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**Software and e-Commerce solutions for the Freight and Logistics industry**

# FCL-ASP

## WebTrack

In the mid-1990's, the freight and logistics industry received a major wake-up call from the large integrators, who began to roll out new Web-based consignment tracking systems.

The main impact of this new technology was to raise the expectations of traders, who began to stipulate that Web-based tracking would have to be provided if a freight agent wanted their business. It very quickly became apparent that agents would have to respond positively to this emerging requirement. However, there are very major challenges associated with providing Web services. It was obvious that alone, the average freight company would struggle to provide this.

FCL was the first UK software house to provide a Web-based consignment tracking system that was fully integrated with its back-office product. In 1998, FCL announced "WebTrack" - a low-cost solution for its customers. Using data exchange from customers' systems, their tracking data was hosted on a database server at FCL's facility in Nottingham. A Web server, with a persistent IP link to the Internet, and running software specifically developed by FCL, serviced browser requests for consignment status information and performed queries on the database server.

This cost-effective hosted data service quickly became very popular with FCL's customers. But with an eye to future requirements, during 2001 FCL developed its new FCL-ASP platform. This provides Web services from one central location at our facility in Nottingham. But using secure network links to our customers' systems, it is now possible to achieve real-time interaction with their live *ForwardOffice* data. Based on this new platform, FCL has developed and deployed a new version of WebTrack.

*WebTrack* provides FCL's customers with a way of providing their own clients and trading partners with Web-based Consignment Tracking facilities, both cost-effectively and with minimum effort. *WebTrack* is remarkably straightforward to implement, but is nonetheless extremely flexible. From our customer's perspective, it is virtually maintenance free - there are no complex issues to consider - users just get on with their day-to-day tasks, and information automatically becomes visible on the Web.

### Key Features:

- *WebTrack* is provided through the FCL-ASP platform
- FCL acts as a service provider, cushioning its customers from complex and costly issues of Internet access: -
  - We provide the Web server
  - We provide the broadband communications link to the Internet
  - We deal with firewall and Internet security issues
  - FCL undertakes all of the support and maintenance functions
- It is simplicity itself to integrate *WebTrack* into your own Web site
- It is activated selectively for those parties that you choose to provide it to
- Through back-office utilities, you allocate logon ID's and passwords, ensuring secure access
- You define the items of information and "Milestones" that you want to expose to each party (the "View")
- Currently up to eight different parties can be linked to any given consignment - each potentially with their own unique "View"
- Operational Diary/Memo records can also be *selectively* exposed to different parties, allowing unlimited narrative to be made visible
- Parties can only view consignments with which they have a direct involvement
- Recall an individual consignment using one of five references - including customer's reference
- Request on-line SQL-style reports, listing consignments that match search criteria - then drill down to individual consignment
- Optional integration with e-Document Management allows documents and images to be *selectively* exposed at Consignment level