Smoothing your TOS implementation.

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10 key factors for a successful implementation.

Logistics is a competitive industry. Terminals around the world are looking for ways to be more efficient and handle greater volumes, which is why terminal transformation is such a pressing need. A TOS implementation is usually a core part of this transformation.

Implementing a TOS is a large undertaking, so it requires a thorough plan that details a workable approach for your terminal. You should not underestimate the breadth and depth of change that your operation will go through. Success requires a holistic plan across people, systems, process, and communication. Last, but not least, you need an experienced partner to help you through the change.

This white paper emphasizes 10 key factors for a successful implementation.

Implementation brings the business efficiencies and process improvements required for your terminal transformation.

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1. Project preparation

Your terminal transformation needs to be precisely defined. Place the project in a clear context that fits your terminal. This makes it easy to explain your rationale for change to the management team.

There are a number of factors to consider:

- Clear and concise business objectives are essential. Communicate these to the organization and get support from an executive sponsor who will provide the necessary resources and budget to complete the project.
- The project team needs to be dedicated and not distracted by their normal day–to–day roles. The implementation will be a major investment of time and resources, and everyone needs to be properly committed.
- The project's budget, scope, and schedule should be well understood, including the impact of any variance.
- A clear risk mitigation plan ensures the right use of resources to prevent any impact on productivity.
- A recognized and proven methodology increases the chances of success, even though every implementation is different.

2. Understanding your business processes

Understanding your current business processes is a crucial first step. You should be able to clearly articulate your processes, how they apply to each part of your business, and why they are important. Define the outputs from each process as a report, invoice, handover of data, or transaction to another process.

Once you've defined your current process, in conjunction with your business objectives, you can look to both the software and processes you will use in the future. Future state processes should be readily apparent and demonstrable in the software.

Then you and your TOS vendor can plan the way to your future state, through process change or software customization, or both.

3. Integration

A strong driver for implementing your TOS will invariably be the requirement to share data with your partners. Your TOS needs to be part of an integrated supply chain to really deliver the value and efficiencies referenced in your business case. The analysis of business processes must therefore be end–to–end and include the partner organizations and systems that require data sharing. Be prepared, this will be a time–consuming exercise, but will be very valuable early in the project to avoid dependencies later in the plan.

Integration can take many forms and use many different standards. These standards, along with the system primacy need thorough investigation, inclusive of the partners involved. Whilst your TOS vendor can provide some input, this part of the plan really needs to be driven by you as the client, as you hold the business relationships with your partners and have the knowledge of the business outcomes required.

4. Data quality

Good clean data going into your TOS will deliver the expected results to both your internal organization and your partners who receive information from your TOS. This data can be input in many different ways, and all of these are equally important in getting to the right result.

- **Static system data:** This is the data that personalizes the TOS to your terminal such as, data about your berths, machines and partners. This data needs cleaning before entering the system to provide a solid foundation.

- **Configuration:** This is important to ensure the data you are producing within the operation is accurate, for example, the invoice configuration producing the expected results as per the charges in your tariff.
- **Onsite cargo:** The cargo that is onsite at the point of Go Live must be taken into your TOS with high accuracy. Starting with the correct inventory data will allow you to focus on the new processes and not the correction of early transactions. The key to success here is to practice the data migration before the Go Live to avoid delays on the day of go live and to only allow accurate data to be taken into the production environment.
- **Ongoing cargo data:** Working with your upstream partners to check the quality of data coming into your system is of utmost importance. Checks to ensure accuracy, usability and cleansing old, obsolete data are sure ways to win with your Go Live.

5. Executive sponsorship

Senior executives set the direction for an organization and need to be fully committed to providing project resources and funds. Project sponsorship should sit with an executive as well. This usually defaults to the senior IT person, but a TOS implementation is a business project more than an IT project. The senior operational person should really be the owner and sponsor.

This is particularly important if the project includes organizational change or new business processes. This is where your sponsor's managerial role is crucial.

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6. Change management

Implementing new software affects not only your business processes, but also the people in your organization. It can be an unsettling time for staff as they learn new ways of working with the system, and deal with uncertainty and disruption to normal business.

Involving users as early as possible can reduce resistance. Help people adapt faster by clearly communicating and clarifying the changes that will occur, the benefits that they will bring, and your overall expectations of the transformation.

This side of the change process needs constant management, and the earlier it starts the better your chance of success.

7. Dedicated project team

The success of the implementation will be directly affected by the performance of your project team.

Every area of the business that will be affected by the new system, including management and end users, should be represented in the team. They need to be dedicated to the project, or you will lose momentum to day–to–day business operations, which will have a financial impact.

The project manager is key to the overall success of the project, and must have the necessary project management skills and experience to lead the team. Your project manager needs to ensure that each team member clearly understands their role and responsibilities. Team members may be involved in the entire project or parts of it, depending on their role.

8. Comprehensive project schedule

A clearly defined project schedule lists the expected dates for agreed project milestones, includes tasks such as data migration and testing, plans each person's involvement, and tracks your infrastructure, training, and budget requirements. Constantly reviewed, it will ensure that the project stays on track.

Your TOS vendor should be able to easily show the key dependencies in the project plan and be aware of the critical path of events through the project.

9. Training

Training is the key to a successful implementation. Training enables your staff to learn, adapt and use new processes and systems.

Your organization should own the training function. Your TOS vendor should provide super user training to your subject matter experts, line managers and power users. Your super users should be responsible for training end users. This enables you to build knowledge, expertise and resilience in your organization.

10. User Acceptance Testing (UAT)

UAT is crucial. It confirms that your future processes will work and that the project will deliver the required business objectives. As well as testing the system's processes, data, reports, and interfaces, it also tests the staff members who will run it.

To be most effective, UAT needs to be as realistic as possible, and target scenarios at the extremes of your monthly routine.

Go Live with confidence

The culmination of all your hard work is a successful Go Live. By the time you are at this stage, the risk will be reduced to the point where Go Live should be a well–rehearsed procedure with a high confidence of success.

All the planning and preparation coupled with good project governance and change management will come together as a single milestone moment in the evolution of your terminal transformation.

However, it is important to remember this is the start of this new journey. There will be new opportunities identified through the implementation and also from the new data you will be receiving from your operation after your TOS Go Live. Setting up a continuous improvement team who will not only support the users but collate and prioritize further initiatives will be invaluable in cementing your new TOS into the organization.
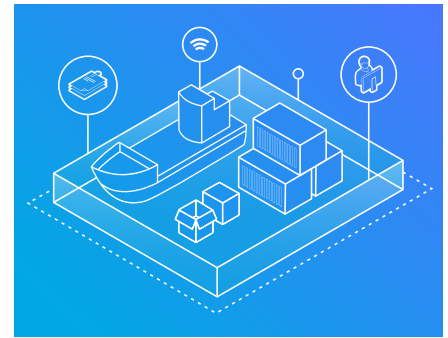
About Master Terminal from Jade Logistics Group

Designed to handle all cargo types in one integrated system, Master Terminal is the world's leading terminal operating system (TOS) for mixed cargo ports.

Master Terminal is licensed at over 120 terminals worldwide, from vehicle terminals in Italy to steel terminals in North America.

Implementation is the key to success, and our implementation record is second to none in the industry. Our proven and robust methodology, partnership approach, thorough training and unrivaled implementation timeframes deliver tangible results fast.

Jade Logistics has been designing, building, and supporting innovative logistics software since 1993. Our experienced people understand the global logistics industry and are the foundation on which we build long-term relationships with our customers.

We have offices in New Zealand, Australia, USA, the Netherlands, the United Arab Emirates, and Indonesia.

For more information, visit us at **jadelogistics.com**

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