

Case Study

Application Development and Managed IT Services Enable a Transportation Brokerage Firm to Boost Business Efficiency and Increase Customer Satisfaction



Customer Overview

Customer

A non-asset transportation brokerage firm

Profile

The firm offers full-service, multi-modal logistics solutions to meet the demands of the transportation industry

Industry

Transportation

Services

Application Development, Managed IT

Business Need

The brokerage firm invests heavily in cutting-edge technology and experienced logistics professionals to deliver superior client service. As a service-centric logistics company that provides accurate data, visibility of shipments, and timely services to its customers, the firm acts as a bridge that connects carriers and customers based on market requirements.

With a deep focus on managing carriers, customers, shipment tracking, shipment exceptions, and accounting functions, it is one of the most trusted freight brokers in the industry. It is well known for its customer-centric services.

However, as the business grew, the existing Transport Management System (TMS) could not keep up with increasing needs, which led to many challenges in scaling operations:

- Manual tracking of shipments led to poor visibility, untimely updates, and lower service delight.
- Multiple inefficient tools were being used for cross-border logistics, leading to issues in freight compliance management.
- The absence of data analytics led to limited visibility into the market landscape, which made competitive pricing challenging and often resulted in loss of business or profits.
- Disorganised contract management due to poor integration and visibility into downstream processes resulted in several challenges in catering to RFPs and loss of expected business from customers and carriers.

- The reliance on data from different sources reduced the time to produce accurate reports and constricted scalability.
- Clunky spreadsheet-based manual reporting limited the firm's ability to conduct historical analysis and generate accurate reports.

The firm wanted to replace its legacy TMS to sustainably accelerate the rapid evolution of the business and ensure it remains at the top of the freight industry. It also sought to outsource critical IT functions to leverage shared services, fractional specialized resources, and global delivery to:

- Scale IT services up or down based on business needs and quickly adapt to changing market conditions.
- Enhance IT delivery via application rationalization and consolidation and reduce technical debt by optimizing costs and resources.
- Boost efficiency by automating core business processes for better productivity and cost savings.
- Allow internal resources to focus on strategic initiatives and core competencies while getting end-to-end support for handling non-core IT functions.

Approach and Solution

To overcome the brokerage firm's challenges and replace the current TMS, Synoptek began the engagement by conducting a thorough review and analysis of its existing technology ecosystem. We assessed the products and processes across logistics brokerage through detailed discovery sessions with key stakeholders.

Based on several onshore and offshore discovery sessions, we outlined the product backlog and designed an MVP for an integrated platform for all transportation management requirements. It was an ecosystem, including a TMS encompassing various workflows for customer, carrier, and shipment management and integrations for shipment tracking, capacity planning, accounting, and associated reports.

Application Development

Synoptek proposed a TMS ecosystem with third-party integrations to build a custom TMS catering to the firm's business processes and needs. This solution will allow users to manage shipments, customers, and carriers using a single application and streamline shipment lifecycle management. It will also offer essential operational features such as shipment, procurement, operations, accounting, and exception management and act as a source of truth for any transactional information.

- **Automated Workflows:** Crafted an always-on, exception-based, state-of-the-art tracking board that automates workflows and enables real-time visibility and 24/7 updates from users and third-party apps.
- **Cross-Border Logistics:** Created a load management platform with robust capabilities to handle and cater to domestic and cross-border loads.
- **Compliance Management:** Automated and simplified compliance management for rate confirmations, customs documentation, and other regulatory requirements for safe and hassle-free transportation of goods.
- **Advanced Analytics:** Created capabilities for reps to perform pricing based on advanced analytics using real-time market analysis, trends, and historical data for pricing shipments and services.
- **Contract Management:** Built a solution for strategically managing business relationships, delivering RFPs and awards through a streamlined workflow, and ensuring seamless transfer and handling of continuous business from customers.

Business Intelligence

Synoptek enabled independent Power BI reporting within the TMS application, generating various reports daily. This included setting up an independent data warehouse to deliver customer reports, carrier reports, shipment statistics, and other key accounting reports.

- **Advanced Datawarehouse:** Created a centralized repository for all data, ensuring secure and easy access, retaining historical data, enabling the generation of past reports, and facilitating trend analysis.
- **BI Integration:** Integrated the data warehouse solution with BI for powerful data integration, analytics, and visualization.
- **Quick Insights:** Adopted the Common Semantic Model approach to ensure consistent and shared business logic across all reporting processes, facilitating quick insights for complex queries and maintaining robust data integrity and security throughout the system.

Managed Services

Enabling access to a broad talent pool, Synoptek provided a range of Managed Services for Application Support using the Global Delivery Support Platform, enabling the firm to scale operations and manage additional workloads efficiently:

- Managed Application Support
 - Reviewed and confirmed build components and specifications.
 - Deployed network and security components, App Services, Functions, API Management, and Azure DevOps.
 - Monitored critical processes with proactive notifications.
 - Ensured TMS functionality remained secure, stable, and reliable.
- Managed Azure Services
 - Ensured service management aligns with Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) frameworks.
 - Ensured 24/7 operations of Azure services across
 - Cloud Management Platform & Governance
 - Cloud Managed Services
 - Service Management
 - Security & Compliance
 - PaaS Management
 - Application Centric
 - Disaster Recovery
 - Client Engagement
- Overall Product Management and Governance
 - Established product planning and management processes.
 - Tracked releases and made dynamic updates for maximum value.
 - Enabled continuous improvements with feedback from customers, users, and stakeholders.

Business Benefits

An underlying set of processes, tools, automation, and AI-enabled development enabled Synoptek to deliver more features, application changes, and value than can otherwise be achieved with a pure staffing model.

To meet the brokerage firm's 200+ requirements, Synoptek developed 500+ prototypes, built 450+ user stories, provided 15+ demos, and constantly incorporated user feedback to enhance performance and functionality. In addition, we enabled significant improvements in delivery excellence, responsiveness, scalability, and flexibility through comprehensive IT outsourcing and managed support.

Developing the custom TMS solution and associated integrations and reports causes zero performance issues and zero downtime, enabling the logistics brokerage firm to enjoy several business benefits.

- **Enhanced Visibility:** State-of-the-art tracking improves shipment status visibility, punctuality, and customer satisfaction.
- **Simplified Logistics:** Streamlined cross-border logistics expand business capabilities and ensure compliance with international regulations.
- **Streamlined Operations:** Consolidated application environment reduces licensing and support costs.
- **Global 24/7 Support:** Accelerates feature delivery and optimizes labor costs.
- **Advanced Analytics:** Optimizes pricing strategies, increasing profitability and competitive advantage.
- **Consistent Reporting:** Common semantic model ensures data consistency, rapid analysis, and top-notch security.
- **Comprehensive Managed Services:** Drives growth and optimization with minimal disruptions.
- **Retrospective Analysis:** Identifies trends and opportunities, enabling corrective actions based on KPIs.



TMS builds are complicated. Logistics is complicated. In my experience, working with Synoptek has been very positive. Everybody at Synoptek has helped to accommodate our needs and provided solutions that have allowed us to build a wonderful product. I look forward to improving that product with the team and to years of shared success with our new TMS solution and the many wonderful things that will build and come of it.

- Chief Operating Officer



56% increase in On-time pick



58% increase in On-time Delivery



Prebook of Loads up by **63%**



E-Track increased to **81%**



Carrier Utilization increased by **20%**



Average processing time for load tenders reduced to under **~2 days**

About Synoptek

Synoptek delivers accelerated business results through advisory-led, transformative full-life-cycle systems integration and managed services. We partner with organizations worldwide to help them navigate the ever-changing business and technology landscape, build solid foundations for their business, and achieve their business goals.