



John Good & Sons Ltd.

FROM GOOD TO GREAT

After 180 years in business John Good Shipping is discovering ways to balance a reputation which transcends generations, with the demands of a rapidly evolving industry.



"It's a bit of a cliché really, but every day in this business is different," says Alan Platt, managing director of John Good Shipping. "You're dealing with different cargoes, different countries, different cultures, different sectors. There's nothing same old, same old, it's always a challenge."

So it has been since John Good launched John Good & Co Ship Chandlers, Agents and Brokers, to focus on trade with Baltic and Finnish ship owners in 1833. Although trade was halted by the Crimean War, the company grew and by the end of the century had become John Good & Sons, creating a connection with the Good family which exists through to the present day.

"There are still descendants from the Good family who are non-executive directors of the company today," says Platt. "The fact that people know you've been around for so long and that you're still in good financial shape speaks volumes in terms of credibility."

Having started his career within the shipping industry with a German shipping line in the early 1990s Alan Platt veered briefly into the realms of fast moving consumer goods in a role with Kraft General Foods followed by Highland Distillers, before joining John Good in 1998. As the industry became more competitive and complex John Good diversified into a range of related areas from shipping and freight forwarding to trucking and domestic logistics, and even corporate travel. At the same time as John Good was diversifying to stay

ahead of the rapidly evolving market, however, many in the freight forwarding and logistics industry were struggling to stay afloat.

"We've seen a lot of small hauliers go to the wall along with a number of the smaller freight forwarding companies, while we've been growing," says Platt. "We would like to think that our success in times like these comes down to a sound management team, good cash management and an understanding that our business is primarily a service industry, it's all about the customers."

It is increasingly the demands of customers to reduce costs and increase service levels which has driven a process of gradual evolution in John Good's business processes. Responding to growing demand for timely data, John Good contracted PWC in 2010 to assess different software providers on the market, with the view to upgrade from an internally-developed freight management system which was operating on highly stable, but outdated AS400 servers.

"We were getting to the position where it was getting harder and harder to find developers who could work on the software," says Platt. "We took the decision to be proactive and find software which would be robust and sustainable in the long term."

When it came down to the final decision, Platt says John Good opted for ediEnterprise from CargoWise because it integrates a number of different functions in



Alan Platt, Managing Director
John Good & Sons Ltd.

JOHN GOOD & SONS OFFERS CUSTOMERS:

- Liner and Port Agency services at all main ports in the UK
 - Full logistics service including freight forwarding, haulage and warehousing
 - International freight management services with strong links between Europe and Asia, India, Middle East, South America, South Africa and Turkey
 - Own overseas offices in Istanbul and Izmir
 - All aspects of customs clearance including CFSP
 - Container trucking
 - Full load and part load national and European distribution
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a single system, evading the need to deal with multiple software vendors and systems.

“Everything in CargoWise is CargoWise, there’s no need to add on extra systems, and we felt it was a more robust solution because that support was all in one place,” Platt says.

According to Platt, the improvements in operational efficiencies delivered by ediEnterprise have enabled their accounting team to move away from repetitive data entry work, as well as providing better and more regular access to company data. More importantly the ediEnterprise software gave John Good access to the data feeds necessary to provide customers with the level of information they are increasingly demanding.

“Ten or fifteen years ago customers would be happy with a weekly report on where their stock was and where it was going, today they want to know exactly how many pallets are in store at any time during the day,” says Platt. “Our customers are working to just-in-time scenarios, and it’s crucial for them to know where their goods are because the whole production and supply chain might be held up or stopped if they don’t get their widgets on time.”