The highly demanding and competitive nature of the supply chain industry requires proactive collaboration amongst trading partners in the air freight community. More than ever, organizations not only need to exchange data between disparate systems in an efficient manner, but also require full visibility into each and every shipment and corresponding document.

With the right solution, organizations can realize significant gains in internal efficiencies and processes, while having the foundations in place to adapt to new industry initiatives such as the IATA e-freight program. IATA has been leading the industry e-freight program aimed at taking paper out of the air cargo supply chain to reduce costs and increase efficiency for all participants.

Descartes enables forwarders and stakeholders to group air shipment interactions together in a unified construct known as e-Pouch. One of the building blocks of the Descartes Air Cargo solution suite, e-Pouch integrates with solutions for bookings, shipment monitoring, quality performance reporting and customs filing to provide a central repository that enhances electronic document exchange connections between back-office system and trading partners.

With e-Pouch, users can easily share information with the appropriate parties, automate routine interactions, flag problems at an early instance, and provide a repository for retrieval of completed deliveries. In addition to automating air shipment processes, e-Pouch provides an interface and exception management facilities to repair specific classes of data problems. In areas where structured electronic documents are not available, e-Pouch also offers document imaging services to capture original documents and insert them into the document repository in a similar fashion as paper documents.

As a web-based offering, e-Pouch provides a highly flexible and scalable solution for forwarders, without the need for costly and complex back-office integration and infrastructure investments.
Potential Benefits

Global Access to Trading Partners – The Descartes GLN provides access to one of the largest federated networks of connected transportation and logistics services providers to improve the quality and timeliness of information exchange.

Speed and Efficiency – As a fully automated electronic solution, e-Pouch expedites the process by automating document association, ensuring consistency and eliminating duplication of effort.

Improved Document Storage and Retrieval – e-Pouch serves as a central repository to quickly and easily access documents with a single click of a button.

Reduced Cost, Greater Flexibility – As a web-based solution, e-Pouch requires minimal system changes and development costs, is fast and easy to implement and eliminates the need to invest in internal infrastructure development. e-Pouch is also up-to-date and compliant with IATA regulations.

Paper-free Cargo Communication – e-Pouch is specifically designed to support paperless shipments in the air cargo industry by enabling the rapid exchange of freight information across the entire supply chain. Companies can quickly and easily reduce their environmental footprint while improving speed and accuracy.

Greater Transparency – e-Pouch’s web interface supplies all stakeholders in the freight chain with a globally accessible shipment database. As a result, all authorized stakeholders can view documents, including electronic messages, invoices, packing lists and more. This transparency enhances efficiency and productivity and speeds customs clearance, by enabling electronic data to be viewed simultaneously and re-used.

Access to Logistics Management Expertise – e-Pouch users benefit from the extensive logistics expertise provided by Descartes within its Air Shipment Management solution and beyond. By providing access to booking, messaging, monitoring and document storage on a unified platform, Descartes eliminates the need for third party integration, and ensures support for a forwarder’s future logistics needs.

Features

Descartes e-Pouch leverages the power of the Descartes Global Logistics Network (GLN), enabling organizations to electronically connect with shippers, carriers and regulatory authorities around the world.

Single Sign-on – e-Pouch users can access additional Descartes GLN services such as GF-X and Cargo 2000 via a single sign-on process. As a web-based service, e-Pouch also allows for easy integration with existing back-office systems.

Seamless Data Capture – e-Pouch offers multiple document upload options, including electronic messaging, manual capture (scanning/fax) or via other Descartes applications. This flexible solution leverages existing and developing standards for electronic business documents and supports multiple data types, including CIMP, XML, EDI, PDF and TIFF. e-Pouch also offers a forms rendering feature to convert messaging into appropriate document formats.

Usability – e-Pouch’s user-friendly web-based interface enables easy access to search, view and edit capabilities; as well as populates information into multiple documents automatically. Built-in quality checks and alerts also notify users if documents or fields are missing or incomplete, while event-driven triggered action ensures document sequencing meets requirements.

Archiving – e-Pouch enables easy electronic archiving, as well as readily available access to historic data for up to 90 days online and up to seven years as a Descartes value added service.

Administration – e-Pouch offers a range of advanced administrative features that improve efficiency and security, including:

- Access Control – Restricts document visibility based upon defined roles of parties
- Profiles and Business Relationships – A nomination scheme for parties to nominate other parties they have direct relationships with for the shipment process
- AWB Re-Use – Enables airway bills to be re-used by applying rules for various waybill states (e.g. rejected, confirmed, cancelled)