



Luka Koper Updates Operations and Boosts Efficiency with Tideworks' Solutions *North Adriatic's Most Important Port Overcomes Challenges to Successfully Replace Aging System*

Slovenia's national port, Luka Koper, is a dynamic and multi-purpose port that serves as the gateway to Central and Eastern Europe, as well as Mediterranean and Far East countries. Though its legacy terminal operating system (TOS) functioned adequately for a number of years, Luka Koper, as a relatively small customer of the TOS provider, found its maintenance and improvement needs were slow to be addressed. Then in 2009, Luka Koper was notified that its TOS was going to be unsupported. Luka Koper was now faced with a daunting project – identifying, selecting and implementing a new solution.

Boris Susmak, head of Luka Koper IT, and his four person team knew they needed to begin the search right away. The fact that the new TOS would have to integrate with Tino, a Luka Koper proprietary business system and the only Customs approved solution, further compounded the situation. This intricate system, developed by third-party provider Actual IT and deployed in 2007, functioned successfully alongside the legacy TOS system and was extremely intertwined with the port community. Finding, vetting, installing and deploying a new TOS would present significant challenges for Susmak and his team.

Forced to move quickly, Susmak undertook a search for a partner that would enable the port to achieve a higher degree of automation, simplify its processes, boost operating efficiency and effectively leverage mobile technologies to enhance visibility and control of container handling equipment (CHE). Although the previous TOS vendor's decision to end support of its software forced the company to find another TOS, it also provided Luka Koper with an extraordinary opportunity to find a stronger technology partner with a proven and reliable solution that better met the port's needs.

The Search

Susmak's initial sweep identified 15 providers, which he began evaluating against a series of selective criteria. The first evaluation criterion was a TOS that could ensure consistency of functionality provided by the current TOS and would integrate effectively with Tino. Susmak also factored in ease of use, total cost of ownership, the provider's experience with managing complex EDI, a proven and well-supported database solution, and the vendor's track record and experience working with similarly sized operations.

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The last factor was critical: Luka Koper felt its previous TOS provider had not paid adequate attention to its dynamic needs, and they had to wait interminably for upgrades and support. Using the collective criteria, Susmak narrowed his list down to seven providers, with Tideworks topping the list. In the final evaluation, Susmak's team confidently selected Tideworks Technology.

"We selected Tideworks due to its proven suite of technology solutions, its experience with similar types of ports and large-scale system migration projects, and its outstanding, long-term customer support," said Susmak. "We were impressed with the energy and enthusiasm the Tideworks' team brought to our project. With Tideworks, it's not just about business – it's about the relationship, and that was important."

Challenges

It was this customer service relationship that would be tested and eventually prove to significantly affect the ultimate success of the deployment. Given the complexity of the technical environment including integration with Tino, the conversion faced numerous challenges and complications. However, with the involvement of senior-level management and under the steady leadership of Susmak and Ronald Robinson, regional vice president Tideworks Technology, Luka Koper and Tideworks were able to clearly define necessary processes and requirements, set realistic and achievable expectations, and realize the tremendous value of the new TOS in the terminal's operation. The relationship Tideworks' and Luka Koper's management teams established early on was integral in their ability to work through initial setbacks.

Both Tideworks and Luka Koper learned invaluable lessons from the conversion. "Integration with Tino was extraordinarily complex," said Susmak. "The integration really required collaboration and support from Luka Koper, Actual IT and Tideworks. Tideworks enabled us to transition to its new TOS efficiently and cost effectively. Although we're currently utilizing the system for containerized cargo only, the Tideworks solution provides the platform to help us manage other types of cargo in the future, which is important for a multi-purpose port like Luka Koper. Tideworks' suite of solutions has allowed us to maximize operational productivity and enhance communication with our customers and partners."

Success of the deployment was also dependent on training the individuals that would be using the new TOS every day. While this training was planned for as part of the deployment, Tideworks recognized during the process that additional education would be beneficial given the differences between the former TOS and the new modern solution.

"Because the legacy system was in use for 10 years at Luka Koper, it required a significant effort by all parties to properly train the end users on the new system," stated Robinson. "Naturally, there was some initial resistance to such a large-scale change; people become accustomed to doing things a certain way after so many years, and now you are giving them a completely new set of tools to accomplish their tasks. Collectively, we engaged in a training effort that was probably several-fold what it might have been in a start-up operation due to this phenomenon." Now that the system has been in place for

several months, “The benefits of Tideworks’ modern TOS are perceived by management and end users alike,” according to Susmak.

Full implementation and go-live occurred in Q4 2012. Luka Koper now makes use of Tideworks Technology’s entire suite of TOS solutions, which includes Mainsail Terminal Management System®, Spinnaker Planning Management System®, Traffic Control™, Forecast® and Digital Bridge™ performance monitoring tool.

Measuring Success

Using Tideworks has enabled the terminal to operate in a proactive, rather than reactive, way and has provided benefits in performance, as well as improved visibility of information and operating assets. The result has been more timely and accurate monitoring and management of operations.

“The graphical interfaces for CHE operators provided by the Traffic Control system are a great benefit to our operation,” said Susmak. “The ability to send accurate, real-time instructions to equipment operators in a graphical and intuitive manner has not only helped boost the productivity of those assets, it has also enhanced yard inventory accuracy and led to a substantial decrease in yard re-handles.” Susmak added that loading of empty containers to vessels used to be primarily a manual undertaking. “This process is now managed with the TOS, saving us time and increasing the accuracy of empty loadings.”

In the short time, since deploying Tideworks solutions in conjunction with certain process changes, Luka Koper has seen significant productivity increases. In February and March 2013, Luka Koper averaged a gross productivity of 23.2 moves per crane per hour, which translates to a net productivity of roughly 30 moves per crane per hour. Luka Koper, said Susmak, hit a record of 100 moves per vessel per hour in April 2013 using the Tideworks TOS. Additionally, Susmak anticipates there will be further increases in productivity over time, as the solution is still relatively new.

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Although the systems conversion and deployment process was tricky, Tideworks and Luka Koper have built a strong partnership and continue to work seamlessly together, resulting in increased productivity for Luka Koper and the vastly improved maintenance and support that the port required. As Susmak puts it, “We could not ask for more from a partner. Tideworks has been there every step of the way during the deployment process. We are already realizing the benefits of Tideworks TOS and look forward to continued success.”

About Tideworks Technology

Tideworks is a premier provider of cost-effective, reliable software solutions for growing terminal operations and shipping lines worldwide. The company helps more than 50,000 users and nearly 90 facilities run their operations more efficiently and profitably. From optimized equipment utilization to

faster turn times, Tideworks works at every step of terminal operations to maximize productivity and customer service. For more information about Tideworks Technology, visit www.tideworks.com/.

Communiqué PR Contact Information

Colleen Moffitt

Main: 206-282-4923 x 113

Mobile: 206-979-4698

colleen@communiquepr.com