



## **SOFTSHIP TMS: A CUSTOMER REFERENCE STORY**



When the Grimaldi Group, Naples, and Mexico Natie, Antwerp, decided in 2001 to build a new terminal as main hub for their newly founded joint venture at Antwerp, they literally started in the open countryside. Step by step the fields changed into tarmac and the pier was built. The Antwerp Euroterminal - A.E.T. - was born.

During the terminal's construction the management at A.E.T. found themselves facing the challenge of furnishing the new hub with top-level software. So, they searched the international market for the proverbial all-in-one-device for every purpose.

"Of course, all big terminals have their own intricate systems, programmed and serviced by legions of IT people. But that could not possibly be our way. Our solution had to be efficient and streamlined," was the management goal. "We had to find an IT solution that not only handled our Euro-Med service, which was only the first stage of A.E.T.'s life.

Later on the terminal had to deal also with other services of the Grimaldi Group to West-Africa and South-America. Since 2005, Nile Dutch Shipping is also calling our terminal to West-Africa. The terminal application had to process all gate and on-yard activities for different cargo types - RoRo, containers, general and project cargo. That was no easy task," recalls the management.

Furthermore, continually providing the local agency with all necessary details via EDI-communication – every 10 minutes was the goal – soon became part of the project as well.

"There was no off-the-shelf system on the market which met all our criteria."

The search for suitable components finally led to Softship AG, Hamburg, who has 20 years experience of developing IT solutions for the shipping industry. They provided A.E.T. the central system to manage the daily terminal-activities with interaction to 3<sup>rd</sup> party mobile handheld scanners on yard. From these building blocks emerged an integrated Terminal Management System (TMS) that met all A.E.T.'s requirements.





The system grew in parallel with the terminal. Since the very first day, RoRo for Grimaldi's big carriers has been handled with TMS. In the yard mobile scanners record all cargo moves – gate in/gate out, load preparations, grid location, tally at ramp, crane – and transmit their data to the TMS system in the A.E.T. office. The *back-office system* side then delivers the necessary paperwork such as work lists and updates TMS' high-capacity database.

The direct connection with the agencies goes through EDIFACT-messages and makes the reporting complete.

And last but not least, the management is receiving real time data during vessel's operations or regarding other daily activities at gate / on yard where costs / profits are reported per voyage or per period and per cargo type.

"If you're looking for a reliable terminal application which covers RoRo, containerized and break-bulk cargo for multiple line services and carriers, you should take a good look at Softship's TMS – a system that the AET management are rightly proud of."

A.E.T. is the European hub of the Grimaldi Group with a surface of 250 acres. In 2008 they handled a volume of 625,000 vehicles, 100,000 TEU and 150,000 tons of general cargo.





### **Antwerp Euroterminal - Some figures**

- ◆ Founded in 2001
- ◆ Joint-Venture of Grimaldi Group – Naples (IT) and Mexiconatie – Antwerp (BE)
- ◆ Main-hub of Grimaldi multi-purpose services + NDS – Nile Dutch Shipping
- ◆ Current surface : approx. 100 ha (up to 160 ha in 2012)
- ◆ Infrastructure : 16.000 m<sup>2</sup> Warehouses, PDI, Repair shop, Fumigation, Freightstation
- ◆ Equipment : 2 mobile Gottwald cranes 100 Ton – Various Reachstackers + Forklifts
- ◆ Distribution Centre for Fiat Group, Ford and Renault
- ◆ Contracts with manufacturers (Opel / Ford / Mercedes / Volvo / BMW / VW / etc.)
- ◆ One of Europe's largest multi-purpose terminals

### **Antwerp Euroterminal – Principal Activities**

- ◆ Gate IN / OUT of all kind of cargo via Truck, Rail, Barge
- ◆ Loading / Discharging of all kind of cargo
- ◆ Stuffing / Stripping Containers & Mafi's
- ◆ Container Repairshop
- ◆ PDI – Pre Delivery Inspection
- ◆ Distribution – Lot-formation Import vehicles





## Antwerp Euroterminal – Handled Cargo

- RoRo : New & Used Cars, Vans, Big vans, Trucks, Heavy RoRo on wheels / tracks
- Containers & Mafi's : upto 80' mafi – upto 200 Ton



- Breakbulk : Crates, Coils, Steel bars, Steel pipes, Rails, Piles, Wood, Project Cargo





## Antwerp Euroterminal – Picture

