



CONSULTING SOLUTIONS

If you had a toothache, you wouldn't go to the eye doctor.

To say that trade spending, contract management, and deduction management are unique and challenging to the foodservice industry is probably a major understatement. Aside from the extremely manual and labor-intensive processes involved, complexities stem from the unique aspects related to pricing and trade spending, the overlapping of deals for supply chain members, and the data required to reconcile and validate programs and claims.

With everybody, including operators and distributors, wanting their "fair share," the challenges become compounded, and the decisions on how and where to spend money, what best practices to employ, and how to benchmark your efforts and results become more and more difficult. And sometimes the pain is like a bad toothache that won't go away.

Don't worry -- we offer immediate and maximum pain relief. Our extensive industry experience, coupled with our knowledge gained from numerous software implementations and consulting projects, has allowed us to frequently see best practices and opportunities for improvement. We're able to share this knowledge and help you streamline your processes, better define roles and responsibilities, and create more profitable programs. We give you more than two aspirin, and you can still call us in the morning.



Why partner with an industry-specific vendor like Blacksmith to complete a trade spending business process analysis?

When manufacturers want to gain a better understanding of their processes, they could undertake this project internally. However, there are multiple reasons to proceed with a consulting partner:

1. Lack of time and resources to complete a study on their own. The Trade Manager at one client said, “This is something I should do, but I don’t have the time or a staff to conduct one or conduct it as thoroughly as I would like.”
2. Senior managers believe an external company lends more objectivity to the analysis than if it were completed internally. As one client stated, “You don’t have our limited view of the world, believing that we do everything better than everyone else.”
 - A third party provides a less-biased view across the organization – senior managers sometimes have difficulty deciphering fact from fiction among functional groups (due to turf issues, self-preservation, sugar coating).
3. A vendor’s experience with other foodservice clients provides best practice ideas based on other companies’ processes. “We can take advantage of your knowledge and expertise.” The General Manager at one client stated that they selected Blacksmith to conduct the Business Process Analysis (BPA) due to our knowledge from working with other clients.
4. Third parties help managers substantiate organization and process change.
5. Business people are not experienced at conducting a Business Process Analysis. BPA is primarily an IT or system/product development function, not a skill set that business people typically possess.
6. IT resources are unavailable, or they charge for their time. At some companies, IT is an independent function, and IT time may be charged to the business unit as a shared resource. At smaller companies, there may be no IT resources available or experienced at business process analysis and mapping.
7. IT people may be available but not be able to adequately lead a business discussion.
8. Companies sometimes lack good communication and trust, especially cross-functionally, and the results of an internal project may reflect this.
9. Internal assessments are sometimes not treated as a priority (or individuals conduct them in addition to their normal job) so they take a long time to complete.
10. Managers are engaged in running the business and may not have time to stop and think strategically about their processes.



What will you receive as a result of partnering with Blacksmith Applications?

- Foodservice expertise – foodservice processes and trade spending practices are truly unique. You need someone who can hit the ground running and ask the right questions on day one – not someone who needs to build the foundation of foodservice knowledge.
- Process flows and text description for each of your processes relating to program creation through payment and deductions.
- Insightful analysis into organizational issues and challenges.
- A better understanding of what actually occurs in the field.
- An objective understanding of what is actually occurring throughout your organization.
- Best practice ideas based on Blacksmith's previous experiences.
- A better understanding of your own systems, and recommendations as to how they should interact with Blacksmith.
- Reduced cycle-time of Blacksmith's software implementation as a result of requirements gathering.

Would you like to learn more about how Blacksmith Applications can conduct a Business Process Analysis at your company?

For more information on how Blacksmith Consulting Solutions can help you better manage your business, please contact Tina Wefer, Senior Product Manager, Blacksmith Applications, at 312-981-6381 or twefer@bigredflame.com.