted for security.

Central Server

Forum Central™:

Hosted by SIFY, coordinates all information exchange between supply chain partners. Forum Central™ executes business rules and processes for validating, formatting and delivering business documents among trading partners.

It also helps users track documents while in transit. Trading partners can also publish their product lists (catalogs) on Forum Central™, and download partners' Item Masters including Product Codes etc. This gives an easy-to-use platform for ensuring that all supply chain partners use uniform Item Codes.

Client Application, which consists of:

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Central Server

'Forum Central™ ' hosted by Sify coordinates all information exchange between supply chain partners. Forum Central™ executes business rules and processes for validating, formatting and delivering business documents among trading partners. It also helps users track documents while in transit. Trading partners can also publish their product lists (catalogs) on Forum Central™ , and download partners' Item Masters including Product Codes etc. This gives an easy-to-use platform for ensuring that all supply chain partners use uniform Item Codes.

The **client component** is a standalone application, which resides on the client machine. It has a simple graphical user interface for easy operations. The interaction between the Micro-ERP and its internet interface is using APIs that helps easier integration and customization. Data exchange is using XML.
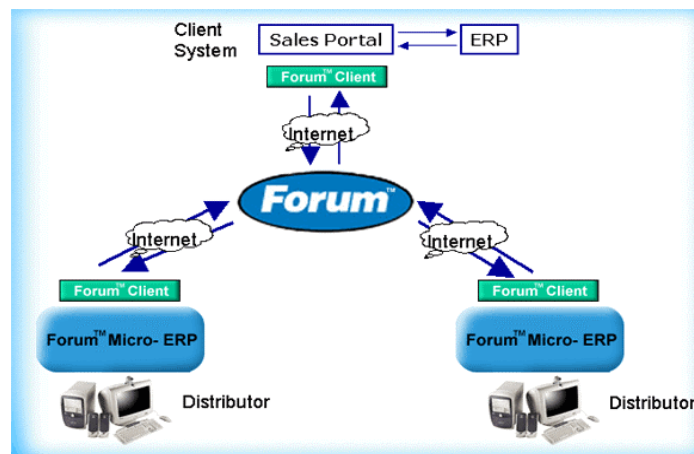
Technical Architecture...

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The business documents (XML documents) are encrypted and contain necessary header information. The client application connects to Forum Central™ through the Internet to upload documents for routing. It also checks for incoming documents and downloads the same from its mailbox maintained on Forum Central™

The *central server* comprises of the core modules for routing. It has the BizTalk module - for validation, schema mapping, destination identification. BizTalk plays a key role in this solution to check for documents arriving at the central server, validating the schema, identifying the processing routines required and then routing the same to the respective destinations through the defined communication channels.

11

White Paper

Forum™ is broadly divided into Four functional areas :

- **Inventory**
  - o Item Maintenance
  - o Stock Adjustment
  - o Transfer In / Out
  - o Stock Type Conversion

- **Purchase**
  - o Purchase Order (Manual & Auto)
  - o Goods Received Note
  - o Billing
  - o Purchase Return
  - o Claims

- **Sales**
  - o Sales Conformation
  - o Dispatch
  - o Invoice
  - o Sales Return
  - o Schemes

- **Accounting & Financial Accounts**
  - o Debit Note / Credit Note
  - o Cheque Deposit / Bounce
  - o Collections / Accounts Payments / Receivables
  - o Manual Journal
  - o Bank Reconciliation
  - o Trial Balance, P&L and Balance Sheet

Forum™

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Why Forum™?

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⇒ **Superior Technology**

⇒ **User Friendly**

⇒ **Simplifies and Minimizes Data Entry**

⇒ **Flexible and User Configurable**

⇒ **High Level of Data Security**

⇒ **Secure Data Exchange & Integration**

⇒ **Integrates Seamlessly with External Applications**

⇒ **Highly Scalable; Can be Deployed for Thousands of Trading Partners**

⇒ **Very Cost-Effective**