



W.T. SEA-AIR LIMITED
WE KNOW OUR WAY AROUND



“4S eTrans has been the central piece of the whole landscape of WT's IT applications. The technological infrastructure and the web-centric approach with which the 4S eTrans application has been designed as early as in 2002 has actually made it possible for us to conceive and deploy newer add-ons with least worry on scalability and stability of the 4S eTrans. It has proved to be a very sustainable and stable platform that is the core of our business transactions. At any point of time more than 200 global users access the application directly apart from another 100 internal queries being passed on through other application and we have no performance issues or whatsoever.”

Natarajan Ganesan,
Global Business Systems Manager, W.T.AIR-SEA LIMITED.



The Company

The WT group of companies had been established more than 40 years back in UK and Hong Kong, offering freight and distribution services over air and sea modes of transport across the borders. The group offers wide range of services in the 3PL including Freight Forwarding, Customs Clearance Bureau, Warehousing with bonded facilities, Courier service, value added services and installations. It has over 40 countries that have the operations spanned across from where goods mainly garments, footwear and cosmetics are imported in to UK and that in turn are distributed/delivered to customers. The company turns over close to 150 Million pounds of trade every year with their own offices set-up in the Far East and HK apart from UK, with agents and partners/associates supporting from other countries. The transportation of goods happen in multi-modal fashion including road imports and also distribution for delivery within UK with combinations of two or all three modes involved. There are also exports performed from its operations apart from cross-trade operations from one site to another, but without routing through the UK.

The Challenge and Solution

WT Sea-Air Ltd went live in 2003 with the initial version of 4S eTrans, a flagship product from Four Soft for their freight forwarding operations. In the first phase, they implemented it for Air-Imports operations in to UK and later expanded to Sea-Imports. The implementation was a huge success and WT's operations have grown YoY by about 20%, a substantial part they would account to their IT focus with 4S eTrans, being the backbone application.

4S eTrans is used by WT Sea-Air Ltd in a very strategic manner after performing quite some Business Process Re-engineering. According to the business process, the exporting countries mostly run by WT's associates have their own shipment processing systems that are versatile and would send all the shipment documentation through fax/ email to a Back Processing Office that WT has set-up in collaboration with their IT partner, Blaze Dream Technologies Pvt Ltd., in Chennai, India. Here, every month, as many as 9000 shipment information are meticulously keyed into 4S eTrans, the Freight Forwarding back bone system, after enough securitization in validating the data. The time zone advantage, with India ahead of UK timings lets the UK staff use 4S eTrans to manage valid imports to be performed efficiently, and distribute the goods directly or through their warehouses with high productivity.

With 4S eTrans in the center of the landscape of number of applications and add-ons that WT has developed to work in tandem, the product is used both tactically to perform day-to-day operation, and strategically as a source of all relevant data. Complete details of transactions are captured in, to perform analysis and reporting, and thus helping them to negotiate better contracts with their suppliers, carriers and customers. Splitting the operations performed on the application strategically across the importing terminals, exporting partners and the Chennai BPO helps them to allot and assign work to each set of user that is best capacitated to perform each task, in the most cost-efficient manner.

Important, minimal and mandatory information of Shipment that is entered in UK, ensures that the UK staff focus on customer service operations, trouble shoot where required, work with customers in discovering newer areas for improvement and thus ensure that the cost is squeezed out of the supply chain and not just passed on to the next element. IT is used as a strategic weapon to not only retain existing customers, increase the share of their business, but also to win new customers.

The mastermind behind the IT renovation, Mr. Natarajan Ganesan, Global Business Systems Manager, is able to cite many cases where clearly the IT strategy with 4S eTrans as the central piece, has helped them win new customers and increase revenue share with existing clients. It was made possible with value-added add-ons interacting with 4S eTrans supported by low cost but efficient resources in their Chennai BPO center to ensure data integrity, data availability, provide track & trace function to their customers and agents, by deploying new add-on applications on top of 4S eTrans and thus leveraging the structured and valid data lying underneath.

Mr. Natarajan Ganesan also adds, "The decision to go for an exclusive BPO at Chennai has proved to be hugely successful with substantial cost savings compared to the next best course of alternative. This is made possible only because the technological superiority that 4S eTrans has. We would continuously increase the number of users as the business needs it."