

## PRESS RELEASE

### New AEB white paper offers tips on delivering greater customer satisfaction

- **Shipping delays: how pro-activeness can turn bad news into an opportunity to improve customer service**



*Leamington Spa, 29<sup>th</sup> April 2014* – Failed or delayed deliveries are damaging, both for a company’s reputation and for customer relations. A new white paper from AEB, one of Europe’s leading providers of global trade and supply chain management solutions, offers tips and suggestions for making the flow of goods and shipping statuses more transparent, keeping customers in the loop – and using shipping delays as an opportunity to improve overall visibility in the supply chain. Titled “Delivering greater customer satisfaction”, the white paper can be downloaded free of charge from <http://www.aeb.com/uk/media/white-paper-customer-satisfaction.php>.

Customer satisfaction is a key factor for the success of any business. Happy customers are more loyal, more likely to recommend a business, more open to cross-selling, and less sensitive to price increases than unhappy customers. While the main focus is of course on the quality of the purchased product, there is another essential factor driving customer satisfaction: reliable, on-time shipping. Unfortunately, even the most conscientious shippers cannot rule out delays 100 percent of the time. But it’s not necessarily the actual delay that irritates customers most, but the feeling of being kept in the dark. That’s why it is so important to provide customers with regular, up-to-date, targeted information on the status of their order and its delivery date. Interestingly, customers who feel they are being kept up to date on the status of their delivery are not just less dissatisfied, they may even perceive this proactive communication as an extra service.

But tracking the status of a shipment in the various transport service provider systems can be complicated and time-consuming. This is where specialised IT solutions come in. These visibility platforms make it easy to collate information from disparate sources and in different formats. Typically linked to host systems, such as a shipping solution, they can obtain information on the status and content of individual packages and consignments and make it available to all relevant supply chain partners. Ideally, companies should allow customers access to this information platform, enabling them to track their orders online and see the expected delivery date as well as any changes due to delays.

Visibility platforms also have another benefit: they can help companies to optimise their own logistics processes. By mapping predefined milestones, updating statuses and monitoring when they are reached, the software helps to identify the source of the problems and initiate corrective actions. Recurring delays on certain routes or with specific milestones can be taken into account for future planning, be it by ensuring that picking operations begin earlier or by assigning more employees when order volumes are high. Visibility solutions can also generate reports and analyses to evaluate the reliability and on-time performance of



transport service providers. Repeated violations can trigger the appropriate actions – including the replacement of unreliable carriers with more reliable partners. In short, using visibility solutions to optimise internal logistics processes can make companies more reliable and responsive, which in turn increases customer satisfaction even more.

The expense of setting up this type of system can pay for itself, as a 2011 study<sup>1</sup> by market research firm Aberdeen Group showed. Nearly 30 percent of those surveyed indicated that they expected a return on their investment in less than one year after introducing visibility software, and the average expected ROI was 18.2 months.

Claire Umney, General Manager at AEB (International) Ltd, said: “Information on the current status of shipments is already available within the supply chain, but may not be easily accessible. Forward-looking companies turn this challenge into an opportunity. By using visibility software to optimise their internal processes, they can improve the quality of their service, increase customer satisfaction and gain a competitive advantage.”

AEB’s new white paper, “Delivering greater customer satisfaction”, can be downloaded free of charge from <http://www.aeb.com/uk/media/white-paper-customer-satisfaction.php>.

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### **Contacts**

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### **About AEB ([www.aeb-international.co.uk](http://www.aeb-international.co.uk))**

AEB is one of Europe's leading providers of supply chain logistics software and has been delivering solutions to customers for over thirty years. The company has over 6,000 customers worldwide and is headquartered in Stuttgart, Germany, supported by offices in the UK, Switzerland, Singapore and the US. AEB’s core product - ASSIST4 - is the comprehensive solution suite for all logistics processes in global business. ASSIST4 offers a complete set of business services for end-to-end logistics, including international goods movements, making it possible to standardise and automate business processes in supply chain execution. ASSIST4 also creates transparency and provides a reliable basis for making the right decisions about the planning, monitoring, control and continual optimisation of supply networks, even beyond the boundaries of the business. The ASSIST4 suite offers full functionality via a wide range of modules including Visibility & Collaboration Platform, Order Management, Warehouse Management, Transport & Freight Management, Customs Management and Compliance & Risk Management.

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<sup>1</sup> Aberdeen Group: “Globalisation: Linking Supply Chain Transformation to the Profit and Loss Statement”, <http://www.tridentglobal.com.au/whitepapers/aberdeensupplychaintransformation.pdf>