



International Container Operator Keeps in Touch with Drivers via SMS

ECS European Containers NV (ECS) are an International Container Operator which operates within the UK, Ireland and the European Continent as a whole. ECS became a client of HSL's in 2008 since developing a need to find a new and more cost effective SMS provider.

ECS are renowned for their intermodal solutions with short transit times and a perfect service. In Zeebrugge, ECS additionally offer warehousing and cross docking services and due to its location the ECS warehouse can also be used as a bridgehead between the UK and the rest of Europe. As such the ability to maintain excellent interdepartmental communications, including with contractors, is crucial to the success of the business.

ECS have three different software systems which are used to send SMS messages to truck drivers. As the truck drivers are not ECS personnel but rather subcontractors, the use of their onboard computers would be too difficult to utilise, so SMS is the best way to instruct them. Previously messages were sent through SIM boxes on a server in Belgium but because the majority of these messages are sent to international numbers, the cost of messages became too high. Coupled with a lack of redundancy, ECS felt they therefore had no choice but to search for an alternative provider who could send messages at a cheaper rate.

The decision to switch to HSL was therefore based on HSL's cost effective pricing structures, the ability to forward the messages through the internet from an automated system and furthermore the solid, and professional, support and approach offered by HSL.

HSL's technically capable and highly reliable SMS delivery infrastructure comprises geographically separate and independent customer facing sites, and links directly into the infrastructure of multiple mobile network operators. The configuration includes geographic redundancy and redundant links via different suppliers between all sites. This infrastructure enables HSL to offer clients over 99.9% availability Service Level Agreement.

Since moving to HSL, ECS have now configured their three applications to produce a custom xml file which is submitted to their internal Microsoft Biztalk Server. When the message is sent through HSL, feedback to the originating application is sent back according to the instructions that were sent along with the message in the xml file thus enabling efficient, reliable and cost effective SMS communications.