

GE Information Services

Industry-Leading E-Commerce Connectivity with *BSCLIB*



Highlights

BSCLIB is a software tool kit that emulates both the point-to-point Binary Synchronous Communications (BSC) protocol specific to IBM 3780 and 2780 data terminals and the multi-point BSC protocol found in 3270 terminals. The tool kit's applications program interface (API) enables the complete control of the information flow between an application and a BSC communications link. BSCLIB is available for all of today's most widely used platforms, including DOS, OS/2, Windows 3.x, Windows 95, Windows NT, UNIX, and AIX.

"Bisynchronous communication is one of the mainstays of U.S. industry and a predominate requirement for gateway connectivity products. For Enterprise System to reach this market, we needed a solid bisync communications solution that would run on new technology platforms. Serengeti's BSCLIB was a good fit. With BSCLIB, we have the functionality we need to expand our customer base—and the ability to provide today's businesses with sophisticated, reliable e-commerce capabilities."

***David Blaine
Product Mgr.
GEIS***

An Advanced Corporate Gateway for the Global Marketplace

More and more, electronic commerce is a requirement for remaining competitive in today's fast-paced global economy. At the same time, embracing this powerful new technology can be a complex undertaking indeed. To create e-commerce programs that work—programs that successfully facilitate the fast, effective exchange of vital business information with trading partners around the globe—companies need robust ways to integrate legacy and next-generation business applications into their e-commerce environments. They need methods for processing messages from

a variety of applications and platforms as well as help in fully exploiting the rich potential of the Internet.

It's no wonder, then, that more than 150 major Fortune 500 companies in the U.S., Europe and Asia—leaders in everything from manufacturing to retail, transportation to healthcare,

telecommunications to utilities—have adopted Enterprise System from GE Information Services (GEIS). The Enterprise System is one in a suite of several powerful GEIS products and services that help businesses solve their information challenges and internetwork their global enterprise. This communications and information gateway lets firms link their internal enterprise resource planning (ERP) applications, such as SAP and Oracle, with an external trading partner community. With the Enterprise System, businesses also have a platform for leveraging emerging Internet technologies to reach more business partners.

Key to the success of this powerful corporate gateway is its ability, using as a common language the electronic data interchange (EDI) format, to enable seamless communication between a company's internal ERP applications and those of its diverse trading partners—many of whose own business applications run on legacy mainframe systems. "This requires a number of flexible, robust communications capabilities," says David Blaine, Enterprise System product manager at GEIS' Rockville, Maryland, headquarters.



Industry-Leading E-Commerce Connectivity With *BSCLIB* & GE Information Services

“When we entered the U.S. market three years ago,” Blaine continues, “it became clear that we needed an industrial-strength bisync communications capability to facilitate the mainframe communications so common in this country.” In early 1997, GEIS found the solution it needed: *BSCLIB* from Serengeti Systems.

“*BSCLIB* offers outstanding flexibility and support,” says Blaine. “It lets us get business information off a mainframe, provide translation and routing services as needed, and then send onward for external communications. *BSCLIB* has all the features and functions we need, provided by a vendor who has been able to adapt the product to our specific requirements. Without *BSCLIB* and Serengeti’s support, we simply could not be as successful providing U.S. corporate gateway customers with the solutions they need.”

Multi-port Adapter: Capacity for High-Volume Communications

GEIS’ Enterprise System customers tend to have hundreds of trading partners, with whom they routinely exchange purchase orders, shipping and inventory information, account data and other business-critical EDI messages. That translates into a huge volume of communications sessions that must be supported—often simultaneously—by the GEIS gateway.

“*BSCLIB* is the only bisync communications product with multi-port/multi-board capabilities,” says Bing Xu, senior system engineer at GEIS’ Brentwood, Tennessee-based Enterprise Development Group. “This is one of *BSCLIB*’s key advantages,

because it makes it possible to have up to 32 clients talking to the EDI server at a time—and heightens our customers’ ability to communicate effectively with an ever-widening circle of partners.” Blaine goes on to add that *BSCLIB* provides “the scalable solution our customers require.”

BSCLIB’s Comprehensive, Easy-to-Use API

The EDI application developed by Xu and his GEIS colleagues is, he says, “like an electronic post office that’s specialized to deliver inter-company business data.” A C program, which is closely integrated with the Enterprise System product, controls all bisynchronous communications by interacting with the EDI server to send and retrieve messages. “When a remote mainframe site calls in,” says Xu, “the program accepts calls, prepares for communication, and starts receiving data and passing it to the server. The process is essentially the same for sending data to the remote site; data is continually being passed back and forth between the EDI application and the bisync gateway.”

It took the GEIS developers just six months to develop this sophisticated application—thanks in large part to the *BSCLIB* applications program interface (API), which is commonly referred to as an open/close/read/write interface. “The API was straightforward and easy to use,” says Xu. “The functions provided by the API lent themselves to a straightforward design of our application. The sample program included with the *BSCLIB* API helped a lot. We based our program on it—and this really went a long way toward streamlining the development process.”

A Strong Continuing Relationship With Serengeti

As the GEIS developers were creating their bisync communications program, says Xu, “Serengeti was very helpful. Whenever we had problems, we’d just call them, and they would respond very quickly with whatever we needed.” What’s more, Serengeti continues to provide tech support and enhancements as the Enterprise System project proceeds. “I can call them anytime,” Xu says, “and they invariably provide all the assistance and support we might require.”

About Serengeti Systems

Serengeti Systems is the recognized leader in Binary Synchronous Communications (BSC) technology and Remote Job Entry (RJE) PC-to-mainframe connectivity. The company has developed PC-to-legacy systems integration products for Windows 3.x, Windows 95, Windows NT, OS/2, MS-DOS, UNIX and AIX systems since 1986.

Give Serengeti a call, and find out why customers like GE Information Services choose Serengeti as their communications provider. For more information about GEIS’s powerful e-commerce solutions, call 800/560-GEIS, or visit them at www.geis.com.

Serengeti Systems

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