



# Lipari foods uses Cleo to deliver products quickly and efficiently



**Company profile:**  
Leading independent wholesale food distributor based in Warren, Mich.  
**Region:** Midwest  
**Industries:**  
Food Distribution  
**Business need:**  
Growth and improved partner relationships  
**IT issue:** Multiprotocol data integration

## Business Need

Lipari Foods, a leading independent Midwest wholesale food distributor based in Warren, Mich., serves more than 5,000 retailers in 12 states across the U.S., including Michigan, Ohio, Kentucky, Illinois and Pennsylvania. With a mission to transform customers' stores by delighting shoppers with quality and selection, Lipari Foods works hard to serve as a trusted business partner.

Today, that hard work has proven invaluable as retailers trust Lipari Foods to execute marketing, merchandising and in-store product publicity in order to enhance their reputations. Therefore, fostering relationships and improving communication with its external partners and suppliers is a critical business need.

## I.T. Need

However, maintaining the level of service that customers have come to expect required Lipari Foods to streamline their data integration. With increasing customer requests for additional protocols, Lipari Foods rapidly realized a need to handle more than just EDI transactions.

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## The Solution

Lipari Foods chose Cleo Integration Cloud to provide the company with a common integration platform that creates a centralized hub for electronic data processing. Now, regardless of the protocol its partners and suppliers use (EDI, XML, spreadsheet, etc.), Lipari Foods is able to streamline electronic communications.

A Cleo customer since 2005, the decision to replace their previous integration software with Cleo Integration Cloud was an easy one. “We chose to stay with Cleo because we value the 10-year relationship they’ve built with us,” said Michael Hegarty, director of ERP and CRM corporate strategy at Lipari Foods. “They made the transition easy by managing the process from installation to implementation to deployment so that I didn’t have to expend our valuable in-house IT resources.”

Before implementing Cleo Integration Cloud, onboarding a new trading partner with a data requirement beyond EDI was difficult. Without the ability to communicate via the partner’s preferred file type, Lipari Foods found the process unnecessarily expensive and time consuming – not to mention incredibly prone to error. Utilizing Cleo Integration Cloud has greatly simplified this process. Now Lipari Foods can onboard a partner in a matter of hours instead of days.

This is good news as the distributor plans to grow its number of trading partners significantly within the next two years. Specifically, Lipari Foods plans to jump from 150 partners to 1,000 – a process that will be made much simpler with the help of Cleo Integration Cloud.

In using Cleo Integration Cloud, Lipari Foods was able to address two important customer requests. The first was to be able to provide additional transaction sets for EDI to customers’ trading partners. It was also critical to provide enhanced spreadsheet integration capabilities to ensure all order types were processed despite file format.

Lipari Foods is now able to quickly adapt to partners’ systems, which provides for a better experience as they don’t have to worry about the hassle of making their files compatible.



“At the end of the day, we want to be easy to do business with ... Cleo helps us accomplish that goal by allowing us to better communicate with both customers and partners. You can’t put a price on that.”

– **Michael Hegarty**,  
director of ERP and  
CRM corporate  
strategy at Lipari  
Foods

