

Collaborating with competitors has major advantages

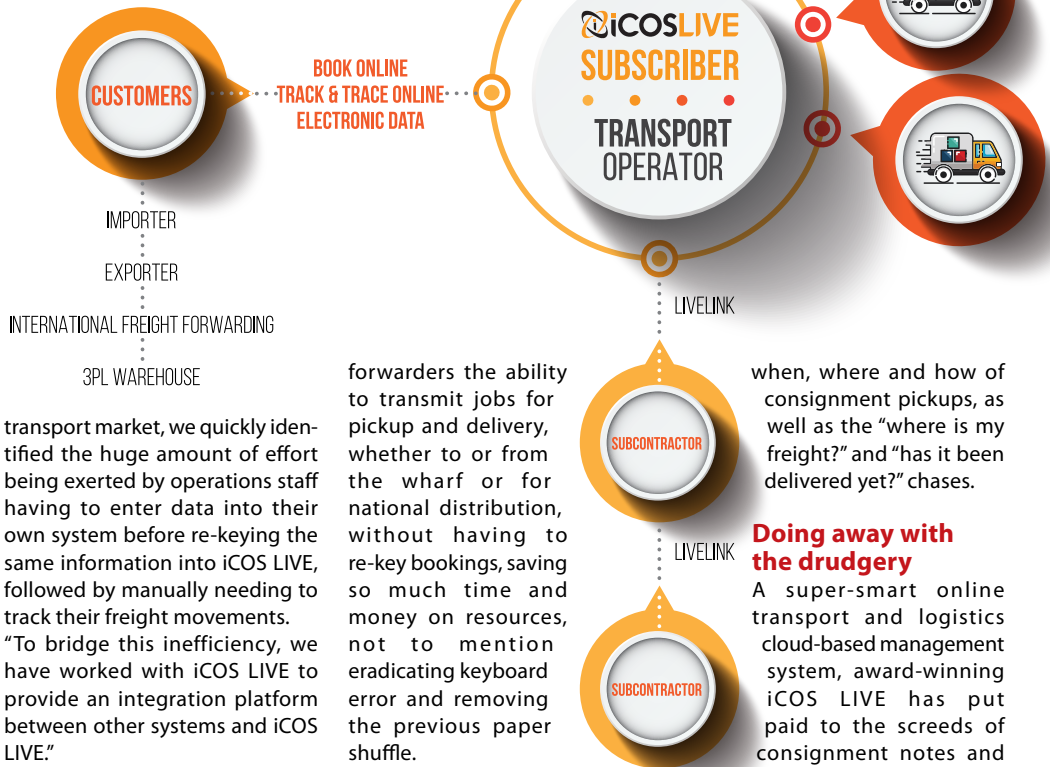
Software companies everywhere try to be one thing to all people. However, they can't be – they have to evolve with their industry and keep pace with the various technologies around them.

Continued development is one avenue for most who want some longevity in their respective sectors, as remaining static will ultimately be a death knell for their product. One significant leap – in faith and far-sightedness – is along the path of collaboration, even to the point of forming relationships with competitors.

New Zealand transport management system innovator iCOS LIVE is travelling the collaborative route, trialling an integration with one of Australasia's leading international freight forwarding and warehouse management systems via Cloudster Connect. Cloudster Connect has offices in Sydney and Melbourne and is a leading provider of logistics integration services both locally and internationally.

"In today's world of ever-changing technology, streamlining your processes isn't enough. You need to do more than eliminate risks, increase productivity and reduce costs," says Sebastien Soum, sales director at Cloudster Connect. "With this in mind, we investigated the New Zealand market and found most freight forwarding and 3PL businesses used a handful of software systems to manage their day-to-day operations. "With iCOS LIVE being as prevalent as it is in the New Zealand

A super-smart cloud-based management system, iCOS LIVE allows transport owners to take better stock of their day-to-day operations



transport market, we quickly identified the huge amount of effort being exerted by operations staff having to enter data into their own system before re-keying the same information into iCOS LIVE, followed by manually needing to track their freight movements. "To bridge this inefficiency, we have worked with iCOS LIVE to provide an integration platform between other systems and iCOS LIVE."

Removing the paper shuffle

The benefit to transport operators using both systems in their operation will mean no more re-keying jobs from one system to another – jobs will automatically appear in iCOS LIVE, ready to be dispatched to the operators' trucks for delivery.

iCOS LIVE's collaborative integration with Cloudster Connect is already underway and phase two will offer international freight

forwarders the ability to transmit jobs for pickup and delivery, whether to or from the wharf or for national distribution, without having to re-key bookings, saving so much time and money on resources, not to mention eradicating keyboard error and removing the previous paper shuffle.

"Keying data once and having it available throughout the lifecycle of the freight movement means staff can spend less time capturing data two, three, or four times, and more time on more important activities," adds Sebastien Soum.

Consigned to the past are warehouse managers creating run sheets, paper dockets and hand-writing labels, along with the time-consuming to-and-fro communication with the transport operator advising the

when, where and how of consignment pickups, as well as the "where is my freight?" and "has it been delivered yet?" chases.

Doing away with the drudgery

A super-smart online transport and logistics cloud-based management system, award-winning iCOS LIVE has put paid to the screeds of consignment notes and delivery-specific instructions. It has done away with all the drudgery work, allowing transport owners and their customers to take better stock of their day-to-day operations and manage their customers' shipping requirements as intended.

Distributors with their own fleets can sign up to iCOS LIVE for their transport and logistics management in their own right, or, even better, have their transport operators handle those tasks on their behalf, realising huge cost savings and business advantages. iCOS LIVE is a SaaS web-based product with no user licences, which means transport operators can have unlimited customers on their system. The software provides the ability to book job orders online, or, better still, permits transport operators' clients' internal IT departments to send orders directly from internal ERP systems electronically, saving resource at their end.

Cloud-based solutions are also far less complex, requiring less involvement from IT experts and are easier to learn for front-office and logistical staff, as well as drivers.

For further information, visit www.icoslive.com

Air New Zealand explores translation technology

Air New Zealand is turning to technology to tackle the language barriers that often arise during travel.

The airline is one of the first corporates globally to trial a customer service use case for Google's wireless Pixel Buds headphones which enable live translation of 40 languages via Google's Pixel handset.

Air New Zealand chief digital officer Avi Golan says the airline has a number of multi-lingual employees, but naturally there are

times when the relevant language speaker may not be on hand, and technology could play a pivotal role in those moments.

"We operate to 30 international destinations and our customers speak an even more diverse range of languages. Google's Pixel Buds could assist in areas such as check-in and boarding, as well as inflight, to help our staff communicate effectively with international customers."

Mr Golan says exploring how translation technology like Google's Pixel Buds could enhance Air

New Zealand's customer experience has been "excellent". "In this increasingly digital world our customers expect us to provide a fast and personalised experience. It's crucial we embrace technology solutions, and collaborating with like-minded partners helps us keep ahead of the game," he says.

Air New Zealand's experimentation with Google Pixel Buds follows on from other recent initiatives involving artificial intelligence, augmented reality and social robotics.