



fcB2B 2022 Annual Meeting Minutes

September 19, 2023 and September 20, 2023

Embassy Suites Nashville Airport
Nashville, TN

Introductions

The meeting opened on Tuesday September 19, 2023 at 9am with 47 members in attendance. There was a good group of Manufactures, Distributors, Software providers and Retailers. Lewis Davis welcomed the group and reviewed the agenda for the day. The group was asked to introduce themselves.

Version 3 – Are we there yet?

The survey results from last year were shown and discussed that there were 7 companies that indicated they would be ready for certification by the end of 2022. As of the meeting only 1 new company had requested certification. Dixie, Mohawk and RFMS remain the only companies that have completed certification for v3.1.

Several software companies committed to being ready for certification by the end of the year. Those companies are Broadlume, Comp-U-Floor, and QFloors. RFMS is testing a Product Catalog but because of system changes can't commit. Kerridge is currently in development with the Product Catalog and will be moving to analysis of the PO next. They are hesitant to commit to a date but are committed to getting it done. Some suppliers are struggling with their EDI service providers not offering the 7050 version.

A question was asked about the benefits for a supplier, or software provider to move to the latest version. Currently there aren't any benefits defined that could be shared to help support the expenses of the upgrade. A new committee is being formed to address and document these benefits, if you are interested in participating, please contact Lewis Davis at ldavis@wfca.org.

Web Services Committee

Chad Ogden, co-chair of the committee provided the update.

Existing Web Services:

- Order Status Service
- Price Check Service
- Related Items Service
- Stock Check Service
- Reservation Service (pending implementation)

Related Items Service is being used widely in the industry because the linking sent in the 832 seems to be limited. Suppliers in the room indicated that they don't have a process in place to



update the parent SKU when a related item changes. It appears that related items are only being refreshed when the parent SKU is sent.

New Services being developed:

- Purchase Order Cancel / Modification
- Image / Document Service

A new service was requested that could be beneficial, the service would be provide a link to a page on the existing portal that shows additional or more detailed information (i.e., order tracking, shipment tracking, etc).

A request was made to add the Web Service discovery URL address to the fcB2B site associated with the member company. This has been added to the Connections tab for each Member where it applies.

fcB2B Mission and Vision Statements

The fcB2B Mission Statement got updated from the prior statement from 2014. The new mission statement is: ***Our mission is to utilize technology standards to enhance business relationships, performance, and connectivity within the flooring industry.***

There was also a great discussion around the Vision Statement from 2014, which is below.

The Vision of fcB2B is to increase organizational impact and relevancy within the floor covering industry by:

- ***Ensuring alignment and connectivity across the value chain (i.e., Manufacturers → Distributors → Dealers → supported by software providers)***
- ***Consistently delivering a compelling value proposition to all partners (i.e., achieving targeted ROI's)***
- ***Increasing the adoption rate of the fcB2B transaction sets***
- ***Enabling a more competitive customer/consumer experience (i.e., through information access and timeliness)***
- ***Ensuring fcB2B organizational efficiency and effectiveness (i.e., member engagement, right structure, right staffing model, right leadership; sustainable funding stream)***

The vision is still valid, and the points related are what we continue to do to meet the vision. The group felt that the last point had been met when the WFCA acquired fcB2B and brought it under their umbrella. The other bullets should be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure they are still relevant.

There was also a good discussion about obstacles faced by retailers when trying to use fcB2B. It appears that some reps from fcB2B members continue to push website usage instead of fcB2B. More education to promote the benefits of fcB2B is needed.

Retailer Panel

Three of our retail members participated in a panel discussion related to fcB2B usage. The panel consisted of Jennifer Larson from HJ Martin and Son's; Michael Reynolds from Michaels Flooring Outlet; and Jennifer Schmidt from Nonn's Kitchen, Bath and Flooring.

Some of the topics covered were:

- Suppliers providing a product catalog.
 - Range was from 30% to 80% depending on the total number of suppliers.
- Of the suppliers providing an 832 how many files must be reviewed/updated.
 - For most on the panel there are few that have to be touched.
 - Problems are because of missing sub-classifications, vendor name changes, drop products being sent multiple times or being dropped then undropped.
 - A question came up about changes to the product description and if a new catalog would update in the retailer's system.
 - Depending on the system used by the retailer, some allow a description change and others don't.
- Time spent maintaining the fcB2B catalog.
 - very little time
- Time spent maintaining the non-fcB2B customer products.
 - up to 10 hours per week
- Issues that cause the review / update the product records.
 - Pricing not updated timely by sales.
 - Associated products not updated in the catalog vs the web service.
 - Further discussion identified that most suppliers aren't triggering an update to the parent product when an associated product is added. Web services will always provide the most updated list.
 - Incomplete material classification, only sending class but no sub-class, or a new classification the retailer hasn't setup in their system.
- Suppliers providing only the 832 and no other documents?
 - A gap was identified where retailers don't know what documents are supported by a supplier. Suppliers who provide all documents, most indicated they enable the customer for everything from the start. Suppliers that are only providing 832 catalogs initially and later add additional documents, the retailer may not be aware or know they can request.
- Is your business using fcB2B PO's – All three of our retailers do use fcB2B PO's.
 - The range of suppliers they are sending PO's was from 25% to 75%.
- Reasons for not using PO's:
 - Lack of awareness that suppliers provide PO's.
 - Special PO processing or needing approvals (internal or supplier)

- Large orders need special routing.
- Special pricing
 - Delay in order processing, waiting for rep approval.
 - Suppliers not checking price sent, creating order with default price.
 - Supplier not knowing if price changed or incorrect price in retailer system.
- No defined priority of PO statuses for supplier to sent when multiple issues with order. Committee created to review codes and determine sequence.
- If fcB2B problems who is your first point of contact?
 - B2B support then supplier rep
- What would help increase adoption of fcB2B PO's?
 - More user training.
 - Better software integration.
 - More awareness campaigns.
 - Catalog data issues limiting usage.
- Only half of the retailers utilize invoices, reasons for not using were:
 - Split lines on invoices – software not matching to PO line
 - SY vs SF pricing
 - Rounding issue when price is sent with more than 2 decimals.
- Anticipated benefits of v3.2 is better product data.

SFTP Adoption

It appears that 12 suppliers have adopted SFTP and have either fully migrated all fcB2B customers or have partially migrated. There are 6 suppliers that are currently testing.

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|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| • AllTile (PO's only) | • Shaw |
| • Arley Wholesale | • United Tile |
| • Bedrosians | <u>Testing</u> |
| • Certified Flooring Distributors | • 21 Century Tile |
| • Conestoga Tile | • Crossville Studios |
| • Emser Tile | • Kraus |
| • Happy Floors | • Stanton Flooring |
| • JJ Haines | • Surface Art |
| • Karndean | • The Dixie Group |
| • Mohawk | |

Software Panel

We had 4 of our software members participate in a panel discussion. Chris Burlon from Broadlume, Benjamin Heinze from Comp-U-Floor, Chad Ogden from QFloors and Cheryl Allen from RFMS/Cyncly.

- What is the biggest challenge facing us about fcB2B today?
 - Supplier adoption for retailers wanting to use fcB2B for all suppliers.
 - Onboarding new vendors when using a third-party EDI provider.
 - Repeatable process for retailer setup by third-party EDI providers.
 - Bad customer experience is generalized to the entire industry.
 - More adoption of web services
- All suppliers are verified by the software provider with their software.
 - Some software providers offer sandbox or test version for supplier.
 - Tested companies put on software providers website as tested/certified.
 - Communication of new suppliers are typically email blast or newsletter.
- Top issues received by software providers help desk.
 - Miss used material classification codes (codes not defined in Core Rules)
 - (S)FTP connection issues (timeout, invalid password, etc.)
 - Searching for products in the software
 - Security issues with the (S)FTP authorities (renaming files or duplicate file names)
- What is the best way for a supplier to report problems? (Contact customer or software provider?)
 - Contacting the software provider is best as they understand how their systems work. Customers may not fully understand the technical issues.
- Will a complete catalog resolve problems caused by a bad catalog?
 - In most software the product record is tied to inventory records so depending on the issue with the original catalog it may require additional work for the retail to resolve.
- How do we increase PO usage for fcB2B suppliers?
 - Software companies training and encouraging customers to try fcB2B.
 - Better definition of fcB2B processes to provide consistent experience.

WFCA Software Matrix

fcB2B and WFCA have partnered to create a matrix of software providers functionality. A survey was sent to and completed by the software providers. The results have been consolidated into a document on the WFCA website available to members. The matrix will allow a retailer to start an evaluation of multiple software at once.



Future Items for discussion

- Review the 832 catalog for information that is more dynamic and look at pulling it out into a web service. One example is related items web service which provides real time relationships whereas the catalog shows the relationships at the time of the last catalog.
- Discussed creating a forum on the website to allow discussion. A forum has existed in prior fcB2B websites but not used. A temporary solution is to create a monthly call where anyone interested could join.
 - The first call is scheduled for Wednesday November 1 at 2pm ET. An email will be sent out to the group a week prior so be sure to watch for the information.