

BEST PRACTICE FACT SHEET

(No. 12)

Streamlining the transport chains in the port of Rotterdam with Port Infolink



The primary objective of Port Infolink is the optimization of the processes in the transport chains that run through the port of Rotterdam by means of on-line information and communication services to boost the efficiency levels of its customers. This port-wide ICT platform is an essential instrument for streamlining the transport chains in the port of Rotterdam.

Main Achievements

- Port Infolink has shown in the last 5 years to be able to grow to 3000 users in and around the port sending approximately 1.25 million messages every month.
- The PCS assists in overcoming the problems related to the exchange of information, e.g. different standards used, between the intermodal transport actors thus facilitates the information flows, produces significant cost savings to its users and boosts the efficiency of the intermodal transport chain

Organisation

The Board of Directors consists of directors from big market players, Customs and Port Authority. Port Infolink is an independent enterprise with the Port Authority of Rotterdam being the sole shareholder.

Port Infolink is a market-driven service provider with a port-wide focus. The organisation has three compact departments:

- Marketing and Sales;
- Product development;
- Operations.

Implementation date

2002 to present, on-going development

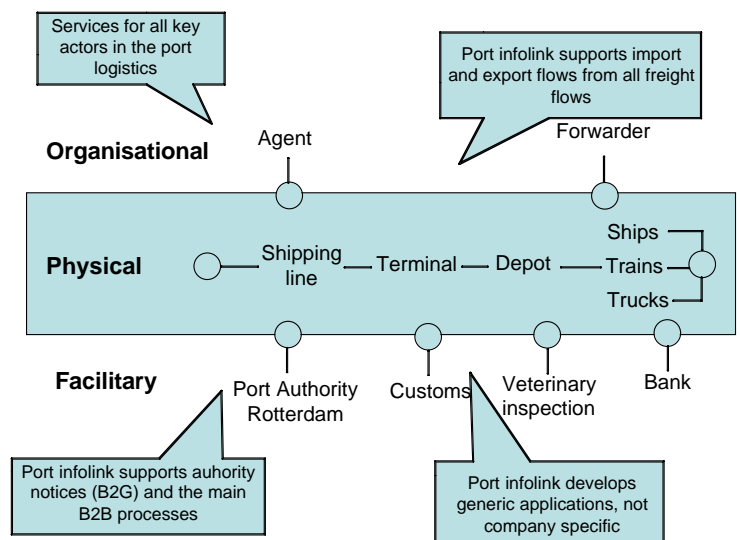
Starting Point

The port of Rotterdam is the largest sea port in Europe and one of the busiest worldwide with a wide number of intermodal transport chain actors interacting within the port. In projects "Vrachtbeurs" and "PROMISE" customers and government of the port demonstrated the need for the development of a Port Community System (PCS). In response Deltalinqs, Customs (Douane) and the Port Authority of Rotterdam founded Port Infolink in August 2002. The port community system covers the whole spectrum of transport modes that meet at the port enabling modal integration from ship line to hinterland by short sea, barge, rail and road.

Solution

Port Infolink's scope of work distinguishes three layers:

- On the organisational layer are the (shipping) agents and forwarders. Port Infolink provides services for all main players in the port and supports import and export flows of all freight transport.
- The physical layer consists of shipping companies, terminals, depots, ships, barge, rail and truck operators.
- On the facility layer are the Port Authority of Rotterdam, Customs, veterinary inspection, insurance companies and banks. Port Infolink supports governmental reporting (B2G) and important B2B processes.



The Port Community System enables all the links within the port of Rotterdam's logistics chain to efficiently exchange information with one another.

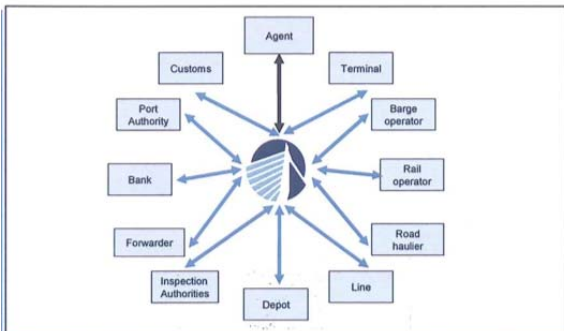
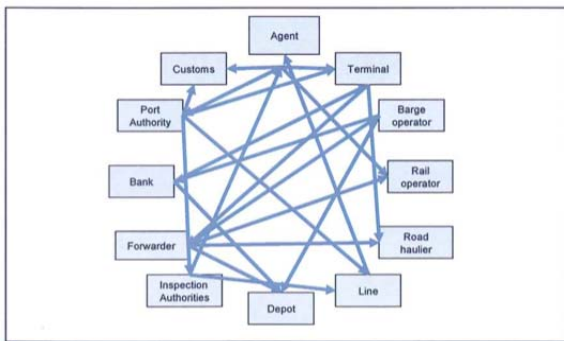
The Port Community System comprises of three basic parts:

- Information and communication services;
- A platform that contains all the facilities that are commonly used for all the services;

- A central database where all the information that is exchanged through Port Infolink by the customers (companies and government bodies) comes together.

Within the platform itself, a distinction is made between three kinds of tools:

- Domain tools that are specifically geared to the port, such as, for example, reference tables containing vessel names. All the Port Infolink services make use of these tools;
- Generic tools with general basic functions – such as security, authorization, management and ‘logging’ – that make sure the various services of Port Infolink (continue) to run properly;
- Implementation tools that provide the cornerstones for the realization of new services.



Results and experiences

The following services have been implemented (November 2007) :

- Agent infolink: services for cargo handling agents
- Authority infolink: services for government agencies
- Barge infolink: services for barge sector operators
- Customs infolink: services for customs
- Depot infolink: services for container depots
- Forwarder infolink: services for forwarders
- Rail infolink: services for rail operators
- Road infolink: services for road transport
- ShipLine infolink: services for shipping lines
- ShortSea infolink: services for shortsea shipping co.
- Terminal infolink: services for terminals

In close consultation with the port business community, Port infolink constantly aims to expand and improve its services. The following services were under development:

- Cargo information - Bulk
- Notification waste disposal
- Notification dangerous goods

- Statement harbour dues
- Transport order

These PCS services benefit the market via a variety of cost reductions:

- Decrease of costs in engagement;
- Decrease of costs in ICT management;
- Decrease of labor costs, as a result of less mistakes that need to be corrected;
- Overview in the operational processes;
- Better management information;
- Increase productivity and decrease of labor costs;
- Improved services to customers;
- Improved accessibility for the users;
- Decrease of phone and fax costs;
- Decrease of paper costs;
- Increase number of checks;
- Quicker scheduling of containers;
- Re-use of data;
- Minimal interruptions of the logistic process;
- Quicker working and cost efficiency;
- Better use of hinterland transport capacity;
- Quicker turn-around time in the port;
- Better overview of the state of the process.

Main benefits

Added value for businesses:

- enhanced efficiency
- lower costs
- higher service level
- better planning
- quicker turnaround times
- fewer mistakes

Added value for society:

- Multimodal transport becomes more competitive, potentially leading to a reduction of environmental harm.
- Competitiveness of Rotterdam as mainport in The Netherlands and related employment, economic growth, etc.

Main success factors

- Strong logistics knowledge which enables Port Infolink to be accepted by the community.
- Active and intense consultation of the actors in the port community, in order to develop only those messages that are considered important by the various actors.
- Neutral position and confidentiality and security of data.
- The system is available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week for all parties involved.

More Information

Contact:

Mr Marten van der Velde
 Tel: +31 (0) 10 252 22 00
 Fax: +31 (0) 10 252 22 50
 E-mail: info@portinfolink.com
 Web-site : www.portinfolink.com

