



OCEANINSIGHTS

International Food Group
a Sysco company

International logistics giant: Positive impact on Sysco
International Food Group's business through Ocean Insights tools

SYSCO Customer Success Story

When the global leader in selling, marketing and distributing food and non-food products to restaurants, healthcare and educational facilities, lodging establishments and other customers worldwide gives Ocean Insights a top rating, you know it's a testimony worth hearing. After all, Sysco, a NYSE-listed private company with domestic U.S. revenues of \$55 billion and 66,000 employees, is a major player in the global logistics industry. A major player yes, but one that up to 2016 had no reliable independently sourced container-tracking information.

Supply-chain visibility problem

The initial contact between Sysco International Food Group (IFG), Sysco's export division, and Ocean Insights came about after a recommendation from an Israeli company. "We were searching for an independent container-tracking site so we didn't need to rely only on information from ocean carriers," says Tim Crumley, Vice President Global Logistics, Sysco International Food Group, Inc. **The problem Sysco IFG was trying to solve was a lack of transparency on shipment status and the multiple supply chain management issues this was causing.** Sysco IFG wanted to shorten the long back-and-forth communication chain between the end customer, the Sysco IFG logistics team and ocean carriers. Specifically, Sysco IFG was having issues tracking shipments that did not touch U.S. shores. **What I immediately liked about the Ocean Insights solution was that it was simple, elegant and intuitive** so anybody from any culture worldwide can understand it," Tim recalls.

Added-value information

Implementation of the Ocean Insights tracking tool in 2016 went smoothly, Tim reports, and the experience since then has been entirely positive. The key benefit is that Sysco IFG now receives information it previously had no access to: **Thanks to the Ocean Insights tool we've been able to catch things ocean carriers won't tell you.** For example, when one major carrier was hacked last July, we were able to track things the carrier couldn't." The better quality information Sysco IFG now has at its disposal enables the company to get back to ocean carriers and challenge the data they have supplied (or not supplied as the case may be). Tim has a useful analogy: "Suppose you're flying from the U.S. to Hamburg via Heathrow. Your incoming flight from the States is late and you arrive too late to catch the plane to Hamburg. You'd expect your airline to at least keep you informed. But ocean carriers often don't inform us about delays until our containers have missed their next vessel. Thanks to our Ocean Insights



tool and the data it provides we can intervene to manage supply chains better."

Better bargaining position

The benefit Sysco IFG gets from the additional information the Ocean Insights tracking tool provides puts the company in a better position to negotiate with ocean carriers. **"We have a better bargaining position based on hard facts,"** Tim explains. "If a carrier misses a connection multiple times, we can use this information to challenge such bad connections." And it's not just the information from the Ocean Insights tool that Tim's team appreciates: "Our sales people like the visual presentation of the data and use these graphics to interchange with our customers. The way data can be presented caters to multiple personality types." Tim particularly likes the Ocean Insights dashboard: "It enables us to see where a carrier's strengths and weaknesses are. And that helps to develop a sensible strategy for specific routes and goods."



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- Tim Crumley, Vice President
Global Logistics, Sysco International Food Group

Improved routing

The optional Sailing Schedules tool Sysco IFG has also obtained from Ocean Insights has proved just as useful as the container-tracking tool, particularly in view of the frequently challenging conditions at U.S. ports. With incoming vessels getting ever bigger, the window for entering a port and offloading containers is becoming smaller and smaller. Add to that a lack of truck drivers, as Tim points out, and you have a scenario where unwelcome delays are always a possibility. But thanks to this Sailing Schedules tool Sysco IFG can easily switch from one U.S. port to another to avoid any forecast delays. "Using this tool is changing the way we do contracts," Tim explains. "We are more flexible in using not only multiple ports but also more carriers. We're finding routings carriers don't offer us. And this allows us to get round the increasingly challenging infrastructure we have right now."

For a logistics specialist like Tim Crumley the added value Ocean Insights delivers is that it makes more creative and more fluid thinking possible: **"It's helping us to identify better ways to market and is putting us, the customer, back in control of ocean cargo."**

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