DESCARTES™

Descartes Dock Appointment Scheduling™

Predictability for Inbound & Outbound Shipments

Many organizations with a distribution center (DC) or warehouse have taken the time to deploy processes and solutions that improve resource utilization, reduce the volume of paperwork and create efficiencies within their facilities. But most have not considered how to plan more effectively for their inbound shipments.

The absence of a strategic plan to address this critical part of a supply chain operation means door availability is typically not factored in, shipment arrivals are not prioritized, and carrier congestion remains a problem. These external issues amplify the lead time variability for inbound shipments and result in a lack of predictability. This makes it difficult for retailers to reduce inventory and resource levels, and minimize "shorts" on outbound shipments to their customers or stores.

Descartes Dock Appointment Scheduling™ is a collaborative solution that enables shippers, carriers and consignees to schedule dock door appointments. It streamlines the dock appointment process by distributing the responsibility for scheduling from the warehouse to carriers and suppliers. By ensuring all supply chain partners are involved in the process and have visibility into requested, scheduled and rescheduled dock appointments, this solution optimizes receiving operations for inbound shipments to a warehouse.

Features

By leveraging the power of the Descartes Global Logistics Network™ (Descartes GLN™), Descartes Dock Appointment Scheduling enables organizations to connect electronically with thousands of shippers and carriers around the world.

Online Appointment Scheduling

Carriers and vendors can book dock appointments over the Web, and monitor the status in real time. The system pre-populates and validates an appointment Web form with order and shipment details to simplify appointment scheduling. Inbound coordinators can then prioritize shipments, refuse carrier requests, or they can configure prioritization rules and constraints to automate the scheduling process.

Appointment Audit Trail

An electronic history of all appointment changes and related communication can be easily accessed by carriers and vendors. This complete history, which tracks when changes were made and by whom, simplifies dispute resolution.

Milestone Notifications

Carriers, vendors and warehouse staff are sent email notifications at different milestones within the appointment booking process. These notifications, which include a link back to the online entry, ensure that all relevant parties are in-formed when appointments are rescheduled or refused; when shipments are ready for pickup; if items are damaged; or when carriers are a no-show.

Integration with Transportation Management Systems (TMS)

Seamless integration with Descartes or third party transportation applications means carriers can simultaneously accept tenders and book appointments, automatically assign doors for both inbound/ outbound loads, and plan routes based on door availability.

Integration with Warehouse Management Systems (WMS)

Integration with WMS allows customers to electronically prepare receiving activities and allocate physical resources to unload, validate and accept the shipment into either their DC or cross dock.

Recurring Appointments

Standing appointments can be created for high volume carriers and suppliers. The ability to block off time windows for recur-ring appointments ensures a level of consistency for supply chain partners that deliver on a regular basis. Time windows can also be blocked off to accommodate for public holidays, hours of operation and other resource constraints.

Historical Data Analysis

Daily and weekly reports turn historical appointment infor-mation into actionable data that retailers can use to measure execution against plan; and ensure carriers and suppliers are meeting compliance standards.

Descartes Yard Management™

Shipping and receiving staff, gate guards and yard jockeys can now more effectively manage the movement of trailers. They can measure trailer aging, keep track of inventory in the yard and report on on-time, on-premise for loading and unloading carriers. This includes planning and recording trailer moves, in-spections and security seal changes, and maintaining an audit trail for loss prevention and government compliance programs like C-TPAT.

Compliance Tracking

Retailers can maintain an audit trail of compliance incidents, related documents and follow up communication for effective online dispute resolution. Chargebacks to carriers or suppliers can also be managed.

Benefits

Improved Inventory Turns

Optimizes the receipt of goods, including time sensitive promotional items, by scheduling delivery at days/times when shipments can be promptly received.

Optimized Hours of Service

Effective planning and resource utilization minimizes wait times for load/unload activities and return trips. Detention charges and other costs to carriers are also minimized when warehouse traffic is better managed.

Increased Warehouse Efficiency

Labor is "load leveled", reducing peak resource requirements due to spikes in deliveries unnecessarily created when ap-pointments are not scheduled and prioritized within regular working hours.

Automated Data Collection

Data can be analyzed regularly to uncover process improvement opportunities. Audit trails also provide insights into bottlenecks and trading partner compliance for dispute resolution.

Enhanced Partner Collaboration

Vendors can monitor carrier service while compliance and performance metrics can be shared with trading partners to negotiate more cost efficient contracts.

Advanced Shipment Visibility

With greater visibility into inbound shipments, retailers can better manage inventory levels. This insight into scheduled dock appointments also allows for actual lead times to be monitored against plans.

Environmental

With better planning and visibility congestion can be reduced through limiting idling in the yard and waiting for the doors on live loads.

Regulatory Compliance

By ensuring shipments are in compliance with voluntary and mandated government regulations, retailers benefit from faster customs processing, enhanced delivery performance and secure sharing of incident data.