



## INTRTRA LINK SOLUTION

## CASE STUDY

### Challenge

The process of booking a container shipment is fairly standard in most ports around the world, including those in South China. But it is far more complex in Shanghai and other ports in North China.

Carriers there accept bookings only from appointed cargo agents with a Class A license. Instead of just providing the carriers with estimated time of arrival, estimated time of departure, container type and quantity, cargo agents must submit detailed preload information, including detailed breakdown of cargoes, detailed cargo description and consignment details, that is normally required only a few days before the scheduled shipment, along with the booking request for vessel space and container reservation, export declaration and pre-loading manifest declaration.

This unique booking process created a heavier workload for Shanghai-based Sinotrans Eastern Company Ltd., which is part of Sinotrans Group, China's largest international freight forwarder and NVOCC. Sinotrans is also the nation's second largest shipping agency. In addition, it operates a large vessel fleet, totaling 8 million deadweight tons.

Different booking procedures used by different carriers – even in the same port – made life even more complicated for Tang XueChun, the company's general manager. Some carriers accepted INTRTRA's standard booking message format that supports essential booking information, but others insisted that cargo agents provide full information captured in detailed paper documents. In order to comply, Ms. Tang and her team had to prepare paper documents, known as Ten-Ply Forms. These forms include details such as the cargo description, the names and addresses for the shipper, consignee and notify party for each consignment, the consignment details and the payment terms. Also, with consolidated cargo, Sinotrans had to provide a separate Ten-Ply Form for each LCL shipment.

Sinotrans had to check every single paper booking manually to ensure that it conformed to the carrier's requirements. It faxed the Ten-Ply Form to the carriers, but sometimes the carriers would come back asking for clarifications because the fax was not clear or there was some other problem. As a result, Sinotrans staff had to spend extra time on phone calls and re-faxing the carriers.

Besides the booking information for the carriers, cargo agents must provide the data required by Chinese customs for the export declaration well in advance of the shipment date. This data must be complete and accurate. In order to avoid any discrepancies, Sinotrans staff had to compare this data with the booking information -- another time-consuming process.

All of this paperwork absorbed a lot of staff time and ate into Sinotrans's profits. In addition, it faced the possibility of a financial penalty from the carriers and even a "No Load" order from Customs if there was a problem with the documentation.



### CHALLENGE

Sinotrans needed a solution that would help them address the unique booking requirements of North China and the different booking procedures used by each carrier. There was very little standardization and the booking submission process required a significant amount of manual intervention.

### SOLUTION

With INTRTRA Link SO Sinotrans has been able to streamline their documentation process. Now they can do a single electronic submission via EDI and it can be sent to the carrier for booking, to Customs for export declaration and to other parties for manifest submission. This has helped SINOTRANS increase efficiency and grow revenue.

### RESULTS

- Saved over 80 man hours per week
- Increased annual container volume by 50,000
- Annual revenue increase of \$300,000 (US)



## INTRTRA's Solution: Shipping Order

To help Sinotrans and other customers in North China, in 2006 INTRTRA created a new product called Shipping Order. Shipping Order translates the booking message into the format that fits the booking needs of individual carriers. This allows shippers to meet the requirements of those carriers that previously required the Ten-Ply Form as well as those that used the standard booking format.

"Sinotrans no longer needs to prepare separate documents for different carriers and can standardize its booking process," says Kelvin Mao, general manager for INTRTRA China and Korea. "The same piece of information can be sent to the carrier for booking, to Customs for export declaration and to other relevant parties for pre-loading manifest submission. This guarantees the integrity and consistency of the data."

Ms. Tang chose Shipping Order because it provides a multiple portal connection with carriers, ship agents and third parties. "One single integration with Shipping Order linked us to multiple carriers and at the same time addressed the requirements of different carriers," says the 17-year Sinotrans veteran. "It saved both overall operation and internal processing time," she adds.

INTRTRA offers Shipping Order in two formats – Desktop SO and SO Link. Sinotrans chose Link SO, which offers direct EDI connections, but other agents have chosen Desktop, for preparation and submission via PCs.

### Benefits

By standardizing the booking process, Shipping Order has reduced confusion and the potential for errors. For example, Sinotrans can now provide detailed booking information such as cargo volume, payment terms and exact package codes in specific data segments rather than as remarks. This saves back and forth clarification. Shipping Order has also smoothed the booking flow, and allows Sinotrans to cater more effectively to the needs of different carriers.

Carriers are happy with Shipping Order, too, because it streamlines their booking process. It reduces paperwork, cuts down on data entry and improves data quality. That makes the whole process go faster and more smoothly.

Thanks to Shipping Order, Sinotrans saved 80 man-hours per week in Shanghai in 2008, where each man-hour costs about three dollars. It also observed a 10 percent increase in volume, which was approximately 50,000 more containers than in 2007 and a total revenue gain of \$300,000.

Besides Shanghai, Sinotrans also uses Shipping Order in Suzhou, Wuxi, Nanjing and Dalian. It plans to add other ports over time.

### Learn More

For more information on how INTRTRA can help you streamline your shipping documentation business process, contact your INTRTRA Sales Representative or access other collaterals by clicking on "Resource Center" at [www.intrtra.com](http://www.intrtra.com).

### About INTRTRA

INTRTRA is a leading global provider of e-commerce solutions to the ocean freight industry. INTRTRA 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 INTRTRA platform each week, representing more than 10 percent of global ocean container trade.

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– Tang XueChun, General Manager, Sinotrans Eastern Company Ltd.

