Kale Logistics
Technology that Transforms

Tangible benefits with electronic AWB Filing

Global forwarders realise savings up to 70% of current AWB filing costs

Overview: Air Way Bill

The cargo supply chain essentially generates three types of documents- Transport, Trade & Customs documents. One of the most important transport documents in the Air cargo supply chain is the Air Waybill (AWB). Issued by the agents on behalf of airlines, AWB covers terms of shipment for transport of cargo from one airport (origin) to another airport (destination).

State of AWB Filing in Cargo Supply Chain

At present AWBs are manually collected from airlines by the agents & submitted back to the airlines at the airport. The AWB has to accompany the cargo across the supply chain. In many developing economies this process of AWB requisition, issuance and usage is semi-automated and involves inconvenient communication means like email/ phone/ faxes/ letters. To elaborate this further, the forwarders have to enter the shipment data on the air waybill, print the same and hand over to the carrier and then the carriers have to re-enter the same in the frenzy of finalizing the flights at the last minute. This entails very high communication costs, enormous time and abundant paper work for Freight forwarders, as well as carriers.

A paperless cargo supply chain has multifold benefits for the global Logistics community. However, in developing economies this initiative is not fully implemented at present due to lack of technology adoption at all levels of the supply chain. This has barred industry stakeholders from moving to complete electronic document transmission.

Winds of change

There has been an increasing awareness of the fact that replacing a paper AWB with an electronic AWB will simplify the air freight process for the supply chain. Forwarders will no longer have to archive the paper AWB. It would also mean accurate information, confidentiality, efficiency, cost reductions. Delays due to the paper AWB being misplaced or lost can become a thing of past. In support of the paper free supply chain initiative, leading Forwarders Associations worldwide have worked in partnership with Kale Logistics Solutions along with the involvement of industry stakeholder's like - airlines, custodians, shippers, forwarders, Custom Brokers & Customs; to conceptualise, design & develop- Universal Platform for Logistics & Integrated Freight Transport- UPLIFT.
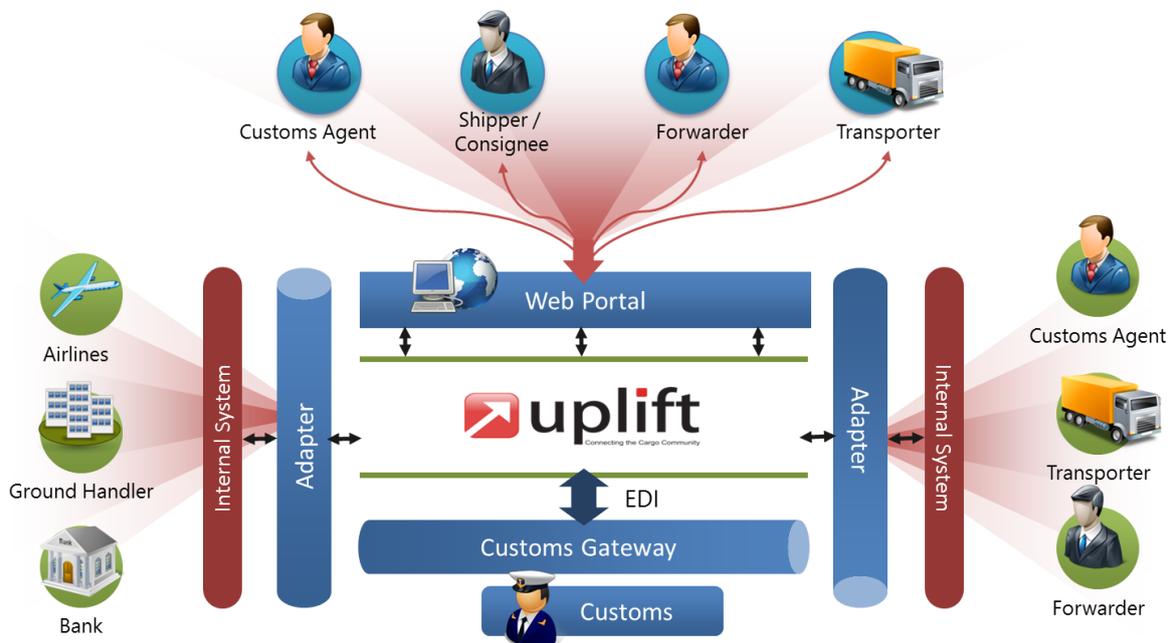
UPLIFT Electronic AWB Filing

An AWB is essentially a contract of carriage between the 'Shipper / forwarder' and the 'Carrier/Airline'. An e-AWB (Electronic Air Waybill) significantly simplifies the air-freight supply chain movement by removing paper air waybill. The initial industry focus is on attaining 100% e-AWB worldwide by 2017 as per IATA mandate. The first step towards e AWB is to enable electronic filing of AWB by the freight forwarder through EDI with airlines.

UPLIFT addresses the pain areas of the Cargo community and equips them with a system having EDI capability. It is an automated, hassle free web-based solution helping the forwarder to file AWBs in electronic form directly to the airlines system. Through UPLIFT this facility is now available to forwarders and airlines in the Cargo Supply Chain of prominent world economies. The platform has processed more than 3.5 million electronic transactions successfully. UPLIFT boosts the e-freight initiative of IATA and provides a value-added service integrated with the airline's system.

With electronic AWB filing, only those copies that are mandatorily required are printed thereby avoiding the hassle of printing, storing and retrieval of documents. Forwarding agents can now directly submit information to Airlines for MAWB and HAWB in conformance to Airline requirements. UPLIFT platform then transmits this information in accepted EDI messaging formats to respective airlines and to the Airport cargo handler to complete the shipment information cycle. This service helps forwarders comply with ENS/ AMS/ CGM filing, electronically exchange cargo documents such as- Shipping bill / Bill of entry and exchange EDI messages with Airlines and Airport Cargo Ground Handling Agents.

From their central office Forwarders and Airlines can also track usage of the allocated AWBs and get status updates on AWB filed electronically through UPLIFT.

Diagram depicting Electronic AWB Filing through UPLIFT

Getting Started on UPLIFT Electronic AWB filing

UPLIFT is a single window system requiring one time data entry that automatically transmits shipment information using CARIMP EDI format between agent and airline. The system also provides complete track and trace for multiple airlines at one place. The e-AWB service can be availed by the forwarding community by three mechanisms, namely- Third Party Interface, Portal and Bureau Service.

- **Third Party Interface-** : Stakeholders can develop XML interface (in required format) with the proposed platform for leveraging the message orchestration capabilities of the platform. Once connectivity is tested and in place, various types of CARIMP messages can be generated from the existing ERP systems and directly submitted on the UPLIFT platform.

- **Web Log-in-** Several stakeholders can access the UPLIFT platform online for using multitude of features available beyond just e-AWB. The users login with unique username and passwords which are encrypted and secure, pretty much like how a banking system works. User access control can restrict/guide only known person to access the functionality on the web-based platform.

- **Bureau Service-** Stakeholders who can do neither of the above two options can send .pdf version documents to the platform's designated email ID. Shipment records and EDI messages will be created in platform and exchanged with the appropriate stakeholder.

UPLIFT Benefits to Forwarders

The clear benefits which any forwarding business would realize on using UPLIFT for e-AWB filing are-

Efficiency Improvement

- Reduce data entry and errors
- Electronic data interface with Airlines
- Data entered once will be used for sending to Airlines
- Reduced phone calls, faxes, courier costs
- Single view of shipment status from multiple airlines with EDI

Cost effective compliance

- Savings of up to 70% on each on ENS / AMS filings
- Document filing in compliance with Industry regulations

Improved Visibility

- Complete tracking of cargo and document movement
- Ability to send and get SMS/ email alerts

Improved service levels

- Ability to send alerts to customers on key milestones
- Ability to track service levels, cost competitiveness and modern outlook
- FSUs of all kind are triggered at different levels of shipment movement

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