

TRANSPUTEC DELIVERS FOR SWISSPORT CARGO SERVICES



THE CLIENT

Swissport Cargo Services provides single-source air freight logistics to more than 100 airlines around the world, including major carriers such as KLM and Singapore Airlines. In 2002 it handled 2.5 metric tons in over 55 airports and generated an income of \$138million. The company delivers a seamless range of services to its customers including full export and import documentation handling, preparation of manifests, issuance of delivery orders, customs clearing and comprehensive security checks.

Every consignment of air freight is accompanied by an Air Waybill (AWB) – an instrument of air transport which serves as a receipt for the shipper. AWBs provide detailed information as well as associated documents. As part of the paper handling and document archive procedure, the AWBs used to be photocopied and then microfiched by Swissport Cargo Services, a time consuming and expensive operation.

THE BUSINESS CHALLENGE

“We were taking more than 2.5 million photocopies a year with microfiching costs exceeding £35,000. That represents a huge volume of paper and a cumbersome and expensive way to store it,” said Tony Lodder, IT Systems Manager at Swissport Cargo Services. **“Sending the documents to microfiche could take up to six weeks, quite a time lag before archived documents could be accessed.”**

Copy quality could be very poor and document retention compliance was also an issue – HM Customs stipulate that some air-freight records must be stored for as long as seven years. Both agents and airlines

OVERVIEW

The need

The company wished to replace its Air Waybill photocopying and microfiche archiving operation with a document imaging and retrieval system. The aim was to reduce paper handling, improve document image quality and enable instant retrieval at 100% accuracy.

The solution

Transputec delivered a bespoke scanning retrieval system in partnership with Cardiff Software Ltd, suppliers of the document imaging system.

The benefit

Elimination of AWB photocopying and microfiching.

- Reduced costs
- Creation of electronic archive
- Instant retrieval of documents
- Reduced storage and paper handling overheads
- Value added customer service

regularly need to access AWB documents for various purposes such as to establish proof of delivery, deal with claims, check freight charges or resolve other payment queries.

A priority was to reduce the sheer volume of paper, create an instant retrieval facility and improve document image quality. Document storage was a growing problem as filing cabinets took up valuable office space and filing itself was a particularly onerous task.

“Essentially we wanted to move towards a new era of document handling”, said Tony. “The air-freight industry is complex and heavily dependent on outdated legacy systems. A document imaging initiative would be the first step away from such a heavy dependence on paper, bring archiving procedures up to date and reduce operating costs.”

The company was put in touch with Transputec Business Solutions who scoped the company’s existing procedures, assessed the critical business challenges and proposed a project plan. The aim was to replace photocopying and microfiche with an intelligent scanning and retrieval solution based on recognition of unique AWB numbers.

THE SOLUTION

Working in partnership with Cardiff Software Ltd, leading global provider of document capture software, Transputec delivered a bespoke scanning retrieval solution. This comprised an SQL database and the programming expertise to create a search engine to read each unique AWB number with 100% accuracy.

The crux of the challenge was the development of a generic template for complex documents. “Air Waybills are generally of poor quality and the layout of data can vary significantly. That’s not helped by archaic dot matrix printouts which can often cause misaligned data on the document,” said Tony. **“We needed a solution that could deliver optimum retrieval performance – the ability to access a unique document without any margin for error. We are very pleased with the result.”**

Customer feedback

“Transputec has implemented a technology solution that will reduce costs, enable fast and accurate archiving, provide instant document retrieval and create value added customer service.”

*Tony Lodder, IT Systems Manager
at Swissport Cargo Services*

THE BENEFITS

The AWB scanning and retrieval system is enabling Swissport Cargo Services to radically reduce its photocopying and microfiche costs.

“We can see some impressive savings in terms of machine maintenance and leasing, particularly as we were using such heavy duty machines.” The company previously dealt with many thousands of pieces of paper on a daily basis but now has a database of scanned documents which can be easily handled, managed and archived.

According to Tony, the retrieval benefits are particularly welcome.

“There is tremendous potential in offering a value added service for our customers – it’s something we can actively promote.” Instead of waiting six weeks for a document to be archived, retrieval is instant and anyone can access the database of scanned AWBs from a PC desktop. As documents are online as soon as they are scanned they can be quickly and efficiently emailed to customers, together with all associated documents, in a single pdf. *“By reducing a lengthy and cumbersome procedure to a series of key strokes we can enhance customer service and bring competitive advantage.”*

This ability to respond quickly and electronically to a customer’s query represents a welcome leap forward in an industry beset with legacy systems and complex document handling procedures. *“As documentation is such a critical element of the air-freight industry the Transputec solution has helped us create value right along the business chain.”* The new system also eliminates the frustrating delays associated with selecting the correct microfiche reel, locating a microfiche reader and scanning for the correct record, a process that could sometimes take hours. The use of email to deliver AWBs also means that documentation can be simultaneously sent to multiple locations, along with an audit trail.

Tony concluded: *“Managing a high volume of paper is fast becoming an unacceptable overhead in the electronic age. Transputec has implemented a technology solution that will reduce costs, enable fast and accurate archiving, provide instant document retrieval and create value added customer service.”*

Customer feedback #2

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THE PEDIGREE

Since our inception in the mid-1980s, Transputec has had the trust of Britain's foremost IT users, including the Ministry of Justice, Samsung, Danone, Camelot, Chubb Insurance and DP-DHL/ Williams Lea to name but a few.

Vertical sector experience covering banking & finance, media, third sector, technology, retail, SMEs and health care adds further value to IT users in the form of industry-specific knowledge.

The human component

The pace of change in ICT is so fast that what was cutting edge technology just a few years ago we now need to refer to as *traditional IT* in order to differentiate it from what we're doing today and tomorrow.

Among the off-the-shelf Cloud computing products offered by Transputec are Virtual Desktop, Cloud Servers, Cloud Backup and Cloud Document Management.

Please visit <http://www.transputec.com/cloudcomputing/> for more information.

A business like Transputec is as much about its people - their experience, customer-focus and expertise - as anything else. From initial assessment to delivery of turnkey solutions and day-to-day customer care, these professionals take solutions from Transputec's hardware, software and professional services business units and ensure they're a perfect fit.

Throughout our supply chain we have exceptional relationships with the world's premier hardware and software brands, giving us a competitive edge to make everything from economies of scale to mission-critical architecture judgment calls.

ENVIRONMENT AND CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY

While Transputec might well be said to have its head in The Cloud, our corporate feet are firmly on the ground. Our Green Data Centre in Iceland boasts impeccable eco-credentials that embrace natural free cooling up to 24kWh and zero carbon footprint.

One of the biggest power consumers in any business is the hosting of their IT equipment. It runs 24/7/365 consuming vast amounts of power – every business needs to look for ways to deliver Green IT.

For a comprehensive guide see <http://www.transputec.com/green-it/>

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Transputec House
19 Heather Park Drive
Wembley
London
HA0 1SS

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+44 (0) 20 8584 1400 (Enquiries)

+44 (0) 20 8584 1440 (Support Desk)

+44 (0) 20 8584 1321 (Support Fax)

For more information please visit transputec.com
