

Delivering an Encore Performance



For Encore Forwarding, Inc. (EFI), a freight forwarder and U.S. customs broker based in Jacksonville, Florida, connecting with carriers and partners on a global scale has become essential for any transportation operation. While the company was using a proprietary Encore Track and Trace (ETT) application, for it to be effective, it needed to connect to its carriers. Descartes Global Logistics Network™ (GLN) enables EFI to interact electronically with its entire multi-modal community so there is real-time visibility with cargo. Exchanging messages through Descartes GLN makes everything much more efficient and predictable.

“Once we talked to Descartes and saw what they had to offer, we realized we didn’t need to search any further.”

Teresa Wickham, President of Encore Forwarding, Inc.

Company Profile

Encore Forwarding, Inc.
Freight Forwarding & Customs Brokerage

Descartes Solutions

Descartes Global Logistics Network™

About the Client

Encore Forwarding, Inc. (EFI) is an international and domestic freight forwarder and U.S. customs broker. The company, which was founded in 1985 and is wholly female owned, specializes in organizing the safe and efficient movement of goods for more than 600 global customers in the retail, apparel, food products, publishing, electronics, office supply and manufacturing sectors. EFI has a domestic and international network of partners and agents, and was the first to open a U.S. customs approved container freight station in Jacksonville, Florida.

Quick Overview

Challenge

The Impact Of Loose Connections

Solution

Moving To Real-time Updates

Results

- Operational Efficiency
- Timely Updates and Notifications
- Broader Visibility
- Improved Customer Service

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Challenge:

The Impact Of Loose Connections

EFI was using a proprietary track and trace system, Encore Track and Trace (ETT), yet only a few of its 20 global carriers were connected to it. And those that were connected were submitting data in various formats, leaving EFI with the time-consuming job of reformatting the data.

To check the status of shipments, two personnel (one full-time, one half-time) were responsible for going onto each carrier's Web site and entering a carrier number and bill of lading. They then had to manually update the ETT with the latest information. "This was an extremely tedious and time consuming job that had to be done daily, and was at risk for typographical errors," said Teresa Wickham, President of EFI. Adding to the challenge was the fact that people in different locations could simultaneously be checking and updating the customer information, leading to further confusion and duplicated effort.

Solution:

Moving To Real-time Updates

It was time to find a way to integrate real-time visibility with its existing, proprietary technology investments. The Descartes Global Logistics Network™ (GLN) is a multimodal network of transportation providers and their customers that facilitates the electronic interchange of logistics information. Through the GLN, global transportation providers can connect to their trading partners and seamlessly and reliably exchange information to help drive delivery performance and high levels of customer satisfaction. The Descartes GLN connects thousands of shippers with 90+ air, 30+ ocean and 1600+ truck carriers, along with regulatory agencies that include the Federal Maritime Commission and U.S., Canadian, Dutch and Indian customs agencies. Designed specifically for logistics processes and their users, the GLN handles all standards and message specifications for manufacturers, retailers and distributors.

Just 60 days after an initial information gathering session, EFI had received customer and carrier authorizations and the implementation began. "The major ocean carriers were already doing business with Descartes, but we still had to isolate the specific data we wanted to pull on each shipment and provide it to Descartes. The relevant data could then be extracted and sent to our own system for automatic updating," explains Wickham.

Results:



Operational Efficiency

Since implementing the solution, staff who previously handled manual updates can now focus their efforts on more value added tasks to improve cargo movement.



Timely Updates and Notifications

Updates now come in four times a day to the ETT, and delay notifications are automatically sent to carriers via email.



Broader Visibility

Approximately 200 people across EFI's extensive network now have access to this data through this system.



Improved Customer Service

The Descartes solution provided the visibility required to proactively provide EFI's customers information about their shipments.