

From Bottlenecks to Breakthroughs: Breakthru Beverage Group Optimizes A/R Operations



The Challenge

Breakthru Beverage Group is a leading beverage wholesaler and family-owned and operated company that has expanded across 16 markets with more than \$8.6 billion in annual sales. Breakthru brings deep industry expertise to its operations across the U.S. and Canada. With a team of 9,500 dedicated associates, Breakthru Beverage Group delivers a distinguished portfolio of wine, premier spirits, beer, and non-alcoholic brands to the doorsteps of retail, convenience, bar, and restaurant businesses.

In order to keep pace with its expanding customer base, Breakthru was looking for a solution to help accelerate accounts receivable (A/R) operations. Breakthru's previous customer payment portal was outdated and prone to errors, creating frustration for both internal teams and customers.

Additionally, the lack of integration with its ERP system meant Breakthru had limited visibility into payments throughout the day, making it difficult to track and manage transactions effectively.

These challenges were particularly problematic in an industry governed by strict regulations requiring rapid check processing to update customers A/R accounts. Prior to implementing a streamlined, straight through processing system, Breakthru had to resort to costly overnight check deliveries for past due accounts, adding unnecessary expenses and delays.

SUCCESS STORY SNAPSHOT

Industry: Beverage
Distribution

Location: United States &
Canada

Solutions: ETran Online
Payments, ETran Mobile &
AutoPay

Payment Methods: Check,
Credit Card & ACH



The Solution

Seeking an integrated receivables solution, Breakthru Beverage Group found FTNI's ETran A/R automation platform. With ETran's advanced payment processing automation capabilities, Breakthru was able to implement a fully-integrated online payment portal, mobile payment and AutoPay solution that seamlessly connected with its ERP and back-office systems.

"The online payment solution is integrated with our customer e-commerce site (Breakthru Now), allowing customers to conveniently place orders, monitor deliveries, and make payments—all within a single login," said Karen Stewart, Director of Financial Systems, Breakthru Beverage Group.

Breakthru has also implemented automated notifications and payments for customers. Now, customers receive weekly notices of past-due invoices or upcoming payments with a link to the payment portal. This has reduced the time spent by internal teams on reviewing payments and monitoring orders throughout the day.

In addition to the online payment solution, Breakthru implemented FTNI's mobile payment acceptance solution. Rather than handling checks manually throughout the day, Breakthru's representatives spend more time managing accounts and less time managing checks. The reps are able to easily scan in checks via the mobile application in real-time. This not only ensures that funds are deposited to bank the same day, but it also allows payments to be instantly applied to customer accounts.

The Impact

"The biggest advantage for our A/R department is that we now have immediate visibility into payments," said Stewart. "Our credit team can see exactly what has been paid and when, drastically reducing the time spent reviewing and monitoring orders throughout the day."

With over 20,000 customers actively using the online payment site, adoption of the A/R automation solutions has been successful in helping Breakthru accelerate back-office payment processing operations.

"Customers love the ease of the online payment option, and being able to access invoice and payment details," said Stewart. "They also love the ability to manage their entire account from one login."

With a successful implementation and adoption of the A/R automation solutions, Breakthru is now focusing on further expanding digital payment adoption by continuing the transition of Cash on Delivery (COD) customers to its online payment portal.

REALIZED BENEFITS

Improved payment visibility with true straight through processing

Payments are applied in real time, reducing delays and improving cash flow

Automated notifications allow the A/R team to focus on higher-value tasks instead of manual follow-ups

About FTNI, an Ascendant Company



FTNI, an Ascendant Company, accelerates the way businesses accept, process, post and manage payments. Processing millions of transactions monthly, FTNI's accounts receivable automation platform, ETran, accepts any payment method, via any payment channel—all on a single, secure, cloud-based platform. ETran seamlessly integrates current business processes, bank and merchant processor relationships, and back-office systems to modernize and automate payment processing and cash application operations. Founded in 2007, FTNI serves more than 20,000 corporate users from over 1,000 customers spanning numerous industries including Banking and Financial Services, Distribution, Insurance, Nonprofit, Property Management, Realty, Utilities, and more. For more information, visit ftni.com.