

LANSA Case Study

Royal Wagenborg manages ship and shore with LANSA

The Royal Wagenborg group, a global logistics provider based in the Netherlands, provides shipping, towage, offshore supply, ferries, stevedoring, warehousing, crane rental, standard and special road transport, plus the assembly of prefab constructions. Wagenborg uses LANSA on its ships and land, for fleet management, crewing, chartering, passenger reservations, ship maintenance and an XML supplier portal.

Harry Meyer, IT Manager at the Royal Wagenborg group, says, “LANSA paints the complete picture. Windows clients with an SQL Server database on board our ships, Windows clients with a central iSeries server for our offices onshore, Web access for third parties and XML data exchange with suppliers. We can do it all with our own team. LANSA’s methodology appeals to us and fits our pragmatic business culture.”



Finding a Productive Tool

“Wagenborg, a family owned company, has been in business for over 100 years,” explains Meyer. “When I joined in 1989, there were various non-integrated systems and platforms in use by the divisions. My mission was to set up an integrated IT environment for the entire Royal Wagenborg group.”

“I soon concluded that none of the systems would support our future business plans. IBM had just launched the AS/400. The low cost of ownership, architecture and reliability appealed to me and it had the scalability to meet our growth objectives.”

“Because of the diversity of our business, none of the available solutions were a good fit. It is also Wagenborg’s strategy to remain as independent as possible from third parties and we did not want to adapt our procedures to conform to a package. Therefore, we started with in-house development using RPG.”

“After six months I started to look for a more productive way to development than 3GL. We chose SSA’s AS/SET® and used it for several years. But AS/SET’s capabilities did not keep up, while LANSA continued to evolve and expand. So in 2000, after extensive evaluations, we moved to LANSA,” says Meyer.

Jan Koster, project manager application development at Wagenborg, says, “The old green-screen application offered insufficient support for our current business processes. It wasn’t possible to offer true Windows clients and Web access. The capabilities we now have with LANSA are far more modern.”

Synchronizing Ship and Shore

Wagenborg Shipping, the first division to implement LANSA, operates 150 ships and offers “total ship management” for its own and third-party ships. This includes chartering, nautical and technical support, crewing, insurance, claim processing, shipbuilding, sales, purchase and financing.

“We can grasp any business opportunity with LANSA.”

“Our Wagenborg Logistic Financial Information System (WALFIS) has been developed completely with Visual LANSA and consists of integrated modules for every aspect of ship management,” continues Koster.

The fleet list module was Wagenborg’s first Web application and covers central recording of ship details, such as length, width, depth, load capacity and motor capacity.

The crew planning module also has a browser interface that overseas recruitment agencies use to maintain crew details including availability and certification by ship tonnage online. “Crew planning is a complex graphical application,” says Koster. “We could not have built this functionality with our old tool-set.”

Voyage administration, used by the chartering department, manages type of goods shipped, loading and unloading ports, passages, tariffs, commissions and generates financial transactions for invoicing and commission that are sent to Wagenborg’s financial management system.

The fleet management system, with modules for both the crew and onshore offices, supports planned maintenance, parts and materials, including consumable goods. A Visual LANSA application lets a ship’s crew order parts and materials while at sea using electronic forms. The ships typically have a Windows 2003 server and a fiber-optic network with five or six clients attached.

Transactions are sent as email attachments for processing by the onshore iSeries which returns order confirmations and other transactions by email to the onboard application. Eventually the



electronic forms will cater for approximately 50 transaction types, allowing almost all of a ship's onboard activities to be exchanged and processed in a standardized way, both in the ship's local Windows and Wagenborg's central iSeries.

B2B and B2C eBusiness

Wagenborg offers ferry services to the popular tourist islands Ameland and Schiermonnikoog. Ferries carrying up to 1,500 passengers and 70 cars depart every one or two hours. Passengers can book through a LANSA Web site, especially for cars.

Meyer explains, "There are only a few ways you can differentiate yourself from your competitors. Our LANSA-based Web site has helped to achieve this, by publishing our ferry schedule and other details and by offering Web reservations."

"An added advantage is that personal details and trip data is entered by the customers themselves. This results in faster processing and a lower error rate."

Wagenborg has also built a supplier portal with LANSA Integrator to automate the purchasing of ship parts and other materials. The transaction exchange uses an industry specific MTML XML-based format via information broker Marine Transaction Services (see www.mtml.org).

Wagenborg publishes Requests For Quote transactions and suppliers respond with a Quote, which receives either a negative response or if accepted, a Purchase Order from Wagenborg to which suppliers return an Order Confirmation and Invoice.

"The Suppliers Portal offers a enormous improvement in ship maintenance and inventory management," says Meyer.

The LANSA Advantage

"With LANSA our iSeries can offer Windows and Web applications as well as XML transactions. It is a fast and reliable platform," says Koster.



The Wagenborg IT development team: Left to right: Harry Meyer, Aart Wezeman, Jan Egbert Muurman, Ida Eckhardt, Theo Mulder, Jan Koster and Kees Bonthond.

Company and System Information

- The Royal Wagenborg divisions include Wagenborg Shipping (total ship management, stevedoring and towage), Wagenborg Offshore (services for the oil and gas industry), Wagenborg Passenger Services (ferry services to the Dutch islands), Wagenborg Reining (road transport and warehousing) and Wagenborg Nedlift (crane rental, special transport, assembly, engineering, multi-modal projects and project management).
- Wagenborg Shipping companies include: Wagenborg Shipping, Wagenborg Shipping North America Inc., Wagenborg Shipping Sweden AB, Wagenborg Shipping Asia Pte Ltd, Wagenborg Projects & Logistics, Wagenborg Stevedoring and Wagenborg Towage. For more information visit: www.wagenborg.com
- Wagenborg's IT team consists of 18 people: one manager, six developers, two service desk people and nine system support people.
- For more information visit: www.wagenborg.com

"By giving access to crew, agencies, suppliers and customers, we are well on our way to moving all data entry directly to the source, where the authority and responsibility should be. In the old days there was always a large stack of mail and faxes waiting to be manually rekeyed and processed."

"Now we all have the same interchangeable LANSA skills."

"We have a development team of six people. With this small team and LANSA, we achieved a lot in a short time frame. We have a practical attitude and want to work productively. Much of the underlying coding you would have to do yourself in other languages is already done automatically by LANSA," concludes Koster.

Meyer confirms their practical approach. "Wagenborg is a fast acting and competent organization with a flat management structure that allows us to react quickly to market changes. In addition, we are going through a period of rapid growth."

"The IT department should be a reflection of the organization and we are. We can respond quickly and in a professional way with a good team and the help of LANSA."

"We have a productive team and a very good mix of experienced and younger people. The transition to LANSA was smooth for everyone, both for the older COBOL and the younger Visual Basic developers. The support and training from LANSA's office in Amsterdam was excellent. Now we all have the same interchangeable LANSA skills."

"With LANSA we successfully moved all development into the one development environment. Even the temporary Visual Basic Band-Aids that we built in the AS/SET years are now replaced with LANSA."

Grasping Future Opportunities

"I expect our customers will ask for more real-time online information in the near future. For example, inventory position and movement of goods in our Warehousing division. With LANSA, we have a perfect opportunity to meet these demands."

"IT is an essential component in support of our company's strategy. With our extensive knowledge of Wagenborg's business processes we are well positioned to develop custom software."

"One of the points in my mission statement is to follow the development in all markets in which Wagenborg is active and to investigate how to respond with IT to the changing requirements of our organization."

"We can grasp any opportunity with LANSA. Our department, and within that every individual, plus the tools we select, have to contribute to meeting the goals of our organization," concludes Meyer.

The Americas:

Headquarters – Chicago, USA
Tel: +1 630 874 7000
Email: info@lansa.com

Europe:

Headquarters – London, UK
Tel: +44 1727 790300
Email: info@lansa.co.uk

Asia Pacific:

Headquarters – Sydney, Australia
Tel: +61 2 8907 0200
Email: info@lansa.com.au

www.lansa.com

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