



FACTS

Customer: Wincanton Trans European (Netherland) B.V., an European Logistics company

Challenge: Speed up invoicing and flag up problems effectively when making long-distance deliveries.

Solution: Digital Pen and Paper solution BTMS-EnRoute from bVa/Beurtvaartadres B.V., incorporating digital pen with Bluetooth technology and Anoto Functionality based on unique gridprinting to transmit signed shipping instructions back to the office. Software developed by Getronics.

Benefits: Smoother administration, quicker invoicing, speedier response to potential problems. Easy to use for drivers, meaning that charter truck drivers can easily adapt to the system.

Digital pen cuts out paperwork for logistics companies

Speeding up the process

Long-distance truck drivers are often on the move for weeks at a time, making the process of dealing with paperwork a long and drawn-out one. A shipping instruction printed at the truck's home base has to be signed and annotated on the way. Invoices cannot be sent to the customer until the driver returns with the form signed and completed as a proof of delivery (POD).

Additionally, any comments on the form from the receiver, perhaps pointing out a problem with the delivery, can take time to be communicated back to the office.

A solution developed by Dutch company bVa using Anoto digital pen and paper functionality makes it possible for an office in one end of Europe to update a form as it is filled in by senders, truck drivers and receivers at the other end of the continent.

The solution, BTMS-EnRoute, has attracted the attention of Wincanton, one of Europe's largest logistics companies.

Wincanton has implemented the solution in the Netherlands, and soon intends to implement it for international deliveries.

Simple and effective

Using Anoto's digital pen and paper functionality, the solution makes it possible for the form to be updated digitally while the delivery is on its way.

"From the moment you put pen to paper you know which goods are being sent from who to whom," says Ton Huybrechts, marketing manager at bVa.

The process for the logistics company is simple and effective. Shipping instructions are printed at the base office on a waybill, each with its own unique pattern, which identifies the job that it is being used for. The forms are printed on OKI printers, which support the Anoto Functionality. At the same time an image of the waybill is sent to the Digital Paper Portal (DPP) of bVa.

Then comes the really clever part: at

every stage of the delivery process the forms are signed – by the driver when collecting the goods, and by the company receiving the goods. But instead of signing with a normal pen, they use a digital pen with Anoto Functionality.

As well as a normal ballpoint cartridge, the pen has an infrared camera that detects what is being written. The pen then stores an exact image of the signatures and any notes, which can be sent back through bVa's DPP using a Bluetooth-equipped mobile phone.

"This also is a great advantage compared to expensive PDA-like terminals that have to be installed in the truck," says Huybrechts.

When the information arrives at the DPP, the forms are automatically updated and an image of this updated form is sent by email to everyone concerned. As the office by now has the signature confirming receipt of the goods, an invoice can be sent to the customer.

Automated processing

Because of the possibility of locating exactly where on the waybill the ink has been placed, automated processing (invoicing and archiving) of the documents can now take place. If there is a problem, the receiving party will place remarks on the document outside of the normal signing box.

This makes it possible for the DPP to inform the transportation company or the sender's customer service staff automatically by e-mail, so they will be able to see the remarks on the form almost in real-time, and can deal with the issue quickly and effectively.

"With BTMS-EnRoute you can increase the level of service you offer customers considerably, which is a big advantage," says Huybrechts. The system has been greeted with delight by Wincanton. The main advantage for the drivers is that BTMS-EnRoute involves almost no alteration of the way they use the waybill. The

drivers only have to let the receiving party sign with the digital pen.

"The power of the system lies in the acceptance of the users," says Mark Brücker, IT-coordinator at Wincanton Trans European.

"We were able to reduce the user manual for drivers/users to just one single piece of paper. To our own surprise that was sufficient. One intuitively understands how to use the digital pen," he says.

As one of their drivers stated: "This really works. At last this is a solution that has been developed from the perspective of daily practice. The fact that it is easy to use means the digital pen and the paired phone can easily be handed over to, for instance, charter truck drivers.

"Using the digital pen provides us with a much cheaper system, which is much more flexible, for instance when working with charters," says René te Lintum, Finance Manager at Wincanton Trans European.

Partner profile:

bVa/Beurtvaartadres

bVa/Beurtvaartadres' mission is to ensure that businesses can carry out their logistical administrative tasks efficiently and in a user-friendly fashion. The introduction of BTMS-EnRoute is a good example of this. This solution was developed for speed, efficiency, control and price, all combined in a single user-friendly, digital system. In order to appeal to a broad user-base and to make implementation as easy as possible, bVa/Beurtvaartadres decided to combine the familiarity and ease of pen and paper with the efficiency of digital data processing and mobile communications technology. For further information about bVa / Beurtvaartadres, visit www.tmsbv.nl

Getronics

With some 25,000 employees in 30 countries and approximate revenues of €2.6 billion, Getronics is one of the world's leading providers of vendor independent Information and Communication Technology (ICT) solutions and services. Getronics headquarters are in Amsterdam, with regional offices in Boston, Madrid and Singapore. Getronics' shares are traded on Euronext Amsterdam ('GTN'). For further information about Getronics, visit www.getronics.com

Customer profile:

Wincanton is a European leader in the design and delivery of advanced supply chain solutions. Its 28,000 people operate across Europe, producing an annual turnover of over £1.7bn /€2.5bn, and offer a broad spectrum of services that enable clients to optimise their logistics requirements at local, national or regional level. www.wincanton.co.uk

Anoto Digital Pen and Paper technology

An Anoto Digital Pen looks and feels like a normal ballpoint pen. However, it contains an integrated digital camera, an advanced image microprocessor and a Bluetooth® transmitter. Any paper can be used with a digital pen, if the Anoto dot pattern is added to the layout before printing the paper. The Anoto dot pattern consists of numerous black dots that can be read by the digital pen, but are almost invisible to the naked eye. The pen reads the pattern and registers what and where the user writes.