



Captaris
RightFax

CASE STUDY

Western Ports Transportation Drives Success with RightFax and LibertyNET

"Using the integrated solution, we save hundreds of hours per month...the time saved also computes to thousands of dollars saved every month." —Gary Casey, Western Ports Transportation

OVERVIEW

Western Ports Transportation is not hindered by speed limits—at least when it comes to customer service. Fast, up-to-the minute shipment reporting is a valued customer service and competitive edge. To get there, Western Ports transformed its shipment tracking process from a time-consuming paper based hassle to a timely, electronic convenience.

BACKGROUND

Western Ports Transportation, Inc. (www.westernports.com) is a leading intermodal and drayage provider in the Pacific Northwest. It works to provide safe and timely delivery of shipments between rail and steamship lines and manufacturers and consumers.

Western Ports consists of 20 full-time employees and 100 contract truck operators. As a team, it is committed to providing the "highest standard of service" for nearly 400 customers across the Country. To sustain this commitment, the company supports a full-time safety and compliance department familiar with all areas of Department of Transportation (DOT) regulation. Also, Western Ports is in full compliance with all DOT regulations and maintains the highest safety rating that can be assigned by the DOT.

Going into its fifteenth year of operation, Western Ports maintains offices in Seattle and Vancouver, Washington.

THE CHALLENGE

To track the status of shipments from pickup to delivery, Western Ports handled a large volume of paper based transactions. The file storage and retrieval system involved hundreds of papers and boxes and the faxing process required hands-on printing and feeding.

Every day, the company used fax machines to send as many as 100 operations-related documents. Among the materials distributed: status reports, delivery receipts, billing statements and other information.

"It is imperative that supporting documentation is delivered to customers quickly," Gary Casey, Information Systems Manager for Western Ports Transportation, said. For instance, notifying customers of potential charges over and above normal delivery charges must be handled efficiently. "When drivers call to advise about delays, notification of billing for additional charges needs to be sent in real-time," Casey said. "Customers need that information as soon as it is available."

While some data was best obtained en route, other requests called for information after the delivery. Customers often requested supporting documentation on orders anywhere from a week to a year old, according to Casey. "Since hard copies were kept in a warehouse with shelves upon shelves of boxes, we'd have to dig through hundreds of files,"

he explained. "The older requests got, the farther back in the files they were." Finding a specific document would often take more than 30 minutes. "It was time-consuming and a huge delay to our customers who may have their own clients on the phone waiting for the information," Casey said.

When it came to sending the information, employees often found themselves in a fax traffic jam. "They would have to print the document, walk to the printer to pick it up, walk to a fax machine, wait, dial numbers, feed, wait, dial again... There was congestion at fax machine, you could be lined up two or three people deep," Casey said.

Paper heavy processes meant many staff members spent the majority of their days tracking paperwork associated with every shipment. It also meant delays in getting supporting documentation to customers.

"Western Ports realized we needed to move from paper to electronic systems to best serve our customers and remain a step ahead of the competition," Casey said. This included the storage of incoming fax documents in an imaging system. Further benefit would be available when documents were linked with back office data, so all shipping information could be retrieved quickly.

During the research process, Casey compared three fax systems and five imaging systems. "I shopped around," he said. "We needed solutions that would fit our needs, but also fit a budget. In this niche of trucking, every penny counts."

THE SOLUTION

Fortunately, two industry-leading solutions proved to be worth every penny, according to Casey. "The cost of RightFax and LibertyNET combined was half the cost of just one imaging system we considered," he said.

And savings were returned in more than dollars and cents. "Using the integrated solution, we save hundreds of hours per month." Casey estimated. "Again, the time saved also computes to thousands of dollars saved every month."

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Captaris RightFax is the proven market leader in enterprise fax and e-document delivery. It achieves significant cost reductions by integrating and automating the flow of a full range of fax, paper and electronic documents and data. LibertyNET, from Liberty Information Management Services (Liberty IMS), is a scalable, comprehensive product suite for the capture, storage, management and delivery of scanned documents and other digital assets. LibertyNET enables transportation companies to reduce costs by automating tasks and improving productivity.

The solutions were recommended and installed by TechLine Communications, a Seattle-based systems integrator and professional services firm specializing in the development and implementation of information management and enhanced messaging systems.

"TechLine knows our needs and offers exceptional knowledge regarding the products," Casey said. "TechLine's implementation and support of the LibertyNET imaging system coupled with the RightFax network fax server has streamlined our record keeping by threefold."

Using RightFax e-document delivery and LibertyNET e-document management, Western Ports receives and indexes images to be easily filed or automatically distributed. Customer service requests are handled faster and more efficiently. Shipment information is available to employees 24/7.

"Now," Casey illustrated, "while a customer is on the phone we can access the electronic images in LibertyNET and fax them to the customer using RightFax. We've had customers say, 'Oh my! Here it is and I haven't even gotten off the phone yet.'"

With RightFax Enterprise Server, users easily fax documents from Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, LibertyNET and a proprietary software application used to handle dispatching.

Employees no longer need to leave their desks to sort through boxes or files or walk to a fax machine. "It's been a great system for us," Casey said. "We've reduced the time to reply to customers from 30 minutes to two minutes—basically, in real-time. I can't say enough about what a huge time-saving system it has been for us."

Casey also had plenty to say about other useful features and functions of the combined solution:

- **Dependability** - "Is there anything better than 100 percent uptime? Reliability has been excellent. Any issues have been hardware, not software, problems."
- **Scalability** - "Both RightFax and LibertyNET are modular – we didn't have to buy the full-blown system in one sitting, a necessity with other solutions that can be cost-prohibitive. RightFax and LibertyNET can grow with us in the future, but for now, the systems are serving us well."
- **Functionality** - "RightFax and LibertyNET are easy-to-use. In comparison to other fax systems, RightFax seemed to be the easiest to install, manage and maintain. For LibertyNET, it's easy to add new folders or change indexing and document types."

RightFax has also enabled automated communication, according to Casey. "We work in an environment that keeps close tabs on the cost of fuel. Often, fuel surcharges must be added to normal transportation charges," he said. "With RightFax, I simply import my address book, create the document, choose addresses and press 'send.'" He added: "I can even schedule overnight delivery for convenience in not tying up the fax line."

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Casey also described training others on the systems as "extraordinarily simple." He explained: "I was pleasantly surprised that both products integrated practically seamlessly in the Citrix metaframe solution. Training on RightFax and LibertyNET as the first time we were able to introduce new software applications easily via remote training with Citrix—no more traveling to conduct sessions."

THE RESULTS

"Western Ports receives high return on investment from both RightFax and LibertyNET," Casey summarized. "I couldn't even put a number on the improved customer service and convenience—it's excellent."

He also said savings from using the joint solution have been redirected to improve other technology systems. Casey concluded: "RightFax and LibertyNET continue to pay for themselves every day."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Captaris - is a leading provider of Business Information Delivery solutions that integrate, process and automate the flow of messages, data and documents. Captaris produces a suite of proven products and services, in partnership with leading enterprise technology companies, delivered through a global distribution network. Captaris has installed over 80,000 systems in 44 countries with 93 of the Fortune 100 using the company's award-winning products and services to reduce costs and increase the performance of critical business information investments. For more information please contact us at www.captaris.com or call +1.520.320.7000.

TechLine Communications - is a premier systems integrator and professional services firm specializing in the design, and implementation of enhanced messaging and information management tools. It works closely with clients to automate and streamline key business processes, including document management and information delivery.

Founded in 1993, TechLine has the experience of hundreds of successful implementations and years of continuous relationships supporting its customers. For more information, please contact: www.techlineinc.com or (206) 527-3450, Ext. 4.

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