



AIR PRODUCTS SHRINKS ITS BOOKING PROCESS TO A SHORT STORY WITH INTRTA ACT BOOKING 2.0

CASE STUDY

Background

Based in Allentown, Pennsylvania, Air Products (NYSE:APD) has 21,000 employees and operations in over 40 countries. It serves customers in industrial, energy, technology and healthcare markets around the world with atmospheric gases, process and specialty gases, performance materials, and equipment and services.

Producing and delivering industrial gases and specialty chemicals globally presents a unique set of challenges. Unlike most products, gases must be compatible with other materials on board—both on a container level and a ship level—and shipping conditions (such as temperature) can be critical. This can affect the loading of the ship itself. For example, certain products can't be stowed near flammable materials and some materials can't be shipped below decks.

This means Air Products must provide very detailed information to carriers when booking shipments, which can be a time-consuming, labor-intensive process. Since shipments are booked six to eight weeks ahead of the sailing date, there are often changes that can impact delivery to customers by the time the ship is scheduled to depart. For the solution, Air Products turned to INTRTA's newly enhanced Internet booking tool, INTRTA ACT (I-ACT) Booking 2.0. Besides making it easier to enter booking details to all INTRTA carriers, I-ACT Booking 2.0 generates automatic e-mail notifications when a booking is sent and confirmed, as well as changes to a shipment. This saves time because it eliminates the need to follow-up on bookings with carriers via e-mail and phone.

Erica S. Stoyer, Transportation Planner at Air Products couldn't agree more because she uses I-ACT Booking 2.0 every day. Ms. Stoyer explains, "This efficient and interactive tool really helped us out. We can respond to and use booking information in a more specific way—and it's less subject to interpretation. Plus, there are fewer errors because we don't have to manually call or write in details for every booking."

"With templates to standardize the booking process, it only takes 12 to 24 hours to get carrier confirmations, where it used to take 48 hours."

– Erica S. Stoyer, Transportation Planner, Air Products



CHALLENGE

Booking ocean cargo for Air Products' industrial gases and specialty chemicals was inefficient, requiring excessive time and manpower. Air Products needed to streamline the process to improve the flow of their products for timely delivery to their customers.

SOLUTION

With enhanced I-ACT Booking 2.0 from INTRTA, Air Products closed the information gap between their systems and ocean carriers with a direct connection that saves effort and time – while reducing the chance for manual errors.

RESULTS

- Air Products has improved the speed and accuracy of its industrial gases and specialty chemicals bookings and interacts more closely with ocean carriers to save shipping time.
- Air Products now gets confirmations back from carriers in half the time to avoid late shipments and improve customer satisfaction.



INTRA's I-ACT Booking: Carrier confirmations in half the time

Submitting bookings, requesting and tracking carrier confirmations, and monitoring bookings throughout the entire cycle is a one-step process with I-ACT Booking 2.0. Standardized templates allow repeat bookings with a single keystroke, while minimizing the chance for data entry errors. Ms. Stoyer explains, "Before, we had to start the booking process from scratch for every shipment. Now, we can create templates once for each material and then re-use them whenever we make similar shipments because almost all the details are already completed. This improves efficiency by reducing booking entry time."

Using INTRA confirmation numbers, planners can track qualifying bookings from the start to the completion of documentation to final bills of lading. And this data can be shared from one INTRA product to another for improved visibility throughout an operation.

Hitting the books quickly

After a successful 30-day trial with select users and sites, Air Products was ready to roll out I-ACT Booking 2.0 across its operation. With just a short two-day training session, Air Products' employees were able to start booking shipments more efficiently. Ms. Stoyer notes, "Anyone in our U.S. offices who is authorized to schedule a booking uses I-ACT Booking 2.0. I can't imagine doing bookings without it."

"We're seeing a lot of benefits now, and we're going to use more reports and tracking down the line. I-ACT Booking 2.0 could help us find new ways to work more efficiently, especially with customers on the receiving end of the shipments"

– Erica S. Stoyer, Transportation Planner, Air Products

Close the book on complicated bookings

See for yourself how INTRA's enhanced I-ACT Booking 2.0 can simplify and speed up your global carrier bookings—no matter what type of materials you ship. Contact your INTRA Sales Representative or click on "Resource Center" at www.intra.com

Data accuracy is critical when interacting with carriers. I-ACT Booking 2.0 helps ensure that our booking data is accurate at every step of the process to save time and meet expectations.

– Erica S. Stoyer, Transportation Planner, Air Products

Learn More

For more information on how INTRA can help you streamline your shipping documentation business process, contact your INTRA Sales Representative or access other collaterals by clicking on "Resource Center" at www.intra.com.

About INTRA

INTRA is a leading global provider of e-commerce solutions to the ocean freight industry. INTRA professionals work with over 30 leading carriers and their customers, to streamline and standardize their shipping processes worldwide through a network of over 20,000 corporate locations. Over 260,000 container orders are initiated on the INTRA platform each week, representing more than 10 percent of global ocean container trade.

