Logistics via Middle East: How to Pass Dubai Customs Fast and Easily

Customer Overview

Name

Logistics company

Location

Dubai, UAE

Industry

Transportation

Challenge

Improve the time-consuming processing of paper documents at Dubai customs

Solution

ABBYY FlexiCapture

Results

- Improved workflow: up to 100,000 items processed daily
- Decrease in operators: from 30 to 3
- Tenfold increase in productivity

One of the UAE emirates, Dubai is best known for its revolutionary and swift transformation from a sleepy fishing village nestling on the shore of the Persian Gulf into the world's premier business hub. Contrary to the generally accepted opinion of oil being the gold mine, one of the strongest development drivers of modern Dubai is international trade. Today the city is a huge international logistics hub. Foods, clothes, electronic equipment, spare parts, cars etc — all these goods come to the borders of the city to be imported or re-exported into the ever growing Middle East states, loading Dubai customs to the fullest.

Challenge

With an ever growing amount of goods, you can imagine the amount of accompanying forms (declarations, invoices, delivery orders etc.) multiplied by dozens of times! This paper bubble might have burst at any moment. How did the customs office manage to overcome the crisis?

Like all advanced countries all over the world do: paper government turned e-government. Today online paperless procedures are based on an electronic standard for submitted documents — comma separated value files (*.csv). The headache of preparing the documents in the necessary format, in its turn, fell to the share of logistics companies.

That's how one of the top 20 logistics providers with turnover of €2.67 bln and offices in 157 countries including the UAE had to organize a tender for a Data Capture solution to transform its paper workflow into electronic one satisfying customs requirements. The tender defined ABBYY FlexiCapture® to be the best solution in terms of delivered value.

Solution

Being one of the global leaders in the industry and responsive to their customers' needs, the logistics company directed their efforts to solving the task. There were several main challenges in adjusting the system to particular specifications of the customs:

1.   Scanning the papers.

All the paper documents, including multipage invoices (15-20 pages), declarations, etc. from different customers were gathered all together at random and then scanned. Being smart software, ABBYY FlexiCapture easily and quickly separated all the documents and classified them according to their type.

2. Multilingual documents

The documents submitted to the customs come in different languages, including Arabic for exported goods, with some of the documents in more than one language. Smart ABBYY OCR technology processes documents in more than 180 languages, easily combining them with each other, all the while providing the highest quality recognition for both European and Arabic scripts.

3. Internal database

The system required a database — Microsoft® SQL Server® — which stored all the items and essential information about them, e.g. name, price, goods category, etc. (the standard workflow is 100,000 items daily). Special script and rules connected 2 systems: ABBYY FlexiCapture and the database, which communicated for data verification.

Thanks to special adjustment and training of the system, ABBYY FlexiCapture automatically extracted the necessary information from the database using barcodes of the documents and predefined rules and compared the data from processed invoices and the database. Such comparison allowed to automatically correct recognition errors occurring due to the poor quality of the initial documents. If the system still doubted in some points, the documents were sent to operators for manual check and fixing.

4. Unique tasks

Specially introduced scripts of ABBYY FlexiCapture made it possible to identify specific data fields to, for example, convert gross weight into net weight (where it was necessary to declare net), or number of goods packs into goods items and other data specific to customs and logistics workflow.

5. Documents' export according to customs specification

There's a set of parameters defined by customs, indicated in comma-separated value files:

- invoice №, date, sum, supplier, buyer (for invoices)
- item №, name, quantity, price (for declarations)

Thanks to the high level of customization ABBYY FlexiCapture exports the data into various formats including the necessary .csv files to confirm Dubai customs specifications.

"Using this application the customs clearance department avoid manually entering line by line item data into the Customs portal for shipmet clearance, thereby increasing overall productivity tenfold and enabling them to take up more clearance jobs on a daily basis."

Information Systems Business Consultant, Logistics company

Results

Thanks to digitizing, the logistics company conquered the crucial logistics junction and gained new clients! Improved service quality and a tenfold increase in productivity again and again make suppliers all over the world choose the technology savvy leader of the market.

Prior to the automatization of document processing, there was a team of about 30 operators who typed all the data manually. Now there are only 3 people who operate ABBYY FlexiCapture solution (one administrator station and two operator stations).

Furthermore, the logistics company's team attended a technical training on ABBYY technologies, and now they adjust the templates of the documents from new clients themselves, regardless of the quantity or the complexity of the documents.

In terms of business development the smart automation solution provided by ABBYY was a strategic investment for office in the UAE. It helped the company and their customers save time, effort, and costs, and yield much higher revenues, and on a higher scale optimize business processes in one of the largest Middle East and logistics hubs — Dubai — in order to keep their own and clients' businesse

About ABBYY

ABBYY is a leading global provider of technologies and solutions that help businesses effectively action information.

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