Supporting Global Business

Drop-Ship Capability and Remote Platform Management Provide Worldwide Reach in Supply and Support

Opportunity

Sometimes a simple enquiry can lead to a marked benefit for a customer across their organisation.

Several years ago a sizable telecom OEM approached VadaTech, looking for specific functionality in an AMC form factor for the next generation of their product. The platform was based on MicroTCA elements from several vendors, with the OEM carrying out system integration in-house. That enquiry led to a change in how the platform was sourced, resulting in cost savings and improved support.

Vision

The OEM had a successful product, implemented in 2U MicroTCA form factor, and were looking to update the product specification. VadaTech looked at the platform as a whole and proposed a solution that not only reduced the cost but did so in a 1U platform, halving the size and hence making the resulting product more attractive to end users.

Innovation

VadaTech offers some of the most compact and closely integrated MicroTCA chassis on the market. The product range allows customers to balance cost, size and redundancy options, so the OEM was able to achieve the required availability level in a very compact platform.

Having come up with an improved platform configuration, VadaTech then went beyond product innovation to look at the supply process. Previously, the OEM had sourced system elements from different vendors and integrated the platform themselves. But with the application code being stable and the product configuration now fixed, that integration task was not adding value to the OEM's business. On the contrary, it was using resource that could be better applied elsewhere. VadaTech took on the platform integration, drop-shipping fully integrated systems worldwide.

VadaTech Value

Since VadaTech was able to act as a 'one-stop shop', it was a relatively simple step to integrate the platform. When providing a drop-ship service, however, VadaTech recognised that the customer's reputation would rest on the company's ability to maintain product quality, in terms of both the delivered platforms and the timeliness of supply. Considerable investment went into developing appropriate production test regimes, automating integration and test, and defining processes for loading the customer

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application and managing licences, to support this business model.

As well as shipping the product worldwide, VadaTech is now called upon to help support it worldwide too. Fortunately, the MicroTCA standard and VadaTech's comprehensive implementation of the platform management aspects of that standard, help us to do this. When an end customer complained that units installed at a remote location were indicating failures, the OEM requested assistance to understand why. VadaTech engineers were able to log in to the remote monitoring facility to investigate, and a review of the sensor log for the units showed that air inlet temperatures had been excessive for several hours prior to failure. On investigation, the end customer discovered that air conditioning units had been inoperable for over half a day and the equipment subjected to excessive temperatures. This confirmed that the product was not at fault and the OEM's reputation was protected.

Looking Forward

As companies look for ways to improve margins by extracting more value from the supply chain, the option to have manufacturers integrate and drop-ship can become very attractive. This requires considerable investment on the part of the supplier to ensure all the appropriate controls are in place. Having those controls and the experience of supplying volume product worldwide, VadaTech is now finding more customers interested in this service.

VadaTech Ltd
Ocean Village Innovation Centre,
Ocean Way,
Southampton SO14 3JZ
United Kingdom
Tel: +44 2380 381982
Fax: +44 2380 381983
eusales@vadatech.co.uk
www.vadatech.co.uk