



TUESDAY • 9 MAY 2023 THE OFFICIAL DAILY NEWSPAPER OF AIR CARGO EUROPE 2023

New lives for old uniforms



When Hactl recently began the process of replacing its frontline staff uniforms, the principal aims were naturally to create new workwear that combined functionality, comfort and supported the corporate brand. The new uniforms have, indeed, proven very popular with staff.

For most companies, that would have been enough; but at Hactl, with its strong commitment to ESG, it raised questions over how to dispose of the 8,000+ old uniforms in an environmentally-responsible manner and one which adhered to its recently-published Strategic Sustainability Framework.

“For Hactl, the ideal would be to give the old uniforms a useful second life, while also raising awareness about sustainability and waste reduction among our staff. The end result was a design for a useful, durable and stylish holdall. In addition, we designed a particularly cute toy bear that uses the

fabric remnants not suitable for the construction of the bags,” Hactl Chief Executive Wilson Kwong said.

Apart from reducing landfill and giving new life to existing materials, by upcycling the old Hactl uniforms into useful items, Hactl hopes it will inspire others to live sustainably through conscious consumption, make better use of waste and unwanted items and take small daily actions daily that collectively create a greener community. Hactl also collaborated on the project with St James’ Settlement Jockey Club Upcycling Centre, so providing paid work for people with disabilities.

“Our members enjoy upcycling the used fabric into bags. They were taught new techniques and were able to challenge themselves with tasks that require more sophisticated skills and careful handling. This not only empowers them technically, but also makes them feel respected and valued,” Sonia Tsang, Project Manager of St. James’ Settlement Jockey Club Upcycling Centre, said.

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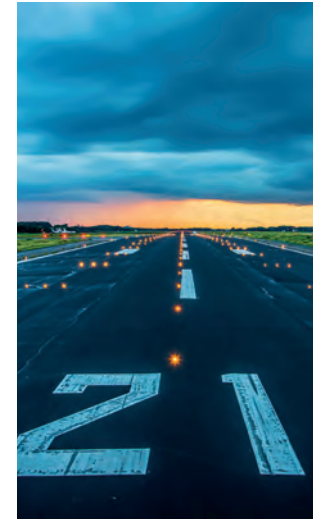


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Maastricht airport starts runway upgrade



Maastricht Aachen Airport (MST), the second largest cargo hub in the Netherlands, has started renovation work on its runway as part of an infrastructure investment plan of up to €100 million over the next few years. MST is investing €35.3 million in its runway upgrade between May and June in anticipation of a project to extend its operational length to 2,750 metres by January 2025.

“Maastricht has much to offer the Dutch air cargo community, with no slot restrictions or congestion at the airport and now a significant infrastructure investment program,” Jos Roeven, Chief Executive Officer, MST, said.

“There is a fantastic opportunity in the current market for regional airports to step up for the cargo industry and help drive a more sustainable future for freight, whilst at the same time creating job opportunities for our local communities.”

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Emirates SkyCargo’s new campaign spotlights the people impact of its air logistics expertise

Emirates SkyCargo has announced the launch of a new creative advertising campaign ahead of air cargo Europe, the world’s leading trade fair for air cargo and logistics.

Showcasing how ‘The World Works Better with Emirates SkyCargo’, the creative brings to life six of its specialist air logistics product areas: pharmaceuticals, flowers, fruits, pets, horses and valuables.

In a departure from functional USP-focussed advertising messages often seen in the cargo industry, Emirates’ new campaign uses everyday scenarios to showcase the tangible impact that

Emirates SkyCargo’s safe and reliable logistics expertise has on the lives of people around the world.

The 60-second advert documents moments in a person’s life, such as holding a bouquet of flowers on their wedding day, receiving life-saving healthcare, or even something as simple as buying and eating fresh produce.

“Over the years, Emirates SkyCargo has established its market-leading capabilities in several key specialist air logistics areas by continually investing in technology, facilities, equipment, and people. We also work closely with our customers and partners

“**We also work closely with our customers and partners to develop highly effective and efficient solutions**”


to develop highly effective and efficient solutions,” Nabil Sultan, Chief Cargo Officer at Emirates, said.

“We want people to realise that we’re not in the business of moving boxes but rather, we are in the business of ensuring that important things in life, whether it is a pet, a medicine, or a diamond ring, reach those who need it, when they need it.”

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Oman Air Cargo to highlight growing capabilities



Oman Air's Cargo division is gearing up for the upcoming air cargo Europe, where it will showcase its upcoming plans, including its first freighter that is expected during Q4.

"The air cargo industry is experiencing a remarkable surge and Oman is well-positioned to capitalise on this trend with its strategic location and its focus on logistics as a cornerstone of economic diversification," Jaffar Al Lawati, Vice President – Commercial Cargo at Oman Air said.

"As we prepare to attend Air Cargo Europe 2023, we are eager to showcase our capabilities, engage with industry leaders, and explore opportunities to support our partners in achieving their business objectives."

Established in 2009, Oman Air Cargo has quickly built a reputation as a leading air cargo carrier in the Middle East. Delivering bespoke solutions for all kinds of freight transportation needs, it continues to innovate and invest to meet the evolving demands of its rapidly growing customer base.



CharterSync launches game-changing end-to-end booking process and management system

Air cargo charter business CharterSync is celebrating four years of air cargo charter disruption by becoming the first air cargo charter company worldwide to offer a fully integrated digital end-to-end booking process and management system for freight forwarders.

CharterSync is debuting the updated system at Air Cargo Europe 2023, showcasing the powerful new time-saving features that build on the company's reputation for driving change in the air cargo charter industry using digital disruption and innovation. The new system will be rolled out to customers in June 2023.

Fully integrated into CharterSync's existing web and mobile booking platform, the new process captures and consolidates all data and documentation associated with a charter booking, aggregating it into a central 'hub' which can be accessed in real time by all parties.

Accessible by an intuitive booking dashboard, the process provides a central repository for key documentation such as airway bills (AWBs), permits, air cargo manifests, customs declarations, load plans, technical drawings as well as emails and other correspondence formerly conducted off-platform.

Another significant efficiency will be the ability to automate and expedite the contract phase thanks to integration with PandaDoc, an electronic signature software tool which populates a contract template with data and client information extracted during the booking process.

"It is genuinely thrilling to unveil our new end-to-end process at Air Cargo Europe, where CharterSync was first launched. The new process allows us to smooth the customer pathway and bring enhanced value and efficiencies to customers. Aggregating all information about the booking in one place enables CharterSync to eliminate a key pain point, while removing the risk of miscommunication, mislaid documentation and human error," Ed Gillett, co-

founder and director of CharterSync, said.

"This game-changing development in the booking management process will benefit all our clients – whether managing a time-critical flight where every second counts, or longer-term projects where meticulous planning is required with multiple documents and diagrams. It will complement other recent enhancements to the platform such as live flight tracking via our RocketRoute integration which allows freight forwarders to monitor the aircraft's position across any phase of their booking and providing total visibility into how their charter is tracking against its schedule," Gillett continued.

Having launched with a focus on UK/Europe-bound cargoes, CharterSync now provides services to a global client base, with global charter flights representing 75% of its business - a 350% increase

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It is genuinely thrilling to unveil our new end-to-end process at Air Cargo Europe, where CharterSync was first launched

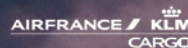
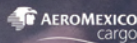
year-on-year. Servicing hundreds of different customers on six continents, CharterSync specialises in key sectors such as humanitarian/disaster relief, entertainment and events, pharmaceuticals, automotive supply chain, dangerous goods, and just-in-time logistics.



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TIACA and cargo.one drive digitalisation

The International Air Cargo Association (TIACA) and digital cargo booking platform cargo.one have made a clear statement of intent in their mission to promote technological innovation in the airfreight sector. cargo.one's Founder and Co-CEO Moritz Claussen joined the association as a Trustee member – the highest level of membership – in March, bringing his experience in building digital businesses at a time when TIACA is keen to embrace new opportunities across the cargo and logistics industry.

In recent years, digitalisation has increased at a rapid pace in the air cargo industry, with digital booking platforms, like cargo.one, seeking to improve efficiency and effectiveness of operations in the sector. The opportunities presented by digital platforms is seen in the strong results reported by forwarders and airlines who have embraced technology.

"We feel very honoured and humbled by the confidence that cargo.one displayed in us by becoming a Trustee. It's the highest level of membership category that we have," TIACA's Director General Glyn Hughes explained.

TIACA's vision

Speaking to Air Cargo Week, Claussen explained his motivation to team up with TIACA came from conversations with Hughes, who was clear about the need to drive progress in the industry.

"I thought that was well aligned with how we think. It's important to have industry initiatives and associations of people coming together to promote innovation," Claussen said. "We found an organisation in TIACA and a person in Glyn who are pushing the right things to really advance the industry."

"We firmly believe that this industry's root to survival is that we have to think differently and act differently," Hughes added. "That's seen in this new breed of organisations, new CEO, the guys that come in and say: 'There's no such thing as a problem that's not insurmountable. It's just another opportunity to do something different.'"

"Our role at TIACA is to shine a spotlight on innovation. We want to create a home for all these innovative, creative new ideas to show the world that there is a way to inspire and achieve new results," he explained.

Beyond standard setting

With the airfreight industry becoming increasingly complex, competitive and globally connected, standardisation can simplify

processes and, in some cases, reduce cost and complexity for businesses. After all, it aims to allow stakeholders in each of the airfreight sectors, whether airlines, airports, freight forwarders, GSAs, government departments, etc, seamlessly. However, while this might have been crucial for the first 30-40 years of the industry, Hughes believes that "we're in a different era now." Claussen agrees, believing that the old approach of sticking to set standards makes the industry slower, delaying positive progress that can improve operations and allow companies to adapt to rapidly evolving situations.

"It's now a case of who can run fastest because of the demands that are being placed on the industry," By joining us, Moritz and cargo.one bring their approach of challenging processes in the industry to find more effective ways of operating. "We like challenge. We like our members to be challenged. We want TIACA to be that home where people feel that we want to create the right environment for people who are creative and can help expose that to the wider airfreight community."

Continuing to innovate

While cargo.one prides itself on being an innovator when it comes to technological development in the air cargo space, working to accelerate digital cargo sales, Claussen is aware that the company can't rest on its laurels – it has to continue to evolve. The same is true for TIACA, as an association.

As new opportunities emerge and digitalisation grows, Claussen acknowledges that they "continuously need to innovate."

"We came into the industry five years ago with a product and an idea that just didn't exist. Now there are more companies offering the same or similar service, we have to focus on aspects that some others might not."

"Let's actually start pushing the rest of the world to where the collective thinking actually says the world is going," Hughes said. "The more we get challenged by this new generation of CEOs, the more demand we have to go and translate to governments and the industry. You can't wait five years, we need to up our game, translating all this new knowledge into helping create a better environment."

"I think this industry will thrive on collaboration and associations, like TIACA, and maybe TIACA first and foremost, are able to create that collaboration on a different level between more established players, newer, younger companies and those that still need to come in," Claussen continued.

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Europa goes global with growing network

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As a business that operates globally, we are used to dealing with fluctuations in the markets on a regular basis

Having begun with just daily services to and from Italy out of an office in Barking, Essex, Europa Worldwide has expanded from simply covering Europe to having bases in Hong Kong, Shanghai, Dubai and more. Most recently, Europa branched out further with a new office in Delhi, India, allowing it to strengthen its foothold in another region. Marking the first time Europa has stepped into the India Subcontinent, this move opens the door to huge opportunities for the company's customers and operating markets.

“Over the past 18 months we have opened a number of offices around the globe and our expansion into Delhi will allow us to continue with our growth ambition and increase our geographical footprint,” Angus Hind, Director for Europa Air & Sea, said.

With three divisions: Europa Road, Europa Air & Sea and Europa Warehouse, Europa Worldwide finds itself involved in all aspects of ocean and air cargo transportation. This is reflected in the current mix of cargo moved throughout the globe by Europe, roughly 50% airfreight and 50% ocean freight.

Enhancing operations

For Europa, while its home might be in Europe, it is always looking for regions that are ripe for the picking. India has always been a core market of focus for the company due to how the Indian economy is growing at an exponential rate. “As we have a strong relationship as nations, it felt like a natural progression,” Hind added.

By establishing a firm base in the region, Europa is looking to further develop some of its core markets for both imports and exports which include, technology and pharmaceutical. There are also strong trade links between China and India, and with its office in Shanghai performing particularly well there was an increased demand for an office in Delhi.

“We have strategically opened our offices in India, China and Hong Kong to emulate where we have a footprint of business. What we are now looking at, is how we can enhance and further that network so that we can incorporate more links within Europa's own supply chain including our offices in the UAE and the UK,” Hind continued.

Fluctuating demand

The airfreight industry has continued to face a number of external issues that pose significant challenges for companies operating within the cargo sector. Strikes across multiple industries, the continuing impact of the Ukrainian war and rising energy costs have put pressure on the industry.

The global appetite for cargo has also slightly decreased in Q1 of 2023 due to the cost of living, while capacity on cargo routes is becoming tighter. Customer expectations are changing, with increased demand for real-time access to information

“As a business that operates globally, we are used to dealing with fluctuations in the markets on a regular basis. At the moment, we are finding that the European market has slowed down, however what we have seen is good growth in both our UK exports and intra-Asia trade lane,” Hind explained.

“Despite all of these external challenges, I'm sure you'll agree the airfreight industry has adapted, shifting gradually in line with supply and demand, and meeting changing customer expectations. As we continue into the year and businesses progress and expand globally, I'm sure we will see the airfreight industry continue to play a crucial role in facilitating the movement of goods worldwide,” Hind predicted.

Future targets

As a company, Europa is always reviewing and identifying where it might need to alter its approach to ensure it can effectively fulfil the needs and requirements of its customers by having skilled and dedicated local teams. These staff members look to stay one step ahead of the game, reacting with agility to any situation that could emerge.

That's why Europa is always looking ahead, even after an impressive period of growth in its global network.

Looking ahead, following the recent growth of its global network, Europa is planning the next step in its evolution. Discussing his plans, Hind revealed that the company sees an opportunity to open a new office in Rotterdam in the coming months, as it takes another big step. There are also other potential offices in additional continents that are under consideration.

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Connecting the airfreight in

Etihad Cargo was flying high in 2022, exceeding its operational performance targets due, in part, to an exceptional first six months. While that pace did normalise in the second half of the year from a cargo standpoint, the logistics wing of the airline brought in roughly a third of overall revenue to the group.

The carrier achieved 80.5% on-time-performance (OTP) for freighter departures and 84.1% OTP for freighter arrivals, ahead of its 80 per

cent target. Etihad Cargo has also maintained a delivered-as-promised (DAP) rate of 86.6 per cent, a 2.6% improvement compared to the previous year and over its target of 85%.

“It was an exceptional year for cargo operations and a record year for Etihad Cargo. Towards the second half, the load factors were in the high 90s from a passenger perspective, so, combined, the airline had a record year in terms of results,” Leonard Rodrigues, Etihad Cargo’s head of revenue management and network planning, said.

2023 goals

For a global carrier such as Etihad Cargo, it’s not surprising that their main goal going forward is to build on the momentum of the previous year to ensure that they continue to meet customers’ capacity demands with agility. This mission to remain the air cargo partner of choice comes with innovation, digitalisation and operational excellence.

Etihad Cargo’s app allows for airfreight to be tracked while in transit — cargo on the go — as well as offering real-time flight schedules at the customer’s fingertips. Alongside this, Etihad Cargo is also a member of the International Air Transport Association (IATA) initiative e-AWB. This initiative eliminates the need for a paper AWB, making cargo paperless, improving accuracy and reliability and speeding up cargo acceptance.

This drive for innovation is shown in some of the offerings presented by Etihad Cargo that are designed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the carrier’s operations. “We are really investing to make it smoother, more controlled, and reduce offloads. From a commercial standpoint, our goal is to be the cargo partner of choice,” Rodrigues explained.

To achieve that, Etihad Cargo recognises that it’s crucial they are as easy to deal with as possible. This is done through maximising the potential of technology to ensure peak customer experience, with Rodrigues revealing that more is yet to come, with a lot of innovation “stacked up and ready to implement.”

Rising to meet a changing market

With the airfreight market experiencing fluctuating demand levels over the past few years, presenting both challenges and opportunities, Etihad Cargo made expanding its global network a priority in 2022. This goal saw the carrier secure increased belly-hold capacity to key destinations, including Bangkok, Brussels, Dublin, Guangzhou,

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Industry through Abu Dhabi

Johannesburg, Kuala Lumpur, London, Madrid, New York, Singapore and Vienna.

In 2023, the carrier has continued this expansion, already boosting capacity to China with an additional Shanghai freighter service, signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to boost its African network and expanding its offering in the European market across Dusseldorf, Frankfurt and Copenhagen.

While the carrier's strong growth has been driven by a period no one could have predicted, which saw a super peak for demand in 2021,

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Market conditions are unpredictable, so no one is able to predict with a high level of accuracy what the situation will be in five years time

Etiha Cargo is realistic but optimistic about its vision going forward.

“The game is changing,” Rodrigues said. “What we are focusing on is maintaining the record throughput on every plane, making sure that we have as much contribution on every plane, and building better and better performance.”

“Market conditions are unpredictable, so no one is able to predict with a high level of accuracy what the situation will be in five years time. However, Etiha Cargo is taking the lessons it has learned and is positioned to respond to dynamic changes with agility,” he continued.

It's not just the level of demand in the airfreight industry that is reshaping the sector. An increase in competition and a reshaping of the way logistics companies operate across the entire supply chain is leading companies to adapt and innovate to remain ahead of the curve. “There are all these new entrants, all those aircraft available,

an increase in maritime players coming into the air segment,” which makes it “relatively difficult to predict the exact balance between demand and supply,” Rodrigues explained.

Despite the unpredictable nature of the industry, Etiha Cargo is looking up, with Rodrigues dismissing the risk of a “negative future” on the horizon for the airfreight space. “Everybody wants to mitigate the risk of anything problematic happening, so we think there are a lot of people who want to team up and build a global partnership.”

Welcome to the UAE

Earlier this year, Etiha Cargo, in partnership with the World Cargo Summit, welcomed the airfreight industry to Abu Dhabi, showcasing their global vision for the capital of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Alongside Etiha Cargo, the nation has not shied away from its vision to build a global cargo hub, capitalising on its ideal position in the world, linking to multiple regions in a relatively short timeframe.

“Etiha Cargo is now back in growth mode. But, in addition to our focus on growth, we are committed to attracting the right partners and building an ecosystem in Abu Dhabi,” Rodrigues explained. “This is about responsiveness, agility and making sure that we have the right efficiencies and capabilities 10 years from now.”

“What we're increasingly looking at is how to ensure Etiha Cargo can synergise with partners. You need to have an integrated relationship where you can get the most out of it. We're trying to build those win-win partnerships with different companies.”

At the centre of this vision is the creation of a pharma hub at Etiha Cargo's home base, a long-term project that will allow the carrier and the country to profit from the premium side of the air cargo market. Etiha Cargo's award-winning PharmaLife service is designed for the safe and reliable transportation of pharmaceuticals and life science products. Even with the decrease in the movement of Covid-19 vaccines, Etiha has continued to see strong performance in this area, as it works with Abu Dhabi to build a global pharma hub in the region.

“We still have quite a bit of focus on our enhanced premium product range,” Rodrigues laid out. “The Pharma facility is still new. We need to make sure that we have the right product when it comes to transiting pharma products, so we are working on this, enhancing capabilities for the ground phase of our temperature-controlled solutions.”

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Inflight Canada (IFC) is on a mission to create economical and flexible use of commercial aircraft, not just in their own country but around the world. Having spent the last 44 years in the commercial airline passenger (PAX) systems retrofit business, the company has expanded into the world of passenger to freighter (P2F) retrofits.

IFC provides services and retrofit kits to the commercial airline sector, starting with retrofit designs, airworthiness engineering, retrofit kit manufacturing and installation/operation Supplemental Type Certificates (STCs), followed by the maintenance of the installed system.

"Over the past 47 years IFC has evolved from a purely maintenance organization through providing retrofits and up to the present where we also develop, design, test and certify various systems for use on the PAX cabins of commercial aircraft including our new Reversible Cargo system," George Smallhorn, Inflight Canada General Manager said.

Growing demand for P2F services

During the pandemic, there was an increase in demand for P2F cargo conversions, with some companies continuing that interest over the last few years. "We saw the pandemic temporary freighters as just that, temporary and relying on "exemptions" from the various airworthiness authorities all of which have expired," Smallhorn added.

"We view the change away from high end business travel towards seasonal leisure travel and the long term growth of e-commerce as the driving factor for the rotational use of PAX aircraft to cargo and then back to PAX," he added.

Looking at what makes the P2F market so desirable for companies in the airline industry is the ability to flexibly utilise available aircraft. This means you don't just purely have to be within the airfreight market, you can have other air transport businesses as well.

"The IFC "reversible" Cargo System, like all of our aircraft systems, is designed to be generic across all platforms ranging from B777- A340/ A330 to B737/A320 & Canadair Regional Jet/ Embraer Regional Jet, so the next step after the first aircraft is to certify the system on all aircraft types and models followed by participating in the e-Aircraft market with the LYTE Aviation LA-44 SkyTruck aircraft," Smallhorn explained.

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Embracing evolution in

Air Charter Service (ACS) was formed in the basement of Chris Leach's Kingston upon Thames home in 1990 and has evolved into a global player in the charter broker business, as the industry has changed at an increasingly rapid pace.

Decades after its founding, ACS has a network of offices spanning North America, South America, Europe, Africa, the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Middle East, Asia and Australasia, arranging 28,000 charter flights every year for its thousands of clients around the globe.

While the industry has changed in many ways, from the aircraft types and airlines to the professionalism of brokers, "the essence is still there," according to Dan Morgan-Evans, Global Cargo Director at ACS. "Knowledge of the market and service to the client – they are the key ingredients to any successful broker. You can add technology or newer aircraft but knowing your product and relationships and service are still the key."

Human input is essential

As with other sectors of the airfreight industry, digitalisation is spreading throughout the broker business, shaping elements of the current model. Morgan-Evans sees it as a way to aid existing systems, rather than replacing them.

While innovation can help to reshape how air cargo operates, including in the charter broker sector, it is clear that there are some customers who want to keep that personal, traditional connection that made ACS what it is today.

"Digital innovation is there to improve processes and act as a tool – whether that is internal or customer facing, but this is not Uber," the ACS director explained. "Human input is essential in this business, as several

private jet companies claiming to be the 'Uber of the skies' have found out. Complex charter operations require trained people for the foreseeable future."

This is why digitalisation in the charter

medical supplies.

The provision of humanitarian supplies via charter services is usually a highly critical operation due to the need to quickly react to the situation on the ground and the

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Digital innovation is there to improve processes

broker business has its limitations in the eyes of ACS, as the company believes online broker platforms are unable to meet the more complex, specialist requests. "You may be able to plug in a route and a payload but you won't know if you can do it! Load plans, permits, one way availabilities, dangerous goods, sanctions – the complexities go on. I think we are a while a way from when traditional interactions and relationships are no longer needed – if ever!," Morgan-Evans said.

Supporting humanitarian operations

ACS has a global reputation for responding swiftly to emergency situations, working around great logistical challenges to ensure the smooth running of relief operations. For over 30 years, ACS has worked with non-governmental organisations, governments and aid agencies to coordinate a wide range of cargo charters, moving everything from heavy equipment and vehicles to food and

urgency of the local population's need. This is generally compounded by the fact that the local infrastructure may be damaged or affected, demand for aircraft has increased, reducing available stock, and airports can get congested with cargo at departure and arrival points.

Some of the relief efforts where ACS has overcome these hurdles to offer their support includes: providing aircraft to transport people fleeing Afghanistan in 2021, sending supplies to Pakistan following the 2022 floods and, more recently, facilitating the movement of aid to Turkey after a deadly earthquake hit the region.

"It could be said we were founded on humanitarian work as our founder and Chairman Chris Leach's first contract was with the World Food Programme," Morgan-Evans said.

Expanding network

ACS has showed that, globally, it has no plans



the air charter industry

to slow down its growth, having expanded its North American operations and recently reported strong results in France. Moving forward, the charter broker is keen to continue its mission of moving into new territories where there are potential markets, as well as being reactive to conditions in the industry.


Bigger economies often provide greater opportunities for charter brokers but ACS is careful with its planning, not entering a market where it doesn't believe there is a chance of success.

"Even though we have expanded massively over the years, there is a nimbleness to ACS that allows us to move quickly as the market dictates – and that includes our other core divisions of private jets and commercial airliners," Morgan-Evans highlighted.

"Initially we were UK-based so the UK was always the strongest office but as we opened offices around the globe we started to spread that share of the load," he said. "Global spread was part of the strategy, not just to have the network, but to spread the risk of down markets in certain areas. The diversity, both regionally and divisionally, were the main reasons we were lucky enough to thrive during and since Covid."

While looking to grow, ACS recognises there is a need to balance an expanding company, industry and cargo market with the need to become more sustainable. The charter broker has been a carbon neutral company since 2007 and has invested in Erik Lindbergh's research into electric flight. However, that solution is still some way off being a reality for the industry.

"There are several steps, and several years, before we are even approaching an entirely sustainable space – carbon-offsetting, Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) and then electric or hydro-powered flight," Morgan-Evans admitted. But, despite the challenges in achieving those visions, ACS is doing all that it can now, providing carbon off-setting and providing funding for research to make aircraft more fuel-efficient.



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Having started with almost no cargo in April 2020, Bournemouth Airport has cemented its status as one of the fastest developing cargo hubs in the UK following the launch of Cargo First. Cargo First is the cargo operations brand of Bournemouth Airport, itself part of the privately-owned Regional and City Airports group.

This success has been aided by the flexibility provided by Bournemouth, as it's the only cargo airport serving London and the South-East UK market with total open slots availability and a unique flexible One Team service. Not needing to rely on third party operators, Bournemouth is able to be nimble, responding quickly to new opportunities that emerge.

Bournemouth's growth is also in its location, at only 90 minutes road transport time to London, customers are offered all the benefits of operating in an efficient regional airport combined with the close proximity to the UK's capital city. This allows the airport to consistently offer a service time from aircraft touchdown to delivery to London faster than if the same cargo had landed in one of the London hub airports.

"The motivation behind our cargo operation is essentially the same as the core objective of our parent group: to offer our customers a better service and a genuine alternative to the congested London hub airports. In the cargo sector, we believe Bournemouth is perfectly located as an alternative access point to London, the whole of South-East England and beyond," Bob Matharoo, Head of Cargo Development, Cargo First – Bournemouth Airport, said.

Regions driving the industry

At Bournemouth, the runway is open for business, with existing warehouse capacity (and options to develop more in the near future). From a wider UK market perspective, "with very little in the way of coherent strategic government policy relating to aviation capacity growth planning," Cargo First believes that regional airports are capable of providing the extra capacity the market needs now, and well into the future.

Cargo operators benefitted from access into congested airports during the course of the pandemic. But as hub airports return to a passenger-first perspective, cargo operators once again find themselves being squeezed out.

"So right now, we're seeing a wave of operators looking for an alternative to service their current operations, whilst also starting to think about where airports are going to have capacity to handle growth well into the future," Matharoo explained. "At Cargo First – Bournemouth Airport, we are keen to demonstrate to operators how we can offer a time- and cost-effective alternative solution for today whilst also safeguarding capacity for future growth."

"Absolutely – we're keen to demonstrate how we can tailor our service to achieve mutual growth. With an expansive estate at our disposal (of which the airfield itself is only about half) we believe we're ideally placed to provide options for growth both of cargo flying activity but also associated warehousing capacity in a way that no other airport in

Fastest operation

South-East England can," he continued.

Changing minds

Cargo First's One Team service means Bournemouth offers a one-stop-shop service from touchdown to truck. With no third party involvement within that service chain, the hub has total control of its costs and can be highly efficient and nimble to work with operators to offer cost advantages versus other South-East UK airports.

"We're keen to show that the savings don't end there: access to uncongested highways means that forwarders can eliminate a lot of trucking dead time, airlines can avoid all the ground and air holding delays you get at the big airports and so on," Matharoo stated. "This means that we're helping to produce tangible cost savings across the wider logistics chain too, not just on site at our airport. This combination of cost savings (and service efficiencies) is giving our customers a truly compelling offering that hasn't previously existed in the UK airfreight market."

To achieve Bournemouth's goal of providing this service to a growing number of cargo operators, the airport must first overcome a mindset in the industry that 'we've always done it this way - why should we change?' With three years' service under its belt, Cargo First hopes to be able to demonstrate the differences it can offer via direct service and cost benchmarking.

"There is a growing understanding, in an environment of high pressure upon costs and service quality, that sticking with what you

know is not always good enough if there are proven alternatives out there," Matharoo added.

Shaping operations

Building a cargo hub from the ground up, Bournemouth has carved out a speciality handling time-sensitive e-commerce goods, ranging from volume-drive consignments manufactured in the Far East to high value consumer goods exported from the UK. Alongside that, Bournemouth handles a vast array of general cargo to more specialist goods, such as perishable exports.

"We're continually expanding our handling capabilities, so watch this space for further exciting developments!" Matharoo said.

Up until now, the focus of Cargo First's flying operations has been the Far East and North America, covering regular and ad hoc routes. As markets, and Bournemouth's cargo operations develop further, the hub expects to see regular routes established into Africa, the Middle East and Europe.

"As the UK market continues to readjust to its new situation post-Brexit, post-pandemic and with certain sectors of the cargo market (such as perishables imports) re-evaluating future trade lanes into the country - there are a lot of opportunities out there for us and we are working hard behind the scenes to develop our handling services accordingly," Matharoo stated. "No matter how we develop and expand, however, our focus remains on what we believe to be our key USP: faster airfreight to London, South-East England and beyond."

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Kales Airline Services, the independent company dedicated to selling cargo and passenger products on behalf of airlines worldwide, is riding the wave of evolution across the General Sales and Service Agent (GSSA) industry to remain at the forefront of innovation.

The company puts its success, in part, down to its focus on the use of technology and data to make the booking process leaner and more efficient, applying RPA solutions. Through this approach, as the industry has evolved, Kales has worked to optimise the revenues for its airline customers, as, at the end of the day, that is still what counts for those they work with - To have a team representing the airline like it is their own with an entrepreneurial can do attitude, acting with agility, flexibility and customer focus in mind.

With that goal, Kales offers a full package of end-to-end solutions to its customers with total cargo management (TCM) solutions, where they are the de facto cargo department, managing everything from operations, sales, finances to the IT solutions.

"I see the GSSA becoming more like an integrated solution, being intertwined with our partner airlines, where technology plays a big role, but at the end numbers count and the most important thing for the airline is that we optimise their yields and load factor against a lower cost of sales than an insourced solution," Sebastiaan Scholte, CEO of Kales Group, said.

With the market becoming increasingly competitive and financial pressures facing the industry, this embrace of technology could be key to the continued growth of companies like Kales. "Automation is key. We have streamlined our processes making use of RPA solutions and digital interaction with our customers," he explained.

"Emphasis on technology, in combination with highly qualified personnel, makes the process as efficient as possible," Scholte added.

Customer relations remain key

The work Kales does is an important core process that airlines are outsourcing. As such, there needs to be a trust relationship. Despite all technological innovations this is still a relationship based industry.

That's why the company engages with clients on all levels, to create an environment of collaboration and open communication that involves active listening, regular communication and flexibility. "Technology will be a key driver. However relationships and trust remain a very important factor," Scholte stated.

"We work closely together with clients to understand their needs, and

then develop a plan to meet those needs while keeping them informed throughout the process. That provides value. By implementing these strategies, we build strong relationships with your clients, leading to long-term success and growth for both parties."

This approach of listening to customers is seen in how the company is approaching sustainability when shaping its operations, as it recognises that airlines are looking for partners with greener practices.

"We see that sustainability is becoming a key consideration for airlines as they strive to reduce their environmental impact and respond to growing demand from consumers for greener and more sustainable practices," Scholte said.

This is still most notable at the passenger side of the industry but is inevitably gaining momentum at the cargo side as well. By investing in fuel efficiency, exploring alternative fuels, reducing waste, offering carbon offsetting, and collaborating with partners like Kales, airlines can work towards creating a more sustainable aviation industry.

Adapting swiftly

These are uncertain times. The Russia-Ukraine war is already causing economic disruptions. There will be geopolitical tensions affecting the supply chain. Companies are increasingly looking at multi and near sourcing but that will take time. It is however an irreversible trend that will have a negative effect on trade and therefore air cargo. Chinese labour for instance is becoming relatively more expensive than the neighbouring countries.

These factors disrupt existing trade relationships between countries but will also open up opportunities for other countries to fill the gap. India and other South East Asian countries in that respect are becoming quickly an even more important market. "It's about being flexible," Scholte said, revealing that Kales is "looking at expansion in Asia and the Americas, both organically and through acquisitions."

Looking at the opportunities available in the new model, Scholte highlighted how GSSAs can partner more with freight forwarders, shipping companies and e-commerce companies, even taking more financial commitments and offering charter solutions to the market. As a global partner, this is something Kales is targeting, helping some large e-commerce companies optimise their capacity.

"Our agility allows us to adapt to quick market changes. We have gained new customers but have also significantly generated more revenue for our existing customers," Scholte said.



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A decade of change in the airfreight industry

Cargonet was launched on 9th April 2013, initially serving as a freelance sales resource for various sectors of the cargo industry, all of which had the same customer base and focus. However, spotting a gap in the market, the company has grown over the past ten years into a 100% neutral UK freight wholesaler that offers a full range of services.

"In 2013, having attended interviews with several of the big name airlines, I decided that I wanted to do a role where I felt I could make a difference rather than being just a number, and set up my own business," Cargonet's Managing Director Steve Landy said.

Cargonet has organically grown over the last 10 years from just Landy at his dining table with 15 customers, to 18 members of staff and almost 700 customers; pinning its success on the ability to be flexible.

"We have never tied ourselves up in processes that cannot be deviated from if needed. We are proactive, passionate and ask our customers what they actually want and deliver it. We've never lost sight of the customer journey which is what brings them back time and time again," Landy highlighted.

Neutral wholesaler

As a neutral wholesaler with a focus on airfreight and courier, Cargonet acts as the middleman between the freight forwarder/courier company and the airline/integrator. Its customer base is wide-ranging, serving everyone from a 1-man band to companies with over 100 employees. Whatever the customer needs, Cargonet tailors its service to their individual needs.

Without its customers, Landy is clear that they wouldn't have a business, noting how they will never lose sight of that fact. Cargonet is a relationship builder that is just trying to make its customers lives easier. "As much as the industry tries to automate it really is still about the people," he said.

"The larger forwarder would come to us for rates and space that they don't necessarily have access to themselves. The smaller forwarder may not have accounts with the airlines which we give them instant access to, also they may require value added services such as transport, handling, screening and documentation," Landy explained.

"The whole concept is based on consolidation and the benefit of

buying rates based on our tonnages rather than just their own. This gives the customer lower costs and increased experience. In a meeting with a customer we were referred to as their "Operations department that they don't actually pay for" which I think is a compliment," he added.

Cargonet's customers like to challenge the company, whether it's moving a live cat to Doha or a Range Rover to Entebbe. They entrust Cargonet to achieve this through its knowledge and experience of different markets and the carriers that serve them. This saves the customer time as Cargonet are the ones who scour the market to find the best or sometimes only option.

Times are changing

The airfreight industry has grown and retracted over the last decade. It is still in a state of recovery after the pandemic with services and schedules slowly coming back. Processes are certainly a lot more complicated than they were 10 years ago but are eased with ever evolving digitalisation.

Digitalisation is something that is evolving all the time and an area that the industry as an overall has been quite lacking. "We use industry leading software which is made up of many components that assist with the likes of eAWB and electronic messaging, customs entries etc. Systems will never replace people and our customers always want that people contact, but we stay ahead of the game and make sure that our internal processes are as automated and up to date as possible which helps us be the face of the company and a step ahead," Landy said.

In this space, Cargonet works to provide reliable, affordable freight solutions but in a manner that is sustainable, embracing the growing focus in the sector on environmentally friendly approaches.

Cargonet is seeing significant investment in the transport sectors with the introduction of electric vehicles. At a more local controllable level they are heavily committed into reducing the amount of paper they use. Their systems allow them to save documentation within the job on the system reducing the need to print hard copy job files. "Sustainability is such a broad subject at the moment, and we continue to work as best we can towards the goal of our use of resources," Landy added.

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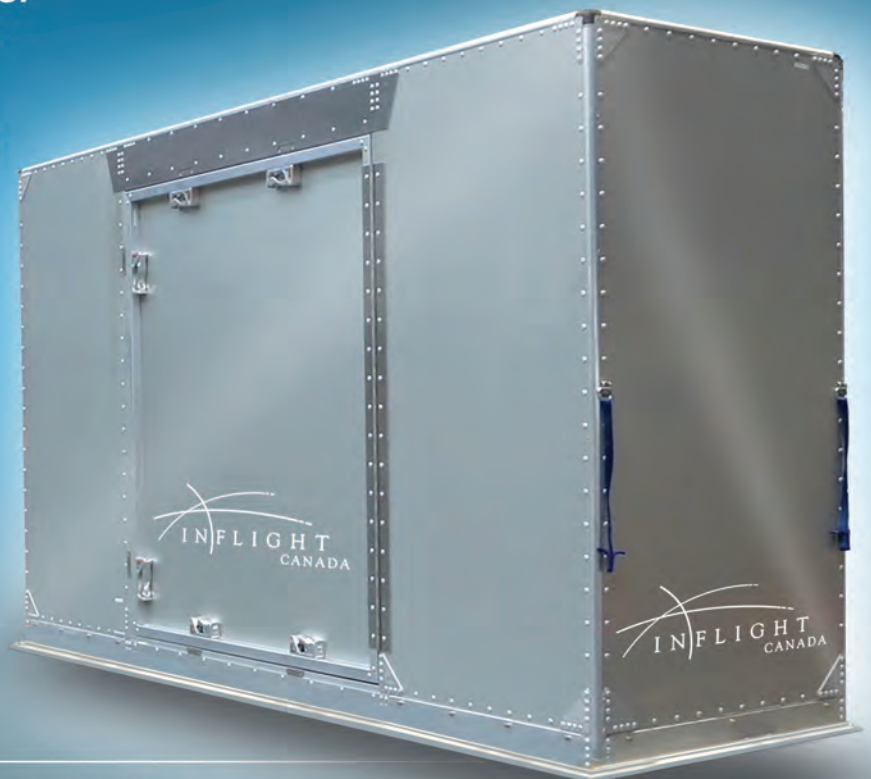
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American Airlines (AA) provides more than 100 million pounds of weekly cargo lift to major cities in the United States, Europe, Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, Latin America and Asia. From perishables to life-saving medicine, the carrier is involved in transporting critical goods around the world.

In the commercial space, AA has always been trusted to move the most important, time-sensitive goods, whether it's the latest phones that are needed on the shelf at first launch, or manufacturing components that keep assembly lines moving for the some of the world's greatest products.

"Every day our teams are involved in transporting important, life-changing products all over the world, and it is incredibly rewarding to be a part of that process," Brian Hodges, Managing Director of Strategy and Planning at AA Cargo, said.

Thriving in challenging times

Airlines have suffered through a turbulent time in recent years, with the pandemic forcing companies to adapt their operations to keep alive while passengers were stuck at home. The cargo-only wing of AA became one of their most valued accomplishments.

AA's first cargo-only flights took off on a Boeing 777-300ER aircraft between DFW-FRA on 20th-23rd March 2020. "Our amazing Cargo Sales team booked these flights to 100% capacity within 24 hours of the flights being on the schedule. We worked with multiple teams across the airline to make this happen – making it our first cargo-only flight since 1984. We went on to operate more than 10,000 additional flights in the two years to follow," Hodges explained.

There's a lot of change happening right now, not just in the air cargo market but around the world and in the global economy. Inflation,



go connects



We went on to operate more than 10,000 additional flights in the two years to follow

increased interest rates and buyer hesitancy as prices increase has led individuals and businesses to take more frugal approaches, etc. These factors impact almost everyone, and air cargo is no different. The supply/demand relationship is changing due to these economic impacts, combined with an increase of capacity into the market as carriers re-deploy aircraft to meet passenger demand.

“Our plan is to continue maximising our current network capacity and seeing where we can solve for our customers even more, like through narrow-body connections or trucking,” he continued.

The new normal

While AA recognises the airfreight market is on a journey back to pre-pandemic stabilisation, the carrier has also learned from the pandemic, approaching business a bit differently. Things that are being implemented in a different manner include industry collaboration, digital distribution and being able to offer customers more options.

“We’ve learned the importance of agility and adaptability these last three years, and we are focused on maintaining those positions as we evolve our business,” Hodges explained.

Digital distribution is a really big focus of AA right now – with both third party platform partnerships and its own booking channel on AACargo.com. 2022 brought about some very significant changes that improved the online experience and allowed its users to complete their transactions quickly and efficiently. Some examples include offering online booking for animal shippers, making changes to allotment bookings to allow for multiple and repeat bookings, and improving its capacity search tool to provide more confidence to users earlier in the booking path.





Collaboration helps operations thrive

As passenger traffic recovers, alliances provide a strong foundation on which airlines are rebuilding their networks. These close partnerships and increased cooperation opportunities offer airlines a broader network scope than if they were a stand-alone carrier. The same is true of the cargo industry, where SkyTeam Cargo enables members to offer an extensive worldwide network of almost 800 destinations in 150 countries but most importantly, a unified product portfolio.

Partnerships help navigate issues, such as new customs regulations, facilitate technology developments and promote best practice when it comes to making operations more sustainable, for example. They also stimulate interline traffic across networks.

In a recent study, SkyTeam Cargo looked at potential traffic flows outside the main, most common, routings. The findings showed that SkyTeam Cargo's network covered most of the top 50 traffic flows in two to four different ways through different combinations of SkyTeam Cargo members. This means far more choice for its customers and greater optimisation of its members' networks. The next step is to digitally offer all these different transport solutions to its customer base.

20 years of tailor-made solutions

SkyTeam Cargo was a frontrunner in designing and implementing a dedicated product portfolio and twenty years on, this remains a unique offering within the industry. Having one branded solution built around four pillars with care as its theme means all our members offer the same product portfolio. During the pandemic, cargo was at the forefront of airline operations as passenger traffic fell away and having a clear product portfolio helped make navigating these changes and shipping cargo much more straightforward for customers.

"Given SkyTeam Cargo members' experience of handling specialised pharmaceuticals, we were quickly able to develop and launch a new product for the handling of COVID vaccinations," Nico van der Linden, Vice President of SkyTeam's Cargo alliance, said.

Being part of SkyTeam Cargo strengthens airlines' brands and ensures product consistency, while enabling them to offer a greater number of destinations to customers through the interline opportunities offered across a huge, combined network. SkyTeam Cargo membership also provides more opportunities for synergies, for example shared warehousing and economy of scale for various services.

Giving customers confidence

SkyTeam's product portfolio was designed to simplify international shipping of all types of cargo – from pharma and perishables to luxury goods – to almost 800 destinations in the world. The branded products are offered consistently across all SkyTeam Cargo members, ensuring bespoke and straightforward shipping solutions.

The key products and their benefits are divided into four categories: Express, General, Specialized and Customized.

Express: a product for expedited shipments of up to 100kg. This is designed to offer fast connectivity with late availability and includes Express Heavy for larger shipments requiring fast dispatch.

General works for both bulk and unit load device shipping modes, for all commodities not requiring specialist handling at economic pricing.

Specialized caters for atypical and high-value cargo shipments including aerospace parts, art, fashion, fresh produce, pharma etc.

Customized is a tri-partite contract between the shipper, forwarding agent and the SkyTeam Cargo airline delivering a personalized service.

Challenges and opportunities

The pandemic was a huge challenge for the aviation industry, but for Cargo it also provided opportunities, as airlines adapted passenger aircraft to carry cargo in-cabin for example. SkyTeam Cargo also launched a programme called, V-Excellence, during this time to manage the transport of COVID-19 vaccine shipments under a new product brand, Customized Vaccines. This offers special handling and priority in addition to Specialized Pharma, the solution for pharma shipments.

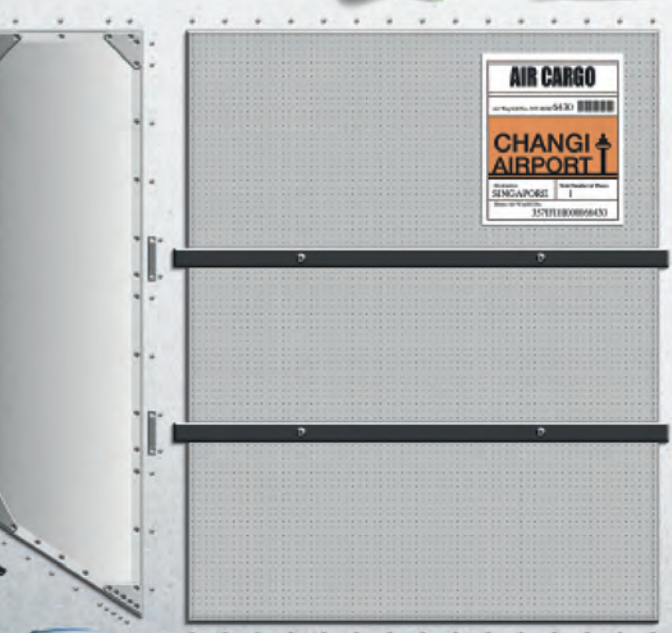
"As the world gets back to business, we're focused on delivering more sustainable operations, something that is growing in importance to customers across the industry," van der Linden said.

Last year's Sustainable Flight Challenge generated hundreds of innovations that are being shared across alliance members to encourage more sustainable air transport activities, including cargo operations.

"No single new innovation will have anywhere near as much impact as SAF and future fuel sources on its own. However, the aggregated value of these innovations will make a difference in the short term while the industry ramps up new sustainable fuel sources," van der Linden explained.

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Gateway to Italy

SEA Group, the management company behind Milan's two main airports, Malpensa and Linate, is excitedly in the middle of a growth phase, continuing unabated despite global instability.

Malpensa, the biggest cargo airport in Italy, handles about 65% of the nation's airfreight, making it the fifth busiest in Europe in terms of volumes. With a network of 210 global destinations served directly from the airport by its 105 airline partners, the hub offers a gateway between Italy and the rest of the world.

"Cargo business saw frequent and quick changes during the past two years. The pandemic had significant repercussions on the dynamics of the flow of goods and on the type of products transported," Paolo Dallanoce, Cargo Manager SEA, said.

Expanding operations

Across 2022, Milan's Malpensa Airport saw more than 721,000 tonnes of cargo move through its hub, marking a 29% increase compared to pre-pandemic levels in 2019. Within these total volumes, over 320,000 tonnes were transported by freighters, while the courier side handled 291,000 tonnes or 40% of total cargo.

"Traffic data demonstrates a good response from customers to the initiatives implemented by SEA to support such rapid market changes in Malpensa Airport," Dallanoce explained.

The considerable increase in movements is related to the growth of express couriers, which mainly operate with short/medium haul aircrafts and have a lower weight/volume ratio than all cargo aircrafts.

Over the past years, couriers, and primarily DHL, have driven the growth of cargo at Milan Malpensa. "This consistent development of e-commerce, accelerated by the effects of the pandemic, has mainly favoured the traffic of courier carriers," Dallanoce said.

The growth of express couriers and the increase in volumes of traditional cargo flights have abundantly covered the shortage of belly cargo (goods carried in the holds of passenger flights) during the pandemic.

In 2022 Malpensa Airport was confirmed as the only Italian airport equipped to handle large quantities of all-cargo flights, with a market share of 65% of the total cargo transited through Italian airports.

"The Milano Malpensa cargo city was thus able to support the economic development of Italy in its traditionally competitive export

markets, such as fashion, furniture, mechanics, and food," he added.

Smart City

"Malpensa still has capacity for airfreight growth, even if the recent impressive growth has put some sub-systems under pressure," Dallanoce said.

To cope with the expansion of cargo activity in Milano Malpensa airport for next years, SEA is in the process of securing approval for a new masterplan that will allow for the construction of new cargo infrastructures, paired with an embrace of digitalisation.

Malpensa Smart City of Goods digital ecosystem consists of a network of ICT-based services that allows all the players in the import-export chain to use, integrate and share information in the management cycle of incoming and outgoing air cargo at the hub.

“

The pandemic had significant repercussions on the dynamics of the flow of goods

"In 2022, SEA has had a strong commitment to the development of new IT applications designed to enhance the functions of the ICT ecosystem 'Smart City of goods'," Dallanoce explained.

The services available allow the optimisation of the time of acceptance and unloading of goods, to streamline the processes and the shipping methods, and to know the stages of the load handling process, transforming the Cargo City for a digital future, aligned with the information and communication standards of the most advanced and important European cargo airports.

"The new applications will improve the accuracy of managed data and monitor the progress of cargo processes at the airport, offering greater tools for intervention," he said.

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Established in 2009, Awery serves clients around the world, using its experience of over a decade to identify the solutions, concepts and visions that can improve the airfreight sector, moving it into the 21st century.

Awery's products have been developed in close cooperation with aviation and logistics companies to reflect up-to-date market demands and to offer tailored complete business cycle solutions with unlimited expansion capabilities.

Experience-led products

Awery has built its business around a team of experienced aviation figures: Founder and CEO Vitaly Smilianets has 13 years of background in global aviation software projects and CCO Tristan Koch has 20 years of experience in aviation and air cargo sectors with British Airways, American Airlines, and IAG.

Awery's desire to bring in industry experts was shown in the recent appointments of Arnaud Lambert, Ariaen Zimmerman, and Pascal Morvan to its Advisory Board who, collectively, bring 74 years' IT, air cargo and airline experience to the company, as it rolls out its flagship CargoBooking service.

CargoBooking is an online booking portal that allows airlines and their General Sales Agents (GSAs) to provide freight forwarders with real-time air cargo rate distribution, quotes, and bookings.

"The Advisory Board have given us a rounded view of what the industry looks for from a company like Awery," Koch explained. "Awery wants to become one of the major players in aviation software. To do that, we need to scale quickly by bringing in expertise from outside."

Industry-wide system

Covering cargo airlines, GSSAs, handling agents, couriers, commercial airlines, private operators, charter brokers, and service providers, Awery has been developed to offer tailored complete business cycle solutions, bringing the entire airfreight industry under one digital umbrella.

"In general, our solutions can bring more value to companies by making them efficient. For example, CargoBooking ensures people can start working on developing the business itself, instead of spending time communicating via unnecessary emails, phone calls, and so on.

However, we recognise that emails will continue to be a part of the air cargo industry for a time, and we have developed solutions such as eMagic, which use artificial intelligence to convert email transactions into digital ones," Anna Balan, Head of CargoBooking, said.

However, to achieve this, Awery has to overcome the biggest hurdle in the industry, which is the desire from some to remain stuck in traditional ways that they have become comfortable with over the years. Balan accepts that, of course, "people are used to the old style," but she is confident that this is the moment leaders can bring new energy to the industry by embracing the opportunities technology offers.

In Awery's view, its CargoBooking system has the key benefit of efficiency, seeing it as the best solution for saving time and solving problems that outdated processes simply can't.

Smooth supply chain

With those in the airfreight industry beginning to realise that they either have to embrace technology or be left behind, Awery can either provide a full suite of IT solutions for them through its system or bridge gaps that they have in their process, making it more seamless.

"There are hugely different levels of tech in the industry. Some airlines are running off Excel spreadsheets, while others have multi-million-dollar live systems," Koch explained. "We can link the lowest level of tech to the highest level."

With that in mind, Awery shapes its services to fit the needs of the industry, with Balan explaining how they "analyse the market, competitors, and customers" to ensure they are providing "what the industry asks."

Recognising the need for full end-to-end shipment visibility, Awery has an enhanced Track and Trace capability. For this to work, Awery pulls information from multiple sources, rather than just relying on the airline's system, working with ground handlers and others to provide the fullest possible picture.

"I've worked with GSSAs. I now work with Awery. What I have seen is the people that have really benefited from transparency is the shippers," Koch said.

"The whole supply chain has more visibility, and this has changed the way the industry operates. There is now greater cooperation between all players in the supply chain, as each party is able to interact more effectively. Whilst this brings efficiencies, it also brings a new dynamic to these relationships, in as much that, every party can now see what the other party is doing."



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ULDs are part of Unilode's DNA. The company's roots stretch back to the original ULD management pioneer, who introduced the ULD outsourcing concept to the aviation industry more than 20 years ago, and to several ULD and inflight equipment repair specialist companies acquired in the APAC, EMEA and Americas regions. Today, Unilode is the leading global provider of outsourced ULD management and digital solutions, and ULD and galley cart maintenance and repair services.

Unilode's asset management, leasing, repair and digital solutions for ULDs, and maintenance and repair services for galley carts help you focus on your core business of flying passengers and cargo whilst delivering significant cost savings and operational benefits across your network. Unilode provides tailor-made outsourcing solutions to meet the specific needs of your business and enhance your operations.

Unilode's flagship ULD management business model ensures the supply of the right ULDs in an airworthy condition, in the right place and at the right time, every time. Unilode manages the largest global fleet of approximately 160,000 ULDs, including more than 120,000 digital containers and pallets, providing outsourced ULD management solutions for 45+ airline customers. When you partner with Unilode you benefit from a smarter ULD solution for your passenger and cargo network with significant cost savings and operational benefits over the course of the partnership.

Unilode is digitising its entire ULD fleet and is rolling out a global reader infrastructure at airports, in warehouses, and on mobile devices. The web dashboard and portable devices make digital data available to customers within seconds. Unilode's digital ecosystem creates transparency, control and visibility across the supply chain and contributes to customers' efforts to optimise operations, increase efficiencies and provide better quality assurance to all players in the value chain, including airlines, shippers, freight forwarders, ground handlers, airports and end customers. What's more, Unilode's digital ecosystem can be used not only for ULDs but for galley carts, dollies and other equipment as well.

Unilode can also help to overcome the temporary challenges of ULD shortages with its flexible leasing solutions at various key airport locations. Leasing periods are available from as little as seven days, and one-way rental, rebranding options and cost-effective repairs are offered at competitive rates.

The company operates the world's largest repair network for ULDs and galley carts with 50 stations at key airports, 36 of which are owned by Unilode, and provides MRO services to more than 50 customers. Unilode's MRO solutions remove the

burden and unnecessary costs of shipping damaged equipment back to your hub and increase space for revenue-generating cargo.

Whether you are looking to outsource the management of your container and pallet fleet, lease ULDs, gain access to the latest innovations in digitalisation, or remove the burden of repair and maintenance of ULDs and galley carts, Unilode can help you improve the performance of your business in various areas.



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WestJet marks major milestone for its cargo operations

With the approval of Transport Canada, WestJet Cargo is ready for take off with its fleet of 737-800 Boeing Converted Freighters (BCF), as it launches a dedicated cargo-only service. Three of the four freighters started operations in April, with the final aircraft joining the fleet later this year, after its conversion is successfully completed.

This was a long-awaited milestone for WestJet Cargo and its partner, the GTA Group, providing more choice for customers, competitive prices and exemplary service.

The dedicated freighters are initially set to focus service within North America, serving Calgary, Halifax, Toronto, Vancouver, Los Angeles and Miami. Leveraging its quick to load and fly narrow body aircraft, the 737-800 equipped with CFM56-7B engines will enable WestJet Cargo to offer greater fuel efficiency, flexibility and frequency for its customers.

WestJet Cargo's dedicated freighter routes will further connect to the bellies of WestJet', serving to accommodate the diverse needs of cargo customers in leveraging the airline's expansive network.

"The path to get here has been extremely exciting, with a brand-new team and vast amounts of planning and deliverables," Kirsten de Bruijn Executive Vice-President of WestJet Cargo, said.

"The process has provided so many opportunities to learn and grow and really enabled us to set a strong foundation for our freighter business," she continued.

"This is a really electric year for everyone at WestJet Cargo. Our team is super passionate, and I'm constantly impressed with the innovative and creative attitude the team is showing," the WestJet executive added.

Creative and agile

WestJet Cargo already carries a broad range of commodities, and the freighter service will help to expand this portfolio. The carrier will

continue to fly commodities like perishables, e-commerce and live animals, while the freighters will enable it to carry oversized items and unitised e-commerce containers.

The Canadian market has long been underserved with air cargo capacity. In this context, WestJet believes the country has room for its operations.

With a team of highly flexible, agile and out-of-the-box thinkers, WestJet Cargo is putting forward a specialised focus on exceptional customer service. Its brand and product are designed to bring something fresh, innovative and exciting to the market.

Digitalisation in mind

WestJet Cargo and SmartKargo recently announced the successful launch of their state-of-the-art cargo management platform. This partnership aims to transform the airline's cargo business, moving it into a technological future.

SmartKargo has allowed WestJet to introduce a new online booking platform which significantly increased self-serve options for customers, shippers and freight forwarders.

"With a decrease in manual processes comes an increase in efficiency, allowing us to operate with a renewed customer-focus. We put a lot of effort into convenience and ease for our customers and SmartKargo plays a big part in that," de Bruijn explained.

WestJet Cargo is heavily investing in infrastructure, digitisation, product and talent. At the same time, it is putting a significant amount of focus on internal and external tools – all with the idea that it wants to be easy to do business with.

"The WestJet Cargo teams put a lot of focus into developing relationships to best understand the markets that we serve – this will help us expand the services we offer. After the launch of the fourth tail, we'll review our five-year strategy and continue our focus on becoming a sustainable competitor in the North American and International markets. There's lots of potential on the horizon," de Bruijn said.



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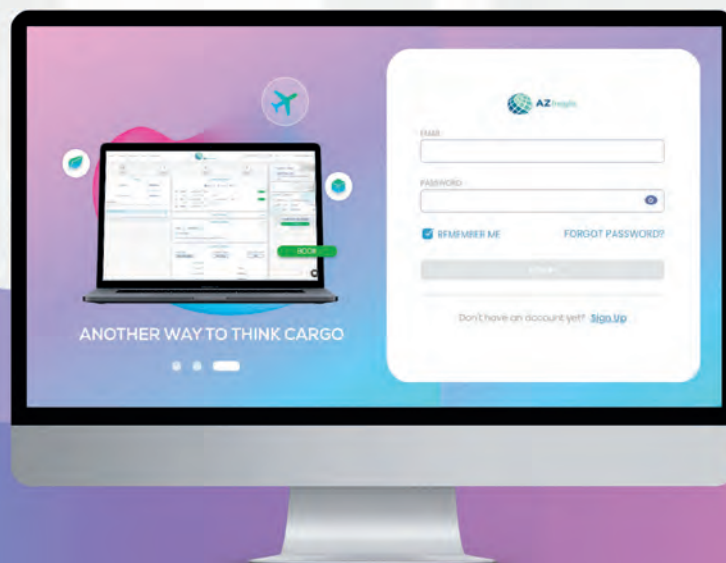
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Advertorial - Tuesday 9th May

ACS Time Critical: handling urgent shipments

Air Charter Service's ACS Time Critical division offers customers a range of specialist urgent cargo delivery options that complement the go-now aircraft charters that are such a popular product of the global charter broker.

ACS Time Critical grew out of the broker's highly successful On Board Courier (OBC) product, a personalised hand-carry service provided by an experienced ACS courier who accompanies a time-critical consignment door-to-door: from collection to delivery. OBC was officially launched at Air Cargo Europe in 2015 and remains today a very sought-after element of the ACS Time Critical offering.

But now the division offers other specialist services that enable ACS to offer its manufacturer, shipper and forwarder customers a complete one-stop solution for all their urgent delivery needs.

The Flight Support option sees ACS Time Critical provide its clients with trucking options for door-to-door delivery of highly time-sensitive shipments. Available 24/7, as are all the ACS brand's services, it is an offer that clients looking for a complete, premium service are happy to take up.

Meanwhile, ACS Time Critical's Next Flight Out (NFO) service bridges the gap between the 'small and fast' OBC product and the larger cargo charters arranged by the broker in its day-to-day work. Typically used by those wanting to make urgent shipments that do not require a supervisor/courier and for cargo that is often too big to be hand-carried, the ACS Time Critical team will use its extensive experience and local knowledge to find the quickest and best route for such a shipment.



It can be offered alongside the door-to-door connections of Flight Support, with all other elements of the shipping process also taken care of by Time Critical – be it Customs handling, repackaging if necessary, etc.

NFO shipments on major lanes will be undertaken probably in less than 24 hours. "It's a premium, Ferrari service," notes Oliver Weigelt, ACS Time Critical's global managing director.

He is based in Frankfurt, alongside his team of 20 or so specialists – though they oversee the work of many hundreds of people, most of whom support the division's OBC service. OBC remains the ACS Time Critical brand's primary offering – it handles some 2,000 or so OBCs a year.

Further expansion and service improvements are planned. For example, a new Time Critical team is in the works to be created in New York, helping the division to 'follow the sun' and offer even more comprehensive global 24/7 coverage.

An Asia-Pacific office is expected to follow in 2024 – there are "big plans", Weigelt confirms.

With Time Critical, ACS has diversified its offering and made the lives of its customers seeking urgent, cost-effective cargo delivery that much easier, he notes. A niche product that doesn't compete with the services offered by forwarders and integrators, ACS Time Critical is going from strength to strength.



ACS ATTENDEES AIR CARGO EUROPE TODAY		
	Dan Morgan-Evans Group Cargo Director	
	Caroline Werf Managing Director (Germany)	
	Oliver Weigelt ACS Time Critical Managing Director	
	James Fitzgerald Managing Director Spain	
	Lyndee du Toit Managing Director South Africa	
	Joseph Tam Cargo Director Hong Kong	
	Leonardo D'Alessandro Cargo Manager Switzerland	
	Stefano Dalaimo Cargo Assistant Director	
	Sam Whitchoelo-Jones Cargo Manager UK	
	Stefan Leslie Assistant Manager UK	
	Glenn Phillips PR & Advertising Manager	
	Kat Richards Group Head of Events	
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	Daniel Martin Rodriguez Assistant Manager	
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