

June 2011 CEO Update

A real buzz has started around the ability to provide a fully electronic Bill of Lading (eBL). A number of parallel initiatives with customers, prospects and with complementary communities has raised general market awareness and has demonstrated that significant sectors and participants are now ready and willing to adopt this alternative.

Of course the technology has existed for some while, every since the launch of Bolero and its technology in 1999, and the associated completion of the largest legal feasibility study into ecommerce for ocean shipping every undertaken which resulted in the Bolero Rulebook. However its adoption is directly related to core communities such as Carriers and Banks being willing, ready and able to change from proprietary and/or manual paper intensive processes.

The eBL delivers value in and of itself both in simplification, reduction in effort and cost and, of course, in reduction of risk. The other key benefit is reduction in time, especially where the extended supply chain (from supplier to customer) covers large distance and multiple geographic jurisdictions, as is typical for example in Asia. This then drives the other exciting development – the availability of an eBL as part of a fully electronic Presentation in order to improve the settlement process and to reduce time to cash. Electronic presentation to the advising bank as part of a pre-check or even a direct examination agreement, provides real value, but the availability of an eBL and the supporting technical and legal infrastructure to support a full electronic presentation to advising and issuing banks through to release of the goods is where maximum value is realised.

This month one of our larger customers in Asia completed such a full ePresentation incorporating a Bolero eBL, setting the stage for the process to be rolled out and adopted on a broader basis.

At the same time, Bolero is partnering with the industry-leading network of Ocean Carriers and Shippers in a joint effort to bring a standardised and industry accepted electronic Bill of Lading to this community as an additional valued added service. This will of course also make the eBL more available for the adoption of ePresentation services on a broader basis.

The value to the industry of broad adoption of an eBL is huge. It is great to see the momentum building and the number of enthusiastic participants increasing around real world solutions and proven technology.