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INTRODUCTION OF INTTRA E-COMMERCE PLATFORM
UTILIZATION IN SACHTLEBEN PIGMENTS OY

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The purpose of this thesis was to find out how could Sachtleben Pigments Oy benefit from using INTTRA e-commerce platform, when booking a sea container. INTTRA e-commerce platform is the largest multi-carrier e-commerce platform specialized on ocean shipping industry. The aim of INTTRA e-commerce platform is to provide the possibility for carriers, shippers and consignees to forget faxes, phones and couriers and replace those with e-commerce tools, which enables each exporting party to save some valuable time and to communicate through a comprehensive network easily. Further I will call INTTRA e-commerce platform only INTTRA.

The reason why I chose this topic was my own experiences and interested towards the exporting system. Last year I was doing my practical training in a company named Sachtleben Pigments Oy and already during that period it was obvious that I wanted to do this research for this company. In half year as a logistics operator I learned the whole process that is required in order to be able to create the right documents for the exporting. During my practical training I also noticed the problems that can occur when exporting goods and this also increased my interest towards INTTRA as I wanted to find out if there would be some easier way to handle all those exporting processes.

This research was done as a qualitative research. In addition to theory I also made a research interview for the companies that are using INTTRA and also for the shipping companies that are providing their shipping solutions through the INTTRA. In theory part my target was to clarify the main idea of exporting and to introduce INTTRA as a system, which includes the products and services in a nutshell and the solutions that INTTRA provides to its customers.

Based on research it was clear that companies working with INTTRA are more than satisfied on this system and the time consuming implementation is all worth of it. INTTRA promises to its users to be fast and convenient way to do shipping and based on user's experiences it manage to achieve all these goals. The research also revealed that the companies using INTTRA are aiming to expand the use of the whole system, which proves INTTRA to be valuable tool for its customers. After studying the whole INTTRA system I can only imagine how useful tool it could be for Sachtleben Pigments Oy.

SÄHKÖISEN INTTRA-PALVELUFORMAATIN KÄYTTÖNOTTO SACHTLEBEN PIGMENTS OY:SSÄ

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Tämän opinnäytetyön tarkoituksena oli selvittää miten Sachtleben Pigments Oy voisi rahtivarauksia tehdessä hyötyä INTTRA sähköisestä tietoportaalista. INTTRA on merenkulkualan suurin varustamoiden välinen tietoportaaali, jonka tavoitteena on tarjota kuljetusyriyksille, rahtaajille ja vastaanottajille mahdollisuus unohtaa faksit, puhelimet ja kuriirit ja korvata ne sähköisillä apuvälineillä. Tämä mahdollistaa jokaisen vientiosapuolen säästää arvokasta aikaa ja kommunikoida helposti läpi laajan verkoston.

Syy miksi valitsin tämän aiheen, oli minun omat kokemukseni ja kiinnostukseni vientijärjestelmiä kohtaan. Viime vuonna suoritin harjoitteluni yrityksessä nimeltä Sachtleben Pigments Oy. Jo siellä ollessani oli itsestään selvää, että halusin tehdä tutkimuksen tämän yrityksen hyväksi. Puoli vuotta logistiikkaoperaattorina opetti minulle vaadittavat menettelytavat, jotta oikeiden vientidokumenttien luominen olisi mahdollista. Harjoitteluni aikana huomasin myös ongelmat, joita tuotteiden viennissä voi esiintyä. Tämä vain lisäsi kiinnostustani INTTRAA kohtaan, koska tavoitteenani oli selvittää, onko olemassa helpompaa tapaa hoitaa vientimenettelyt.

Tutkimus tehtiin kvalitatiivisena tutkimuksena. Teorian lisäksi suoritin myös tutkimushaastattelun yrityksille, jotka INTTRAA käyttävät ja myös varustamoille, jotka tarjoavat merenkulkuratkaisuja INTTRAN kautta. Teoriaosassa tavoitteeni oli selvittää viennin pääpiirteet ja esitellä INTTRA järjestelmänä, sisältäen tuotteet ja palvelut pähkinän kuoressa ja ratkaisut, joita INTTRA tarjoaa asiakkailleen.

Tutkimuksen perusteella oli selvää, että INTTRAA käyttävät yritykset ovat enemmän kuin tyytyväisiä tähän järjestelmään ja aikaa vievä perehdyttäminen on kaiken sen arvoista. INTTRA lupaa käyttäjilleen olla nopea ja mukava tapa tehdä kuljetukset ja käyttäjien kokemusten perusteella INTTRA onnistuu lunastamaan lupauksensa. Tutkimus paljasti myös, että käyttäjäyritykset pyrkivät laajentamaan koko järjestelmän käyttöä, joka todistaa INTTRAN olevan arvokas apuväline sen asiakkaille. INTTRAan perehtymisen jälkeen voin vain kuvitella, kuinka hyödyllinen apuväline se voisi olla Sachtleben Pigments Oy:lle.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Every day many international companies are struggling with exporting, including booking a container and required export documents. Handling these documents might be very laborious and also time-consuming. Exporting itself requires many parties involving and those parties are doing cooperation in order to do business successfully and at the same time to follow the right manners. All this requires patience, much attention and most importantly time. INTTRA e-commerce platform is designed to reduce the consumption of valuable time and at the same time it will make the job of each exporting party much easier.

As the largest multi-carrier e-commerce platform for the ocean shipping industry, the main idea of INTTRA e-commerce platform is to replace all the faxes, phone calls and couriers with the e-commerce tools. This platform will help carriers, shipping partner and consignees to communicate through a comprehensive network faster and easier, than could have been imagined even just a few years ago. The key idea is that INTTRA is using electronic processing, which enables different shipping parties to share information with each other all over the world.

I decided to do this thesis for the case company named Sachtleben Pigments Oy where I was doing my practical training last year. While I was working in Sachtleben Pigments Oy, I had a clear image in my head of the whole process that is required in order to be able to create the right documents for the exporting. When I already then noticed that how time consuming and laborious the process can be, it was obvious that I became interested of doing thesis that can help Sachtleben Pigments Oy to adapt a new e-commerce platform. Clearly behind this thesis is my interested towards the exporting system and my desire to discover solutions that can make some people's work easier.

2 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

2.1 Background

In this thesis a large part has been based on exporting and the trade documents that exporting requires. The other part is dedicated for the INTTRA e-commerce platform, which is giving the basis for this whole thesis. In that section I have been researching products and services which INTTRA offers and also solutions that this platform brings to its users. The topic of my thesis has been narrowed well and this is why the examinations of these two parts have been quite intensive.

I chose this topic because I had an interest to learn and research something that could help my case company Sachtleben Pigments Oy to adapt a whole new way to do the document processing. The case company Sachtleben Pigments Oy itself was earlier known as a company named Kemira Pigments Oy, until in year 2008 it joined together with a German company named Sachtleben Chemie GmbH. The company operates in Pori, Finland and is specialized to produce titanium dioxide, serving industries which are producing for example inks, medicines, cosmetics and foodstuff. The company is producing products such as Hombitan, UV-Titan and different kind of titanium dioxides. Sachtleben Pigments Oy operates world-wide and it has factories in Finland, Pori and in German, Duisburg. Other parts that belong to this organisation are the offices in Helsinki, Duisburg, New York and Shanghai. (Website of Sachtleben Pigments Oy)

Sachtleben Pigments Oy is delivering its goods by sea and road and they have international long term delivery contracts for raw material. They are also using warehousing, which gives them better distribution possibilities. Sachtleben Pigments Oy is using distributors worldwide and at the moment it has 65 long term contracts with other distributors. (Website of Sachtleben Pigments Oy)

2.2 Research Problem

This thesis is aiming to find out the benefits that Sachtleben Pigments Oy could get if using the INTTRA e-commerce platform and to learn the experiences that other companies have when using INTTRA. My thesis has been divided in following questions:

- What is INTTRA?
- How does INTTRA work?
- What kind of services does INTTRA provide?
- What experiences do other companies have when using INTTRA?
- What kind of challenges there are when using INTTRA?
- What requirements does it take from the company when using INTTRA?

2.3 Conceptual Framework

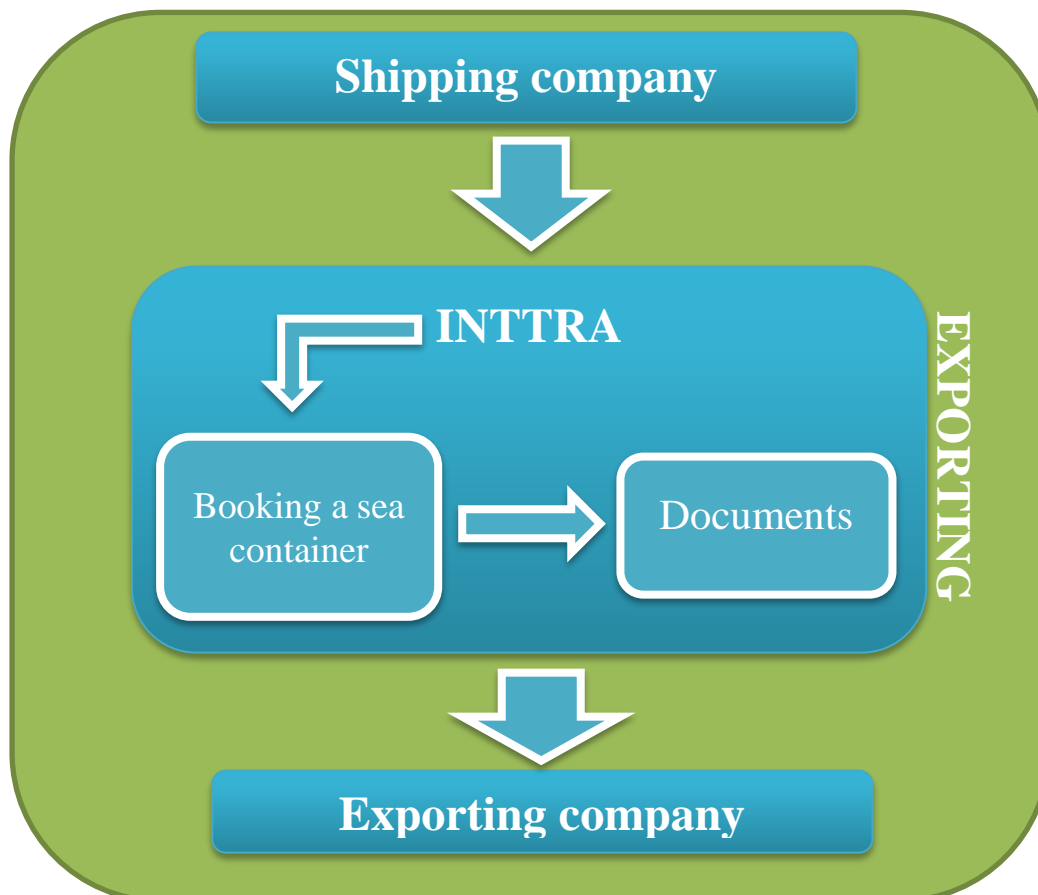


Figure 1. Conceptual Frame of Reference.

2.4 Research Methods

This thesis will be using qualitative research method. The main idea of qualitative research method is to describe the real life as comprehensively as possible. Instead of trying to authenticate claims that already exist, qualitative method is aiming to discover and reveal the facts. In order to do this, it is important that the material will be examined thoughtfully and detailed instead of testing theory. A human itself is playing a big part as an implement to gain results and most importantly, the interviewee is not chosen randomly, the target group is carefully selected. (Hirsjärvi ym. 2009, 161, 164)

Interview is also used as a one research method. I will be doing those interviews via e-mail and telephone, where I will be interviewing people from the companies that are using INTTRA. Other method that I will be using is desk research, where I will use already existing information from internet and books.

3 EXPORTING

3.1 Exporting in General

Exporting is defined as sending domestic goods to the foreign consumers in order to make profit. When the company decides to export its products, it is important to choose the right way to do the exporting process. Planning must be done carefully, considering all the goals and benefits that the company could gain by exporting, but also taking in consideration all the resources that must be used. (Website of CRF Online 2005)

There are two types of exporting; *direct* and *indirect exporting*. *Direct exporting* occurs when the seller is selling the goods directly to the target customer in market. Using direct exporting the seller has a full control of the price and brand, but in this type of exporting, it requires lot of financial and human resources. (Website of New

Zealand Trade & Enterprise 2012) Direct exporting can be considered to be the most difficult way to do exporting, because the exporter is taking care of every aspect of the exporting process personally. On the other hand, using direct exporting could be the best way to achieve maximum profits and long-term growth. (Website of CRF Online 2005)

When the company is using an intermediary when exporting goods, it is called *indirect exporting*. Intermediary can be called as a distributor who is taking care that the products or services coming from foreign countries will be sold to the end users. (Website of New Zealand Trade & Enterprise 2012) Export management companies, export trading companies, international trade consultants and other intermediaries can give the exporter some valuable trade contacts and also give the possibility to access to well-established expertise. (Website of CRF Online 2005)

3.2 Maritime Transportation

Maritime transportation is a convenient and practical way to do business between foreign countries. In Finland, nearly 80% of transportations are done by sea, thought that these days industrial production is situated more often near the potential customers, cheap labor and source of raw materials. (Melin 2011, 196) Despite of all the benefits that maritime transporting is offering, there are still drawbacks that shipping has faced during these years. First disadvantage is the speed of the ship which can be very slow and secondly delays may occur in port of discharge. (Website of Transport geography on the web 2012)

Mainly maritime transportation is done with cargo ships and it is divided in *liner* – and *non-liner transportation* (Parameswaran 2004, 38). In *liner shipping* the ship obeys prescribed routes and schedules which mean that there will not be so major competition, because of the cooperation and temporary contracts between the shipping lines (Selin 2004, 189). Today about 10-15% of all the merchant vessels worldwide are using liner shipping (Melin 2011, 197).

In cases where *non-liner shipping* occurs, there are single cargoes in large volumes which are transporting goods between the ports without any fixed route or schedule. Most importantly *liner shipping*'s passage is dependent on the market in order to gain the cheapest possible cargo. (Selin 2004, 189) Non-liner shipping is mostly used when shipping goods, such as oil-, grain- and coal products (Melin 2011, 197).

Dead weight tons are commonly measured in maritime traffic. This measure means the amount of cargo that can be loaded on an empty ship, in order to not cross the operational limits that are devised for the ship. This kind of limit is usually called as a loadline, which is assumed to be the maximal draft of the ship. There are two types of maritime freight; *Bulk cargo* and *Break-bulk cargo*. In cases where bulk cargo is used, goods like minerals are being transported. These goods can be dry or liquid, but those are not packaged. Transporting these kinds of goods usually requires ships that are specialized, such as oil tankers. Commonly maritime shipping is dominated by bulk cargo by accounting for 69,6% of all the ton-miles that were shipped in 2005. (Website of Transport geography on the web 2012)

Break-bulk cargo is commonly known as a general cargo that includes packages such as bags and boxes. When bulk cargo has only one origin, destination and client, break-bulk cargo has multiple clients and destinations. Before when there was no containerization, using break-bulk cargo was very labor and time consuming and due to this it was difficult to achieve any economic of scale. (Website of Transport geography on the web 2012)

3.3 Exporting Documents

There is wide range of documents that are used when exporting goods and these days more often companies are adopting new electronic documents in order to avoid all the problems that slow movement of documents might cause. For example in maritime transportation where bill of lading is commonly used, vessels might reach the destination before the documents and this is causing troubles with releasing the goods. (Melin 2011, 205)

People have used thousands of year's documents related to exporting the goods. Those documents contain requirements that can vary significantly by country, situation and commodity. All the exporters must take into consideration how to fill out and submit different kind of forms for each international shipment, because shipping documents are the key element in international trade. Export documents are a major help for each exportig party involved, containing outlines for sale, shipment and responsibility, so that the whole transaction is well planned and understood without any problems, such as additional costs or delays. (Website of VEDP International Trade 2009)

There are some functions listed below that can be made through the export documents:

- Testimony of facts related to goods like Certificate of Origin.
- Works as an evidence of the terms and conditions that has been negotiated between the seller and buyer.
- Proves the ownership and title of goods.
- Will be a demand for payment.
- Works also as a declaration of liability.
- Document can be also a receipt for goods received.

There are many benefits from using export documents. Most importantly the document works as a sustained proof of tasks and actions that has been taken in order to get through the export process. Export documents are primary done for the seller and buyer, but at the same time those documents are satisfying the customs authorities and making transportation and payment of the goods easier. (Website of Export Help 2011)

3.3.1 Bill of Lading

Bill of lading (B/L) works as an argument that the goods has been delivered to the consignee. Usually this document includes information like the amount and condition of the goods which is required to be similar that was earlier agreed. Generally it is recommended to make three pieces of original bill of ladings which is called as *Doc-*

ument in Title. This kind of document is also possible to sell or pledge (Pasanen 2005, 295)

There are several types of bill of lading existed, such as *Received for shipment* which proves that the goods are delivered to supplier, while the other document *Shipment on Board* works as an guarantee that the goods has been loaded in the vessel. *Received for Shipment* document can be used also as a *Shipping Bill of Lading*, but in that case it is required to contain accurate details of the vessel and also the day that the goods were loaded. (Pasanen 2005, 295) *Through Bill of Lading* (TBL) is used mainly in international trade. This means that there are two different shipping companies that are handling the transporting. (Melin 2011, 203)

Bill of lading can also be divided on unclean and clean versions. In case where the bill of lading is unclean the goods can be missing, damaged or just wet and dirty. These kinds of cases are always unfortunate, because in worst case the buyer can even cancel the whole trade. (Pasanen 2005, 295)

In order to call document as a bill of lading, there are some things that are required. First it must be mentioned that the goods has been loaded in the vessel or even received. The document must be as an evidence of the maritime transport agreement and it is required to contain the commitment that the carrier will release the goods only against the bill of lading. (Melin 2011, 203)

The content of bill of lading is well defined. It contains information such as description of the goods, to whom all the goods are released in port of destination and from where and when the cargo has left. All these requirements are noticed in law of the sea. (Melin 2011, 203)

The biggest difference between *Negotiable* and *Non-negotiable Bill of Lading* is that negotiable version can be transferred to a third party, while non-negotiable cannot be. Usually non-negotiable documents are delivered directly to the party whose name is stated as a consignee and who only has to prove his identity. When negotiable bill of lading is used the carrier is delivering the goods only to the person in possession of the original bill of lading. Both of these bill of lading types includes a clear mark

whether the document is negotiable or not. Negotiable bill of lading is usually printed on yellow paper, in order to be easy to distinguish it from the non-negotiable version. (Website of Safeway 2012)

Liner Waybill (LWB) is used when the distance between the seller and buyer is short and in those cases the bill of lading can be replaced with the liner waybill. Liner waybill is delivered with the shipping company and in the port of discharge it will be handed to the authorized person. Liner waybill does not include any transport conditions and it can be used only under the agreement of the seller and buyer. (Melin 2011, 205)

Express Bill of Lading is a form of bill of lading that allows shipping line to issue only with a copy of bill of lading and the consignee is able to receive the goods without the original bill of lading. It is time and money saving version of bill of lading and most importantly it helps to avoid the possible demurrage charges that may occur in the destination port. When using express release, the seller must be aware about the fact that the seller does not have any control over the cargo. *Express bill of lading* must show all the details of consignee and it should also be called as a non-negotiable version. (Website of Black-list 2011)

Express release process starts when the seller has the full payment. After that the seller informs the shipping line by e-mail or fax to release the goods to the consignee. Now the copy of bill of lading is sent to the buyer which means that express release has been done. In cases where express release is used, the importer does not need to show the original bill of lading. (Website of Black-list 2011)

SeaWay Bill is also known as a receipt of goods, but the main difference between the original bill of lading and sea waybill is that the sea waybill must not be presented to the consignee in the port of discharge. Only the consignee must identify himself in order to receive the goods. Sea waybill cannot be called as a document of title or negotiable version, which means that banks are not accepting the sea waybill as a deposit that for example a documentary credit can be. Sea waybill can be used different ways. Most commonly it is used in the liner shipping together with other contracts or

cargo receipts, such as charter party. (Website of Maritime Knowhow. Referred 23.2.2012)

3.3.2 Shipping Instructions

Shipping instructions is commonly known as an instruction given from the exporter to the carrier or forwarder. It includes information such as description of goods and the route that is used when transporting these goods into their destination. Addition to previous information, shipping instructions contains requirements related to transporting, customs information and also some kind of allocation of the costs. It is extremely important that every shipping instruction will provide information that is accurate. (Website of Sitpro. Referred 8.3.2012)

4 INTTRA E-COMMERCE PLATFORM

4.1 INTTRA E-commerce Platform In General

These days the global shipping community has come to the point where all the shipping chain operations are turning to be easier and effective in order to reduce all the complexity and inefficiencies that are common when we are talking about shipping. INTTRA has created a solution for this problem and this is why the company is called as “the largest multi-carrier e-commerce platform for global shipping”. (Website of INTTRA 2012)

This platform is aiming to replace taxes and phone calls by offering something new, something that intensify and combine different parties shipping processes through a comprehensive network. From the wide range of different kind of tools the customer can choose which features will help them to complete the tasks and also to get all the customer’s transactions done faster. All the data and information that people is used to collect, check and share can be replaced with electronic processing, which gives

you the possibility to share all the data with the parties that you designate all over the world at any time. (Website of INTTRA 2012)

INTTRA has more than 300 000 corporate locations and each week there are over 500 000 container orders done in INTTRA platform. INTTRA platform handles all the shipment planning, managing and processing electronically, which is saving lots of time from shippers, freight forwarders and third-party logistics providers and also from brokers and importers. (Website of INTTRA 2012)

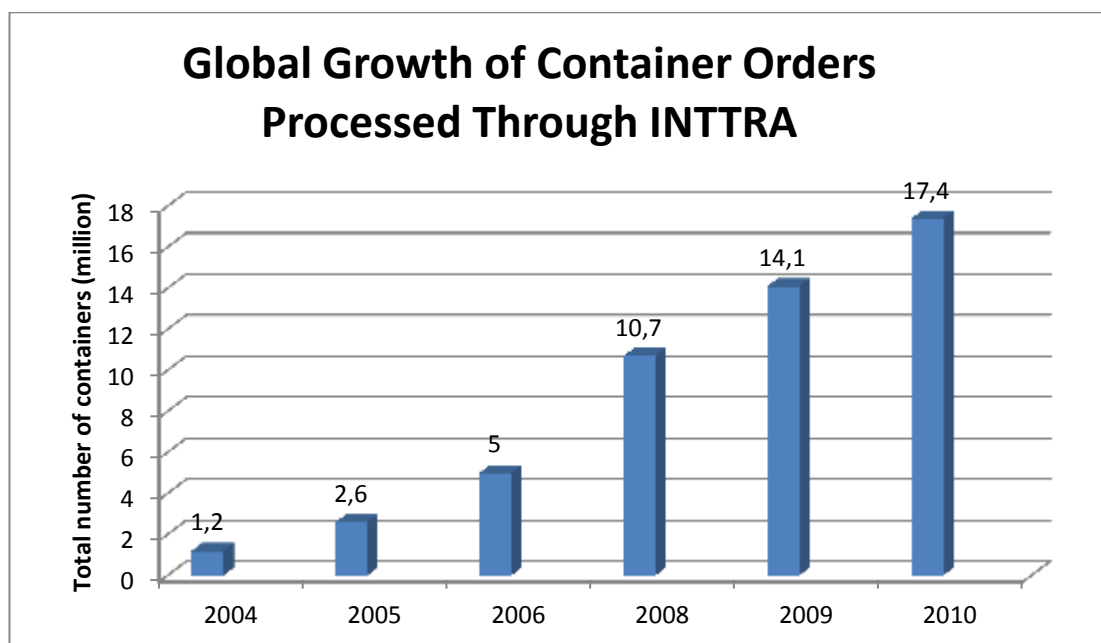


Figure 2. Global growth of container orders processed through INTTRA. (Website of INTTRA 2012)

Today INTTRA is doing cooperation with over 30 leading carriers and over 90% of shippers are using more than one carrier in order to reach the need of global container shipping. This all proves INTTRA to be more reliable for the customers and it can be said, that INTTRA has created e-commerce as a “mainstream of ocean shipping”. (Website of INTTRA 2012)

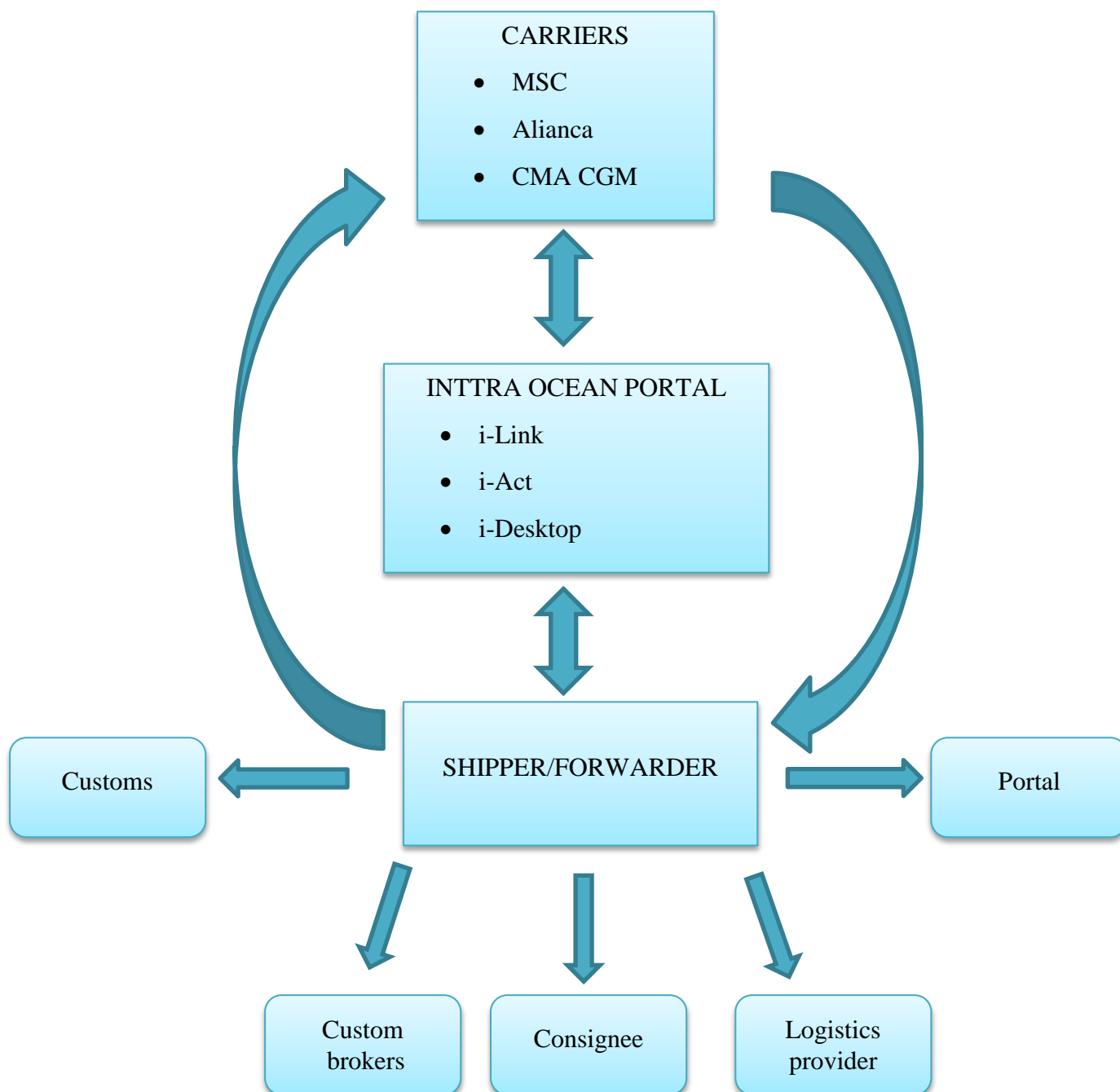


Figure 3. Information flow with each partners using INTTRA. (Website of INTTRA 2012)

Figure 3 describes how the information is shared between the trading partners. Like we can see from the figure, INTTRA ocean portal is working between the shipper/forwarder and the carrier. In this case the shipper can be for example the seller or exporter, like Sachtleben Pigments Oy and the carrier could be for example MSC (Mediterranean Shipping Company) which is transporting the goods sold by

Sachtleben Pigments Oy into port of discharge, where the customer is waiting for to receive the goods. In order to be able to do this trade, first Sachtleben Pigments Oy has to book a container from the MSC which is possible to do through the INTTRA. After the booking stage, we have to create some exporting documents and this is when the INTTRA ocean portal is used again. We can see that both parties, shippers and carriers can use INTTRA and after creating the required documents each party can share those documents with each other electronically without any time consuming couriers. When the documents are handled through the INTTRA, the shipper can forward those documents into the places where seeing those documents is required. From the figure we can see different parties that might require the documents, such as customs, logistics providers and most importantly the consignee itself.

4.2 Products and Services

These days the shipping industry includes multiple industry challenges and ever-increasing competition. Situations like these can stretch the capabilities of even the most successful companies, requiring companies to do improvements continuously. INTTRA is aiming to offer more flexible distribution operations, tighter inventory control and faster, more effective process execution, in order to overcome challenges that companies are facing every day. The key element of each INTTRA's products and services is to keep simplicity a priority at all times. (Website of INTTRA 2012)

INTTRA has created services that offer support and advice for the customers. INTTRA's e-commerce and freight industry experts will help every new customer to adapt the new e-commerce platform step by step, letting the customer to take a full advantage of INTTRA products and technology. When the customer is using services that INTTRA provides, it is possible to avoid risks and pitfalls, by following the implementations that INTTRA experts are offering. (Website of INTTRA 2012)

4.2.1 Product Suite

If the customer needs to transform the supply chain, it is required to use "*complete ocean-shipment information*". In order to success in this transformation, ocean-

shipment information must be handled before the vessel reaches its destination. *INTTRA Link* is called as “*integration service*” which will deliver this information direct to in-house system, which is saving plenty of time. With the *I-Link* service the customer can receive information such as cargo details, charge details, package counts, weights, volumes and key supply-chain triggers, like shipped on board dates. (Website of INTTRA 2012)

INTTRA I-Link's key features are:

- “Triggers” which are needed when doing financial processing.
- Includes detailed charges which are needed for freight audit.
- Sensitive charge information is secured through the secure distribution logic.
- Supports Customer-specific party aliases and references.
- Supports comprehensive party-and-reference qualifiers. (Website of INTTRA 2012)

INTTRA Desktop is created to provide booking or shipping instructions where customer can personally create own shipping documents and after that send those documents directly to the carrier, using e-mail or web service. Through this desktop, customer is able to find information faster than before and at the same time it is possible to create templates, which can be saved and in future also edited. “*Built in form*” is also one strength of the *INTTRA Desktop* which allows customer to follow the US Customs security and also provides decent configures for B/L viewing. Doing bookings offline is also possible with this desktop and it can be used in multiple languages. (Website of INTTRA 2012)

Through the *INTTRA Act* many shipment processes can be managed like:

- Booking the cargo
- Checking bill of lading drafts
- Negotiating all the services related to cargo
- Submitting shipping instructions
- Creating reports that are standardized to your company's shipments (Website of INTTRA 2012)

In addition to the previous processes, the company is also able to share some functions like booking, bill of lading data and shipping instructions with the shipping partners you choose. When using *INTTRA Act* the customer can forget time-consuming booking via e-mail or fax, because with this system the customer can be connected to all the INTTRA carriers through this one single process, which will take usually only few minutes to be finished. (Website of INTTRA 2012)

Platform access	Channel solution	E-commerce tools
Integrated link via XML/EDI	i-Link	Booking, Shipping Instruction, Bill of Lading, Track and Trace
Offline – PC Software and e-mail/Web Services	i-Desktop	Shipping Instruction and Booking
Online	i-Act	Tender, Schedules, Booking, Shipping Instruction, Bill of Lading, Track and Trace, and Reports

Figure 4. INTTRA platform. (Website of INTTRA 2012)

From the figure 4 we can see the different tools that INTTRA products are providing.

4.2.2 Schedules

OceanSchedules.com is a convenient solution if you want to search voyages more quickly and easily. It is a web-based portal that is offering many tools and schedules data. The data that *OceanSchedules.com* is using comes directly from the carriers themselves, which will help avoiding outdated data that is not wanted in many cases. *OceanSchedules.com* will also show data from those carriers who are not using INTTRA's connected network, so the data is very comprehensive. (Website of INTTRA 2012)

There are over 9.000.000 voyage options to search for from *OceanSchedules.com* and it includes both, global and regional carriers. Powerful search tools, such as simple *home-page search box* allows you to search by port to port, point-to point, arrival

or destination date and customized date range from one week default setting. Auto-suggestion feature will help you to find all the names of locations more quickly and easily. (Website of OceanSchedules.com 2009)

“*Schedule Manager*” offers a count of the numbers of matches to your criteria. Multiple interactive filters are also available, such as filter for port and carrier selection and also a filter that allows you to see days for departure and arrival. All the registered users are able to identify the most preferred carriers including preferred arrival and departure day of the week. This way *Schedule Manager* will automatically suggest schedules that suit for these important parameters. It is also always possible to find some other carriers or sailings. (Website of OceanSchedules.com 2009)

OceanSchedule.com provides result pages, which include:

- Carriers results (Carrier name, departure date and time, day of week, time of transportation, arrival date and time and day of week).
- Carrier information buttons (Carrier name, vessel, voyage, Lloyds number and carrier website).
- Carrier-Contact-Request button, that allows you to choose the carrier you want to be in contact with you about a specific voyage.
- Booking button, that only registered users are able to use and which allows you to make an electronic booking for all carriers that are offering bookings via INTTRA.
- Download and Save Search results to your PC enable you to save search results for further analysis. (Website of OceanSchedules.com 2009)

4.2.3 Booking

INTTRA Booking allows you and your customer to access the booking service any time without spending time on hold or waiting for somebody to make changes or place a booking. This way you will have 24/7 access to transaction information, that are critical for the whole booking cycle. Tracking carrier information and asking booking reservations are done fastest and easiest way with *INTTRA Booking*. On busy periods you can find your repeat bookings from the standardized templates and

you can also use the INTTRA instant reservation number to be able to pass the whole exporting process faster. By using INTTRA notification you can alert your customers and partners about the critical changes that have been done and this will help you to avoid the annoying lack of information. (Website of INTTRA 2012)

4.2.4 Shipping Instructions (SI)

INTTRA's SI improves the precision and quality of documents giving the possibility to create documents faster and share those documents with multiple carriers, which will reduce shipment delays. *SI* supports bookings that are under the strict requirements by your partners, in order to fill out some specific customs regulations. *Shipping Instructions* are initialized into the bill of lading format and in addition to that feature, bill of lading can also be viewed for chosen carriers in the INTTRA carrier network. *INTTRA SI's* features offers support for:

- hazardous cargo
- split goods and multi-level packaging
- multiple container or commodity information (Website of INTTRA 2012)

4.2.5 Bill of Lading

INTTRA's bill of lading tool is a convenient aid for the shippers and forwarders in order to deliver bill of lading faster. Naturally this will reduce shipment delays and at the same time it gives the opportunity for shipper and forwarder to standardize documentation process. Bill of lading tool also improves data accuracy, which will reduce expenses that are caused when all the mistakes that occur in documents are corrected. There are two different features that INTTRA offers; *Bill of Lading Image* and *Bill of Lading Data*. (Website of INTTRA 2012)

With *Bill of Lading Image* it is possible to view, edit and approve Bill of Ladings from the other INTTRA's carriers. Express & Sea Way Bills and copies of Negotiable versions can be printed and shared with many third parties, which improves workflow process and reduces paper work. The customer will receive a notification

via e-mail that includes the B/L receipt which will give a 100% reliability. (Website of INTTRA 2012)

Bill of Lading Image is a perfect solution to check shipment details which are delivered direct to your in-house system just about the same time that your carrier will create the Bill of Lading. Bill of Lading Image provides shipment details such as:

- Ocean-freight charge details
- Cargo details
- Shipped quantities
- Package counts
- Weights
- Volumes
- Some key supply-chain triggers like shipped-on-board date. (Website of INTTRA 2012)

4.2.6 Electronic Invoice

INTTRA EInvoice is created by the experts that operates in ocean freight industry. INTTRA EInvoice allows ocean carriers, shippers and forwarders to use this electronic invoicing system that has served other industries for years. With INTTRA EInvoice carriers can send invoices faster than before by using electronic delivery via a single connection. This will cover all your customers that belongs to the INTTRA EInvoice network. All the carrier-specific codes are translated into the codes that are used by the shippers and forwarders. (Website of INTTRA 2012)

INTTRA EInvoice is also saving money when the whole invoice processing is automated. Information flow inside the process is secured according to company's own policies and is available only for the authorized individuals. (Website of INTTRA 2012)

4.3 Solutions

INTTRA is offering solutions for each party. Today carriers, shippers and freight forwarders are able to use tools that are designed to make their job easier and most importantly, to create solutions that make working even faster and what helps each party to focus and maintain the customer satisfaction. In the following sections I will clarify some solutions that INTTRA offers for each party.

Today carriers have become more depended for e-commerce. Carriers are increasingly doing cooperation with the customers through the e-commerce, which nowadays can be even more than 50 percent of carrier's total container volume. INTTRA is doing their best to speed up this development by familiarizing carriers to e-commerce, which is suitable for transforming complicated and time consuming business processes to simple and standardized processes. (Website of INTTRA 2012)

When the customer is registered to INTTRA the customer is able to share documents with the shipping partners. In this case the customer can use *INTTRA Desktop* in order to work offline, while working online requires customer to use *INTTRA Act*. (Website of INTTRA 2012)

The following sentences describe all the benefits that carriers can get from using INTTRA:

- Carriers can focus more on customer's satisfaction when they do not have to worry about problems with connections.
- E-commerce with the customers is growing all the time.
- Operations and costs in IT-section are reducing when there are no costs related to development, project management or customer-support. (Website of INTTRA 2012)

INTTRA is also making shippers work easier by providing a wide range of shipment processes. INTTRA enables shippers to search up to the minute sailing schedules, book cargo, submit shipping instructions, review Bill of Lading drafts, track and trace cargo and create standardized reports for your shipment. In additions to these

processes, all these documents can be shared with the chosen partners. (Website of INTTRA 2012)

Here are some benefits that shippers get when using INTTRA:

- Faster processing.
- Reduce the use of faxes and phones and the consumption of paper.
- Standard access to multiple carriers.
- Offers better data quality by deleting “rekeying and receiving transactions” that have passed the strict data validations that INTTRA requires. (Website of INTTRA 2012)

Freight forwarders and their customers will also benefit from using INTTRA. Innovation is the key element if the company is willing to be a strong player on the market. This means that freight forwarders need to focus on their core business, which makes INTTRA to be the right solution to improve freight forwarders business processes. (Website of INTTRA 2012)

Here are some benefits that freight forwarders get when using INTTRA:

- E-commerce adaptation is increasing without any significant investment.
- Managing bookings, shipping instructions and bills of lading are easy with easy to use tools and at the same time the internal force is improved.
- When the manual processing is reduced and in-house software solutions are simplified, the costs are also diminishing.
- There is no need for multiple EDI connections with the customers. (Website of INTTRA 2012)

4.4 The Network

The cooperation with the partners and customers covers a large part of INTTRA’s operation. The target is to create and also implement standardized business process with partners, such as shippers, freight forwarders, third-party logistics providers, brokers, importers, industry portals and shipping lines. At the moment INTTRA offers over 65,000 active links between shippers and carriers and users in 105 coun-

tries. INTTRA has also a wide range of carriers by offering more than 30 ocean carriers. (Website of INTTRA 2012)

5 INTERVIEW RESEARCH

5.1 Research Approach

Interview is very flexible way to do different kind of surveys, including action related to concept, meaning and language. When doing interview, the researcher and the interviewee are in interact with each other, which makes it possible to researcher to notice motives behind the answers. Most importantly the first thing to discover is the facts that the interviewees already know about the topic and after that, the interviewer is able to look closely and compare those answers. The main target of interview is always to gain information and it is always pre-planned happening in random places during the interviewee's daily basis. The main role of interviewer is to be curious and to motive the person who is interviewed. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2000, 34, 41, 43, 59)

Interviewees also known as the target group are affecting on how the interview is used, for example interviews where the kids are the target group are organized differently than interviews for adults. In most cases it is interviewer's job to make the decision whether he wants to handle the interviewees as a whole group, like a small survey research, which is based on inquiry and interview, or hear them just one by one. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2000, 58-59)

The research interview can be divided on structured and unstructured interviews according to how the questions are formulated and how the interviewer is handling the whole situation. In structured interview, which can be for example form interview, the form is commonly used and also the formulation of the questions and the order is fully designed. Creating the form is the most difficult part, but the interview itself is pretty easy to do. Telephone interview is often done by using structured interview. This is a convenient and fast way to implement interview and at the same time is it possible to do some quality control. Telephone interview is often done like a survey

and it is very economic, though the phone calls costs more than the inquiry that is sent via post. Addition to all this, using telephone interview it is possible to reach people from long distance and at the same time extra travel expenses can be avoided. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2000, 43, 44-45, 64-65)

Unstructured interview includes interviews such as open interview, depth interview and customer-orientated interview. Open questions are commonly used when doing intense interview followed by the deepening of the answers, so the extension of interview is possible to build based on the answers. The interview is often so intense that only specialized people are qualified to answer the question, which means that random sampling is not used. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2000, 45-46)

Half structured interview which is also called as theme interview concentrates on specific themes that are same for the each interviewee. This means, that the interview is processing by using particular themes, not questions in order to create better visibility for the interviewee's voice. Theme interview is called as a half structured interview, because it is not as strict with the formulation and order of the questions as structured form interview is, but neither fully free interview like intense interview is. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2000, 47-48)

5.2 Implementation

The target of my thesis was to do as comprehensive interviews as possible, in order to get answers into my research questions. I decided to use half structured interview, because this way I will be able to create better visibility for the interviewee's voice. The case company gave me the contacts of the shipping companies, but I had to find the customer companies by myself.

I planned my questions to be as simple as possible in order to receive many answers. Simple questions are also easy to present via telephone and this way I was making sure, that my interview is not going to take much time from the people that might already be quite busy. I chose to do different kind of questionnaire for the companies that are using INTTRA and for the shipping companies that are providing their ser-

VICES through the INTTRA. The first questionnaire is addressed for the companies. I have been shaping these questions in my head through the whole writing process and it has been very convenient way to discover the importance of relevant questions.

At the beginning I thought this research to be easy to implement, because the topic was current and interesting, but when I started to interview people I realized how challenging this project would be, because of the unknown companies using INTTRA. My plan was to call through the biggest exporting companies in Finland and ask if they were using INTTRA. After that I asked the permission to send my questionnaire by e-mail. The size of companies caused some problems, because in most cases it was nearly impossible to reach the right person, because after all we are talking about system that usually is only one person's specialty. My timing could also be better, because the Easter was coming and the offices were closed earlier. I also heard that many people were spending their winter holidays.

After sending the questionnaire, in all cases I called after the people and made sure that they are going to answer on my questionnaire within reasonable time. This was absolutely necessary for me, as I did not have more than three customer companies on my awareness. I was glad that all those three companies were operating on different industry and they all had used INTTRA very different time, which gave different perspectives for my research. For my surprise, all the customer companies were answering quickly to my questions and even one big company was interesting to hear the results of the research.

In this research the sampling turned to be quite small, because of the unknown user companies, which automatically affects on the reliability of the research. Many companies had outsourced all the logistic operations to the logistic service providers and unfortunately I could not interview those companies, because they did not belong into my scope. Even though I found only three companies using INTTRA, I managed to get answers for the case company's questions and this way I was able to reach my goals.

6 RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

In this section I will introduce all the results that occur from the interviews. Interviews were done by e-mail, only one person gave her answers through the telephone conversation. I divided my questionnaires for the shipping companies and customers that are using INTTRA. From those customers I managed to get interviews from three companies that are operating in forest, recycling and water industry. I chose five shipping companies to take part in this survey and there was only one company that I could not reach by telephone. Because the interview was done anonymously, I will call the customer companies and also the shipping companies as Company A, B and C. The persons that were taking part in this survey were representing titles like sales manager and logistics manager.

6.1 Results from the Shipping Companies

1. *How long have you been providing shipping solutions through the INTTRA?*

Two from the four companies have been providing shipping solution through the INTTRA from the beginning and the Company B and C more than five years.

2. *Are you able to see any kind of disadvantages in using INTTRA?*

Two companies did not mention any disadvantages, but Company D pointed out that it depends on which INTTRA solution the customer is using. Company D considered that especially INTTRA Link requires data mapping between INTTRA and the customer and the set up requires some extra IT work. Another disadvantage was also discovered:

- The most problematic thing with INTTRA is wrong input of data by shipper (Company A).

3. *Can you list some reasons that affects on shipping companies desire to get as many customers as possible to do their booking via INTTRA?*

Two companies (Company B and C) mentioned the possibility to fulfill the need of every customer to be one big reason for tempting new customers to use INTTRA. There were also other reasons for that:

- Usage of INTTRA minimizes human errors and so called copy-paste errors (Company B).
- More detailed (and accurate) information already at time of booking (Company A).
- INTTRA from carrier's side is very useful tool for small and mid-size customers (Company D).

4. *Has competition between the shipping companies affected on your decision to use INTTRA?*

Based on interviews three from the four companies thinks that competition has nothing to do with their decision to use INTTRA. Company B mentioned that the company sees some competitive advantages in using INTTRA against the carriers that do not offer INTTRA possibilities.

5. *Has the use of INTTRA increased among your customers in past five years?*

All the companies mentioned that the growth has been strong.

- Yes, dramatically. Many big customers have started to use INTTRA (Company B)

- Yes, very much. Today more than 50% of our inputs come via different e-channels. Of course exact figures cannot be given (Company D).

6. Can you list the advantages that shipping companies are getting by using INTTRA?

Based on interviews two companies consider that INTTRA provides faster information flow and three from the four companies mentioned that using INTTRA also prevents errors. Companies also pointed out advantages such as:

- Less manual keying in information (Company B).
- Requires less manual labor (Company D).
- Information does not need to be inputted several times into different systems (Company D).
- Same data input despite of different shipping companies which makes it more simple (Company A).
- Same data input despite of different shipping companies used-> more simple and more correct booking confirmations (Company A).
- Faster information flow, less errors, less manual keying in information (Company B).

6.2 Results from the Customer Companies

1. How long have you been using INTTRA?

The time of using INTTRA divided from one to three years.

2. *What services do you use from INTTRA?*

All the companies are using booking, but there were also other functions that were used:

- Booking, tracking and B/L instructions (Company A).
- Booking, shipping instructions and also reporting tool (Company C).

3. *How often do you use INTTRA?*

All the companies are using INTTRA daily.

4. *Can you list some advantages and disadvantages in using INTTRA?*

Advantages

Based on interviews, all the companies mentioned INTTRA to be fast and reliable, but there were also other advantages mentioned:

- Better quality of data and similar process with multiple carriers (Company A).
- Cost avoidance, no need to use freight forwarders (Company B).
- Fluent and clear (Company C).
- Big plus that INTTRA reports all the errors and changes that occur when doing booking on our e-mail (Company C).

Disadvantages

Only one from the three companies did not mention any disadvantages. Other disadvantages were:

- Atomization requires messages/segments to be strictly correct that IT systems works perfectly (Company A).
- Different carrier's different capabilities to provide similar information on messages, even differences between booking offices within same carrier (Company A).
- General IT-errors (Company C).

5. Are there some special requirements that using INTTRA requires from your company and have you made any changes in your working process, in order to be able to use INTTRA?

Two from the three companies mentioned that the biggest change that was made was their own approach towards the new system. Both companies also mentioned INTTRA to be easy to use after implementation. One company pointed out some changes that they have made:

- Messages needed to be created according INTTRA booking manual (Company A).
- Systems required changes to make to be able to receive and use confirmations information fully (Company A).

6. *Have you been able to do any time savings when working with INTTRA?*

All the three companies have been able to do some major time savings. Company C mentioned especially that when booking is not done by e-mail, the change that e-mail will be lost among the other e-mails is minimized.

7. *Are you going to expand your utilization of INTTRA in future?*

All the companies are going to expand the use of INTTRA in future. Some expansion plans were mentioned:

- I am currently working with couple of carriers to get their confirmation on acceptable level that our system can use data sent by carrier (Company A).
- One aim is to take INTTRA in use globally during this year for booking and tracking (Company A).
- We will expand the usage to all our global customer service centers (Company B).

7 CONCLUSIONS

The research showed that companies using INTTRA has more positive experiences than negative. Most of the companies consider INTTRA to be fast and convenient way to handle shipping solutions and most importantly most of the errors can be avoided by using this platform. Based on interviews, one company pointed out well that disadvantages are dependent on what solutions from INTTRA the customer is using. I believe that this also affects on the results, because most of the companies did not consider disadvantages from that point of view. The research also showed

that shipping companies have been working with INTTRA much longer than the customer companies, whose experience was three year at longest.

INTTRA was created in 2001 but still Finnish leading exporting companies experience from INTTRA is small. Also the fact that many big companies have been outsourcing the whole logistic services might affect on the amount of companies using INTTRA. It seems like INTTRA suits best for the companies that are not using freight forwarders, or external logistic service providers, just like Sachtleben Pigments Oy. I also believe that many Finnish companies are slow when it comes to adapting a new system, especially when using INTTRA requires implementation and changes in own approach towards the system. Many smaller companies do not see the advantages behind the requirements, because of the smaller exporting volume. Still I believe that when INTTRA stands out more, it is only matter of time when also smaller companies starts to seek efficiencies and cost-savings.

Based on interviews, all the companies are going to expand the utilization of INTTRA in future. The implementation might need time and resources and this way also the expanding is going to be slow. The companies that are using INTTRA are mostly companies that are operating worldwide, which also means that these companies have working units all over the world. In this kind of companies the expanding of INTTRA is very important and also relevant, because this way the communication and information flow between different working units would be much better. I believe that if Sachtleben Pigments Oy decides to start working with INTTRA, it would be able to get the largest benefit if each unit of Sachtleben Pigments Oy would be determined to use INTTRA.

It is obvious that shipping companies are more familiar with INTTRA, because some of those companies are in fact the co-founders of INTTRA portal. Shipping companies are also offering some own shipping solutions and that was the one reason that I heard people saying, when they mentioned not using INTTRA. Obviously there are also some other solutions that are competing with INTTRA, for example direct EDI-links are in some cases preferred, as INTTRA is a platform for several ocean carriers. This means that INTTRA does not create so intensive co-operation between the carrier and customer, because the customer using INTTRA has the possibility to choose

from several ocean carriers. The thing is that EDI-links are quite heavy to set up even for bigger companies.

Despite of INTTRA's competitors, based on interviews the use of INTTRA has experienced a major growth in past five years. This really surprised me after thinking about how hard it was to find these customer companies. I was wondering that why companies that are using INTTRA do not promote the fact that they are doing cooperation with INTTRA. When I was gathering the possible user companies, I was truly surprised that these companies that I assumed that obviously are using INTTRA, had never even heard about that portal. I instantly tried to figure out why not all the users try to boost the awareness of INTTRA in Finland and this way also shipping companies could benefit from it, when more companies are aware of the benefits of INTTRA and decides to start using it. The websites of INTTRA only shows a few international companies using INTTRA, but if more user companies would bring themselves out, I believe that many other companies would also be encouraged to use INTTRA.

Based on some interviewee's opinion about different INTTRA systems, I would recommend Sachtleben Pigments Oy to use INTTRA Link. Some of the interviewees discovered the double input to be a bit time consuming. If the company would use INTTRA Link the double input could be avoided, because when the customer submit information on their own system, it is automatically transferred to INTTRA. This is the absolute key if we are thinking about time saving.

I think that the thing that weighs in company's decision to adapt a whole new system is the need of time, meaning that more often many companies are struggling against the time and especially when we are talking about exporting industry. In that industry the situation might change in a minute and the companies need to have some tool that helps them to control the situation. Sachtleben Pigments Oy could benefit from INTTRA specifically as a time saver. In many cases the most time consuming problems are the errors that might occur, for example when creating and sending the valuable exporting documents. If INTTRA could minimize this kind of problems, it is sure that Sachtleben Pigments Oy is going to profit from using INTTRA, because of the higher data quality.

Cost avoidance is also a big part of INTTRA's benefits, which is obviously one of the main targets of every company. For example if Sachtleben Pigments Oy would submit the draft of bill of lading instructions via INTTRA, it would notably reduce the fees such as liner charges and faxes that are caused when drafts are submitted manually. Also the growing environment trend is pushing companies towards new innovations and adapting new systems. This is the scenario where INTTRA suits perfectly, as it provides the possibility not to use papers anymore, only networking is enough. As a one part of Rockwood Companies, Sachtleben Pigments Oy is committed to protect the environment which automatically means that actions for protecting the environment must be taken. Obviously using INTTRA is a tiny part of environment protections, but I believe that piece by piece the decreased consumption of paper can be seen.

All in all INTTRA got praises for the speed of the system and the fact that usage of INTTRA minimizes human errors and gives the possibility for shipping companies to fulfill the needs of each customer. Even though INTTRA has been serving its customers over ten years, I still got the vision that in Finland this system is still little bit unknown and it needs to stand out more clearly. It is sure that big exporting companies are using INTTRA more often than small and medium size companies, and I believe that in this kind of cases the bigger companies are working as a "trendsetter".

The world turns to be more web-based all the time and especially the use of e-commerce has experienced a major growth. I believe that these are the facts that will help system like INTTRA to stabilize its position in future's exporting, as INTTRA already has an extensive experience to serve web-based shipping industry. The future challenge for INTTRA is to make sure that they are using the best technology available, in order to be able to adapt and respond the customer's changing needs.

8 THE THESIS AS A PROCESS

As I already mentioned, the idea of this thesis started when I was working in Sachtlebe Pigments Oy. I realized how current and interesting topic this would be for my thesis. Right from the start I wanted to have Sachtleben Pigments Oy behind of this research, so I could use their name instead of using name case company.

At the beginning I started to gather information about everything that related to INTTRA and exporting, but after having a conversation with my supervisor, I realized how much I will have to narrow down my topics. Then I noticed how much better the thesis will be if it is more intensive, than the version where everything is circumspect and only scratching the coating. When I had a clear image of my scope, it was easier to start writing, because I was writing under the exact frame, which was formed around the thesis.

During the writing process, I started to study what kind of system this INTTRA is. Soon I became aware of how huge tool it is and how much time it is going to take to study all that material from the websites of INTTRA. During the writing process, I noticed that those websites were the biggest part of my sources and the list of references is not going to be so long. For me it was important to find some reliable sources, such as books beside of the website sources and I think that I managed to find few good books which refer to.

It was quite difficult to write about INTTRA, because the whole text was all new to me. When I started to figure out the whole idea of INTTRA, I also started to shape the questions of the questionnaires in my head. I noticed that the questions were more relevant when the background of INTTRA was clear to me. I was aiming to ask questions that are easy to realize, but at the same time also creating information that is revealing facts about INTTRA. Because of the small sampling, it was not so hard to analyze and gather the answers. The majority of the interviewees had same kind of experiences of INTTRA, so that made the analyzing little bit easier. I sent the questions when the theory part was done. Unlike analyzing the answers, finding the companies that I could interview was the hardest part of the whole thesis. You can read more about doing the interviews from the chapter *5.2 Implementation*.

This thesis was completed quite fast. I was scheduling my days in order to be able to write at least six hours per day and I noticed that it was the only right way if I wanted to graduate in June. Thesis as a process is not so bad once you get started and after that, the desire to write and explore only grows. Also the major help that I got from my supervisor enabled me to get this thesis completed and in the end, I am more than satisfied with the results.

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Dear Receiver,

My name is Mari Uusluoto and I am a student in Satakunta University of Applied sciences. I am studying International Business and at the moment I am doing my thesis about introduction of INTTRA e-commerce platform utilization in Sachtleben Pigments Oy.

The target idea of my thesis is to find out how Sachtleben Pigments Oy could benefit from using INTTRA e-commerce platform. In order to be able to discover all those benefits I am going to interview companies that are already using INTTRA and who could share their experiences with me. My target is to find out all the advantages and disadvantages that using INTTRA could cause.

This interview will be done anonymously and it is completely confidential. Your contacts will not be shared or used in the future.

Your answers will have a major impact on my thesis and it would enable me to achieve results that are necessary for my thesis to succeed. I would highly appreciate if you could answer the following questions and send the answers to my e-mail mari.uusluoto@student.samk.fi at the latest on 9.4.2012.

Thank you in advance!

Best Regards,

Mari Uusluoto
+osoite
+puhelinumero

INTTRA e-commerce platform questionnaire

8. How long have you been using INTTRA?
9. What services do you use from INTTRA?
10. How often do you use INTTRA?
11. Can you list some advantages and disadvantages in using INTTRA?
12. Are there some special requirements that using INTTRA requires from your company and have you made any changes in your working process, in order to be able to use INTTRA?
13. Have you been able to do any time savings when working with INTTRA?
14. Are you going to expand your utilization of INTTRA in future?

INTTRA e-commerce platform questionnaire

1. How long have you been providing shipping solutions through the INTTRA?
2. Are you able to see any kind of disadvantages in using INTTRA?
3. Can you list some reasons that affects on shipping companies desire to get as many customers as possible to do their booking via INTTRA?
4. Has competition between the shipping companies affected on your decision to use INTTRA?
5. Has the use of INTTRA increased among your customers in past five years?
6. Can you list the advantages that shipping companies are getting by using INTTRA?