

STENA LINE

E-BILLING ENABLES GROWTH AT STENA LINE



«At Stena Line we believe it is important to invest money into providing value-added IT services for our customers. As well as E-Billing, we also offer online booking and an online track-and-trace service, all of which we believe are contributing to the growth of our business»

– Freight Commercial Manager, Stena Line

The Challenge

Stena were quick to see the benefits that e-billing could offer the business and how it could improve the customer experience but they needed a solution that met their specific requirements; one that could be implemented with minimum disruption and support future growth, not a generic 'one size fits all' one.

Background

With growing customer shipment orders and associated paperwork, Stena Line Freight (Stena Line) were one of the first organisations to recognise the significant time, cost and environmental benefits that could be realised through the introduction of electronic billing. Today SPS' E-Billing service delivers 98% of Stena Line's customer bills electronically and has also dramatically enhanced customer service.

The Solution

Stena Line began their 'digital evolution' back in 2002 by issuing their statements electronically via the SPS platform and, in 2006, implemented a full electronic billing solution.



84%

take-up rate across
Stena Line customers

Project Preparation

Prior to the full roll-out of the project, SPS and Stena Line introduced a pilot system to



About Stena Line

Stena Line Freight is the freight division of Stena Line, an international transport and travel service company and one of the world's largest ferry operators. Every year over 7 million passengers travel with Stena Line. The company also transport 1,5 million cars and about 2 million freight units. Stena Line has 20 strategically located ferry routes across Northern Europe, operating in Scandinavia, the Baltics, the North Sea and the Irish Sea with a fleet of 34 vessels.

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run in tandem with the traditional distribution model. This allowed Stena Line to see how the system would work within a test environment and ensured that the transition to the new system was as smooth and error-free as possible – vital if customers were to accept and embrace the new process.



3,000
customers receive
E-Bills each month

Moving Customers to E-Billing

Stena Line launched the service with a two week trial, asking their customers if they would prefer to receive their bills electronically. Customers were offered the opportunity to revert back to the old method, but significantly – not one trial customer reverted back to paper billing. The take up rate reached 46% within 12 months, far surpassing the initial target of 45% within 18 months. Now 98% of invoicing is electronic with some 3,000 customers a month receiving E-Bills.

The success of Stena Line's customer migration to E-Billing has led the company to adopt this as its default billing channel, now operating an 'opt-out' model where new customer accounts are required to specifically request a paper bill if that is their preference.

Stena Line's Perspective

Stena Line Area Sales Manager, David Byrne, responsible for the roll-out and promotion of the E-Billing concept, believes the key to success was not only choosing a system from a credible provider, but a system that was easy to use, and one that would offer significant benefits to customers.

David said: "Stena Line's customers have enjoyed a tried-and-tested relationship with SPS for paper-based billing, and when the time came to explore more innovative

solutions, SPS' intuitive and easy-to-navigate system was the logical choice. In fact, since its inception, E-Billing has enabled some of our customers to win more contracts, as they are now able to take on more work without having to invest in additional resources for processing payments."

Stena's Freight Commercial Manager for the UK & Republic of Ireland, added: "At Stena Line we believe it is important to invest money into providing value-added IT services for our customers. As well as E-Billing, we also offer online booking and an online track-and-trace service, all of which we believe are contributing to the growth of our business.

We couldn't have achieved this growth without the support of SPS. In order for us to take our billing services to the next level it was important that we chose a provider who could cater for our needs, by listening and developing a solution that was right for us – and that's exactly what SPS has done."

The Benefits

Not only are e.documents delivered to customers same day, but there are significant immediate savings as a result of removing the cost of paper, envelopes and postage, as well as the transparency of knowing that customers have received their bills. E-Billing also opens up a flexible new channel to communicate with clients about more than



same day

Documents are delivered to customers same day

just billing.

Ultimately though, the project's success is founded as much on the benefits the new system has delivered to their clients as those for the business.

Customers receiving bills electronically

have the opportunity to quickly analyse, manipulate and redistribute them where multi-authority levels are required or different business functions are involved, reducing manual handling and rekeying of



8hrs

saved through
reducing manual
paperwork

information.

One customer reported saving up to eight hours a week previously spent manually inputting data from invoices as they arrived in the post.

Stena Line's cost savings have increased year-on-year in proportion with the level of customer uptake. In addition to the direct financial savings on printing, stationery, postage and labour, Stena has also realised a number of other significant benefits.

- Increased customer satisfaction
- Reduction in customer queries and copy invoice requests through self-service functionality.
- Enhanced job satisfaction and productivity of their finance team
- A greener service – the paper reduction alone equates to over 30 trees each year
- Greater service reliability with reduced exposure to delays and losses inherent in postal delivery

"At Stena Line we believe it is important to invest money into providing value-added IT services for our customers. As well as E-Billing, we also offer online booking and an online track-and-trace service, all of which we believe are contributing to the growth of our business," said the Freight Commercial Manager at Stena Line.