

## Port of Valencia creates cargo information hub

The Spanish port of Valencia is using container-booking portals to act as an intermediary between shippers and carriers in an effort to attract more traffic.

The port has set up its own online platform linking to the GT Nexus and Intra portals to create an information hub for cargo coming in and out of the port, including shipment bookings, tracking and shipping instructions.

The valenciaportpcs.net system is a step up on previous port-community networks and is aimed at improving communications between port agents and shippers, freight forwarders and carriers.

Currently, the port system is processing around 1,500 shipping instructions per month and Valenciaport portal manager Jose Garcia says it is expected to improve port traffic by about 10%.

Garcia says the port portal is not an e-commerce system but an e-business tool aimed at making document flows more efficient. He adds that it makes it easier for the commercial portals to contact local forwarders and benefits the port by reducing its need to connect to multiple-carrier Internet booking sites.

Spanish port authorities are obligated to improve their infrastructures, including electronic networks, but Valencia is also hoping to link up with similar systems operated at other European ports.

Port of Valencia commercial manager Jaime Lopez said: "Normally we are not involved in communication between clients over booking and shipping instructions. But we have created this way of communication as a new service."

GT Nexus has also linked up with major forwarding and logistics group Schenker to standardise shipment-status messages and booking confirmations, initially for containers moving to and from the US and Canada.

The portal says it will enrich and normalise data it receives from carriers before passing it on to Schenker, which runs its own customer-facing systems.

Schenker customers should gain superior container visibility, while the forwarder has better internal control of its ocean-container flows.

"Poor global-logistics data quality is too complex for any one customer to solve," said Greg Johnsen, executive vice-president of sales and marketing at GT Nexus. "The solution lies in a shared platform, where all customers share a common set of data-management processes."