

Improving freight visibility

C&M Forwarding grows business with freight management system

“We’re focused on moving our customers’ freight efficiently and cost-effectively,” said Michael Erne, vice president at C&M Forwarding Co. Inc. “With operational planning and the right management technology, we can excel at delivering LTL shipments on time and at favorable rates.”

Based in Rochester, N.Y., C&M Forwarding is an asset-based, privately owned carrier that offers LTL, truckload, warehousing and distribution, and logistics and freight management services. With 100 daycab and sleeper tractors and 300 dry and refrigerated trailers, the company provides nationwide and next-day service to New York City; Long Island, N.Y.; New Jersey; Philadelphia; and Chicago.

C&M Forwarding’s services are used by a wide variety of large and small shippers, including manufacturers, wholesalers, and distributors of consumer, business and medical goods, food products, and hazardous materials. A large amount of the LTL freight it handles are imports and exports that go through New York and New Jersey area international air and ocean cargo facilities.

“Our diverse service offerings require comprehensive administrative and operational business management systems,” Erne related, “but a few years ago, we realized we had outgrown the open accounting software and transportation modules we were using. They were only capable of simple business process functions. What we needed was an enterprise solution designed for freight management and asset-based operations.

“That software would not only have to meet our administrative and operational needs,” Erne continued. “In addition, it had to allow us to manage complex transportation partnership agreements and move freight more effectively while steadily growing. We also needed to improve the accuracy of our rating pro-



C&M Forwarding is focused on providing shippers large and small with a combination of capabilities. Photo: C&M Forwarding

cesses and to invoice customers more efficiently to improve cash flow.”

After evaluating several transportation management systems to replace its legacy system, in late 2017 C&M Forwarding began implementing the FACTS freight management solution from Carrier Logistics Inc. (CLI). The company went live on the fully integrated operations and financial software in February 2018.

C&M Forwarding is now using FACTS for administrative, financial, and operational processes, as well as the FACTS Deal Management rating module to improve the accuracy of its pricing, especially for revenue splits under interline agreements. It is also working with CLI to add new modules to the software.

For example, C&M Forwarding is in the process of implementing the newly enhanced Dock Management Board from CLI in conjunction with the FACTS Dock Management System. The Dock Management Board runs as a mobile application on any Android-based device to manage and record dock activities.

The CLI Dock Management Board includes a graphical display that shows the loaded, unloaded, and in-progress status of trailers, with icons indicating potential operational issues. Simply clicking on a trailer icon brings up detailed load and shipment information, with drill downs all

the way to the bill of lading.

“This technology improves freight visibility, dock productivity, and loading accuracy,” Erne said. “By knowing in real time the exact location and status of every shipment passing through our cross dock facility, we have accurate information for improving efficiency and reducing misloads.

“Overall, with an advanced freight management system, we are saving administrative time, and that means we can manage our growth without adding people for just that purpose,” Erne explained. “Just as importantly, because we have management tools we didn’t have before, our staff can focus on customer service and resolving issues. It also provides an opportunity to be more competitive and profitable. There are customers we have now that we would not have had without this technology.”

Curt Simmons, vice president of sales, noted that there is steady growth taking place in LTL markets, especially as import and export volumes help drive a rebounding economy. In 2019, in fact, C&M Forwarding moved into a new headquarters building and commercial warehouse. To meet rising demand for its services, the carrier recently broke ground on an additional 300,000-sq.-ft. cross-dock facility. ■