



# FRANS MAAS

An International leader in Freight Forwarding, Frans Maas (UK) Limited handles over 2000 delivery notes per day. The retrieval of a specific delivery note is a common requirement. A likely scenario is that a customer may have a query regarding the delivery. As all delivery notes were previously held in a paper format, the Frans Maas (UK) Limited staff would be faced with a number of problems.

- Slow and difficult retrieval of delivery notes, sometimes taking days to locate a specific document
- Waste of employees time searching for documents
- Frustrated customers awaiting copies of delivery notes
- Potential for lost delivery notes
- Cost of storage space for delivery notes



Frans Maas (UK) Limited chose the DataStore<sup>®</sup>32 solution to archive all delivery notes to enable instant document retrieval. To enable faster indexing, Frans Maas (UK) Limited took the decision to barcode their delivery notes, thus eliminating manual keying.

Once a delivery note is scanned, the barcode is recognised and a bespoke macro incorporated within the DataStore solution reads a database and picks up all the index values, making it retrievable for a Frans Maas (UK) Limited user.

## The Process

A Customer signs the delivery note and the driver takes all PoD's back to the depot. The delivery notes are scanned and indexed using the barcode reference creating an electronic file. Overnight the files are downloaded to the central server held at head office. Within 24 hours of scanning, all delivery notes from the depots are held centrally on the server for instant retrieval when required. Users can then proceed to locate the delivery note from the DataStore system.

## Access via Internet

It was decided that users could access the DataStore solution through their Intranet via a traditional browser. Users are given a user name and password and by inputting search criteria, users are immediately presented with an image of the delivery note. Users can then print, email or fax the delivery note to the Customer within seconds.

*"We are now working with Hitec to customise the browser front-end and rather than limiting access to our Intranet we will provide access for both the staff of Frans Maas (UK) Limited and Customers on the company Internet." Says Nic Woods, Frans Maas (UK) Limited Assistant ICT Manager.*

## Benefits Include:

- huge improvement in Customer Service
- increased Employee productivity
- cost savings
- Immediate access to information
- Secure retention of documentation

Discussions are under-way to expand the solution to cover the other depots throughout Central and Eastern Europe.

Frans Maas (UK) Limited is part of the wider Koninklijke Frans Maas Groep N.V. which is based in Venlo, the Netherlands. Founded in 1890 it specialises today in international freight forwarding and logistics solutions - the movement of freight by land, sea and air, plus a wide range of storage and associated activities. Combined with an in-depth knowledge of its clients' own business operations, these strengths enable Frans Maas to provide full logistical services with an openness and transparency that keeps the client informed and in control.

The group offers these services through a close-knit network of offices and terminals throughout Europe. All offices are connected by the very latest in I.C.T. systems. Strategic alliances with major service suppliers further enhance the group's services in North and South America, the Far East and Pacific Rim.

In total the group employs around 5,825 skilled employees across 175 locations in 25 countries, and in 1999 had a net turnover of €700.3 million.

Frans Maas' International Freight Forwarding sector performs groupage transport, the collection and distribution of general cargo, part load and truck load, and related activities such as warehousing, customs formalities and administrative processing. In addition to road transport, Frans Maas offers its customer airfreight and ocean shipping services. Outside Europe, Frans Maas works on an exclusive basis with intercontinental partners.

In combination with international freight forwarding, Frans Maas offers a series of value added logistics services. These services add value to the goods and goods flows of Frans Maas' customers. They vary in complexity from repackaging to subassembly and other customer-specific processes. Value added logistics include Platform Logistics, European Distribution Centres and Dedicated Orders. Value added logistics comprise: Transport Optimisation, Warehouse Management, Processing and Material Handling Management. Frans Maas centralises the goods flows of one or more pan-European businesses at European Distribution Centres (EDCs), making the goods customer or country specific at the latest possible stage in the value chain.

After finishing, the goods are efficiently distributed through Frans Maas' European network to customers and end users. Frans Maas helps its pan-European customers reduce their stocks to a minimum, cut their overhead costs and decrease the time to market. Every one of Frans Maas' EDCs operates state-of-the-art management information systems to match supply with demand.

The main benefits of outsourcing supply chain management are the sharper focus on the core business and savings in time, money and space. Frans Maas' strategy is geared to offering the right combination of infrastructure, know-how and services. Frans Maas seeks growth in selected market segments in which it can be a leading independent logistics service provider.

Frans Maas shall consolidate their position through:

- organic growth;
- selective acquisitions;
- continuous improvement in the quality of services.



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