C3 Solutions

Case Study

CONNECTING THE DOTS WITH SAP DATA INTEGRATION

A retailer boasting over 800 stores and 4 distribution centers (DC) wasn't satisfied with the appointment scheduling module residing in their warehouse management system (WMS). The project team came to C3 Solutions for assistance in order to resolve some very labor intensive processes and to improve the visibility on their dock activity. C3 Reservations was successfully implemented shortly after to complement SAP by optimizing the appointment and receiving process.

THE CHALLENGE

- The appointment requests were all managed by email, requiring a dedicated team of schedulers to manage the schedules for 5 facilities.

- To fulfill their contractual obligations, schedulers had to respond to appointment request within 24 hours. This constraint forced them to maintain a time consuming email tracking process that was still error prone.

- The manual schedule was built around restrictive door constraints.
These door assignments were of course no longer relevant at the time of the actual arrival but it was the only way to visualize the receiving capacity.

THE RESULTS

- Suppliers now request appointments through a self-served web portal accessible 24/7. Every request that fits within the schedule and constraints is automatically processed without any scheduler intervention.

- Most of the appointment requests are now automatically approved, allowing for immediate confirmation via automated emails. The C3 Reservations' business portal also provides a task list alerting the scheduling team of any exceptions so they can be dealt with in a timely manner.

- Appointment times are now made available to suppliers based on the true warehouse capacity and constraints (i.e. quantity, load type, product, etc.) leaving the door assignments to the arrival process, where it becomes truly relevant.

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THE CHALLENGE

- Because the scheduling was done in a system where each PO had to be appointed separately, consolidation loads took considerably longer to process.

- Processing trailer arrivals at the gate was a multi-step and cumbersome process: The gate guard had to capture appointment arrival information on paper, proceed to door assignment by contacting the warehouse via radio and then manually record the arrival information in SAP.

- Reconciling non-compliance information recorded against shipments in SAP and any appointment related issues was a manual and tedious process.

THE RESULTS

- Suppliers can now consolidate loads in one easy step when requesting appointments. PO booking status updates are then sent to SAP via web service integration, thus providing real time visibility to all users.

- The complete trailer arrival process can now be done using C3 Reservations. The appointment information can be retrieved and updated by gate guards via a mobile device, thus requiring minimum manual data input and radio communications.
  These real time updates dramatically speed up the process and contribute to reducing driver detention fees.

- Using C3 Reservations' compliance module, faults can easily be recorded on appointments as well as shipments, providing immediate visibility and reporting on the complete realm of non-compliance issues.