

# oceanmarkets

Up to 15 per cent of global container shipments are initiated using the INTTRA platform by over 12,000 companies in 80 countries, writes Anna Game-Lopata.



INTTRA is the creation of leading container shipping lines, among them Maersk and CMA CGM, to streamline and standardise the common processes and transactions involved in container shipping.

The company builds and operates a global, multi-carrier, multi-channel, e-commerce platform, and drives e-commerce penetration across the industry. "The basic exchange of value is global standards, streamlined interoperability in exchange for increased electronic information," says US based INTTRA vice president, Commercial, John DeBenedette. "This innovative formula has fuelled tremendous growth, from zero in 2000 to over 10 million containers in 2007.

For a company to truly be innovative, DeBenedette maintains its people need to think 'big picture' and outside the box, which requires a high performance culture. "INTTRA realised years ago that a supportive, productive team environ-

ment can't flourish if employees don't understand their goals or are operating in a self-interested fashion," he tells Logistics Magazine. "Departments that operate in functional silos and ignore the larger company's mission and strategies tend to undermine the organisation as a whole. This does not foster innovation."

Instead, by utilising high performance teams, INTTRA teaches employees a set of behaviors and skills that empower them to become highly effective and collaborative. They function as a team with a new collective mindset about INTTRA's success, rather than individual or departmental agendas. "An HPT-focused culture increases clarity of a team's business goals and improves the working atmosphere," DeBenedette says. "This creates an environment that fosters innovation and the exchange of new ideas for the betterment of the organisation."

According to DeBenedette,

INTTRA's visibility tools will expand the flow of information for shippers and forwarders worldwide helping them manage their business, share information, and control costs. "We are uniquely positioned to provide powerful visibility solutions due to our vast multi-carrier standardised data stream," he says. "In summer 2008, INTTRA will announce an exception management visibility tool with alerts to manage outbound and inbound ocean shipments. These alerts will help shippers quickly find and prioritise shipments that are not moving as planned, so they can follow up in time to recover by redirecting stock from another location or shipment."

INTTRA's soon to be announced INTTRA-LINK BL exemplifies a new multi-carrier e-commerce tool that will serve the needs of the industry. "Strong demand for Bill of Lading data from customers and carriers has resulted in INTTRA-LINK BL, which will provide enhanced data and financial processing support," DeBenedette explains. "I-LINK BL will allow shippers and forwarders to update ERP systems with actual shipment details as executed by the carrier, and will provide 'one-stop' access to detailed charge information needed to feed freight audit/payment processes and systems."

"In addition, secure procedures provide assurance to shippers and carriers that data is protected."

INTTRA director sales Australia/NZ George Pin says the company will add more e-commerce tools for the global ocean shipping market to improve data quality, efficient processing of shipments, and increase visibility across the organisation's global multi-carrier platform. "The adoption of standardised electronic processes for ocean shipments, in markets around the world will con-

tinue to grow, advancing the quality of communication and ease of data transfer throughout the global supply chain," he emphasises.

Responding to customer, shipper, forwarder, and carrier feedback, INTTRA recently introduced a new version of its Web-based Shipping Instruction application, i-ACT SI. "INTTRA's ACT SI has powerful new functionality, is faster and easier to use, and as a Web-based product is available 24/7," Pin says. "Users manage all Shipping Instructions (SIs) in one place

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which improves workflow and helps meet shipping cut-off times."

"This application is free," Pin enthuses. "It doesn't require installation and there's no software to download. Shippers and forwarders can access i-ACT SI easily; all they need is a computer, internet access and an INTTRA user ID."

"Another key feature is the 'one-click' data import that allows users to transfer data from Excel spreadsheets, reducing entry time, errors, and allowing users to securely share shipment information with trading partners."

In the ever expanding globalisation of the supply chain, multi-language solutions like ACT SI have seen unprecedented adoption rates.

"Increasing demand has also been fostered by the ubiquity of reliable internet access," Pin says.

"As more enterprises concentrate on their core competencies they continue to look for solutions that can be easily integrated into their supply chain management process."