

EModal reduces the amount of time trucks spend waiting in queues at terminal gates by establishing terminal appointments and eliminating delays caused by fee payments and incomplete information. This saves fuel, cuts pollution and can reduce greenhouse gas emissions by over 200 metric tons per year at a typical port, while improving earnings for truck drivers/operators and terminal operators.

Introduction

Every day, the freight industry is challenged with transporting large numbers of containers to and from a diverse network of transportation facilities. In February 2000, the eModal system was introduced to help manage this “many to many” aspect of container movement. Functioning as a warehouse of information, eModal improves the communication and coordination between the trucking, marine and rail communities. The eModal software manages pertinent information from many marine terminals, allowing for easy and efficient coordination between terminals and trucking companies. Today eModal is the nation’s largest online port community system with thirty-four marine terminals on both U.S. coasts participating via this common portal.

Program Description

EModal’s applications focus predominantly on the truck and marine terminal gate interface. Efficient marine terminal gates equate to reduced truck queuing and idling. To increase gate efficiencies, eModal provides a common portal of container and export booking status information. Trucking companies, customs brokers and others can check cargo status at a terminal, pay fees online, input the truck driver information for verification at the terminal, and schedule an appointment. By using web-based technologies, users

streamline the required processes before the trucker arrives at the terminal.

Terminal operators are using eModal as one tool to address the increasing container volumes moving through U.S. port facilities. By allowing online access to container information, fee payments and appointment scheduling, eModal has helped to reduced delays caused by problematic transactions and peaks in traffic volumes. Terminal operators and trucking companies are generally pleased with the system’s ease of use and ability to eliminate time-consuming communications between terminals, dispatchers and drivers. To achieve significant congestion mitigation benefits, terminals have indicated that greater participation within the trucking community will be required.

Applications included in eModal, such as online fee payment and appointment scheduling tools, have provided terminals and trucking companies with improved information exchange and processing efficiency. This allows terminals to process greater volumes of truck traffic, while decreasing fuel consumption and diesel emissions resulting from trucks queuing at terminal gates.

Online fee payment allows demurrage fees to be paid prior to the truck’s arrival at the terminal using a credit card, debit card or electronic check lodged with

eModal, avoiding delays associated with fee payments. Stopping to pay fees at some terminals can add 15-60 minutes onto a trip to the terminal. It is estimated that due to online payments, approximately 17 fewer trucks stop at a gate per hour, saving over 200 metric tons of CO₂ per year at a typical port.

Prior to the introduction of eModal, appointment scheduling was limited because it was considered too cumbersome a process for many trucking firms. EModal has facilitated the greater use of appointment systems by improving its accessibility to the trucking community. By smoothing out the delays caused by daily and weekly fluctuations in traffic volumes, the appointment scheduling tool has allowed some terminals such as the Oakland

International Terminal to accommodate growth in gate volumes.

Conclusion

EModal addresses the need for convenient and efficient communications that is central to eliminating bottlenecks in the national freight system. By facilitating a smoother flow of goods between terminals and trucks eModal improves the bottom line for terminals, truck drivers and trucking companies while reducing the impact of ports on local air quality.

Contact Information

More information on eModal's services, registration and a complete list of participating terminals are available online at: www.emodal.com or contact John Cushing at (949) 474-3140.