

## **Customer**

Intuitive Surgical, Inc.  
1266 Kifer Road, Building 101  
Sunnyvale, CA 94086-5304  
[www.intuitivesurgical.com](http://www.intuitivesurgical.com)



## **Company Overview**

Intuitive Surgical, Inc. (“Intuitive”) is the global leader in the rapidly emerging field of robotic-assisted minimally invasive surgery. Since its inception, the company has consistently provided surgeons and hospitals with the tools needed to improve clinical outcomes and to help patients return to active and productive lives.

## **Situation**

Intuitive shipped products to domestic and international locations from their corporate headquarters via UPS, FedEx, Generic Carriers, LTL and TL. Intuitive used a variety of carrier and 3rd party (Clippership) systems, Web sites, and manual processes to rate, label, document, ship and track outbound shipments. None of these systems were integrated to their SAP system. Intuitive lacked consistent processes for automating international compliance in an industry that is heavily regulated and becoming more so. Export Department personnel manually prepared customs documents, a time-consuming process which raised concerns because as a public company, Intuitive is subject to Sarbanes Oxley and must demonstrate reasonable care against regulatory compliance risks.

Because shipments were processed with disparate systems, Intuitive lacked a central repository to store all transportation information. As a result, management lacked visibility and control of transportation costs and historical shipping information. Shipping system operators manually verified carton contents for multi-package shipments, a requirement for international shipping. Many of Intuitive’s customers require the use of their own carrier account numbers.

Customer Service Representatives (CSRs) are responsible for fielding questions from customers and field support representatives regarding order and shipment status. Tracking shipments required searches on the SAP system, carrier websites, and continuous calls into the shipping department for shipment status. CSRs needed the ability to quickly answer customer questions with complete and most up-to-date information available.

Finance lacked controls necessary to account for and reconcile transportation costs. Intuitive pays for all shipping costs and every shipment is sent expedited or express, and there it was important to control these expenditures accurately and in a timely fashion. Dimensional charges, fuel, duties and other accessorial charges increased shipping costs rapidly and were frequently not taken into account due to the time-critical nature of each shipment.

## **Capabilities Required**

Intuitive identified the following key system requirements:

1. One enterprise shipping platform, one SAP interface
2. Automate FedEx, UPS, LTL and TL shipping processes
3. Automate export document preparation, electronic SED filing
4. Store digitized export forms for reprinting & filing requirements
5. Improve financial visibility and control over transportation costs and carrier invoice reconciliation
6. Verify dimensional weights from product database
7. Verify proper consignee carrier account #
8. Verify Duty Payer options
9. Search and provide up to date shipping status instantly
10. Ability to quickly expand to new shipping locations



## **Solution**

Agile-Network, LLC, is a nationwide organization of logistics systems integrators who specialize in enterprise deployment of integrated shipping solutions. Agile-Network's NYC Metro office ("Agile") had successfully integrated with SAP on several other occasions. Agile studied Intuitive's requirements and recommended AgileElite, a suite of enterprise transportation management solutions that met all of Intuitive's expectations.

Agile deployed AgileElite on a single server, behind a firewall in Intuitive's corporate data center in Sunnyvale California and integrated to SAP using a Remote Function Call (RFC) connector created by Agile. This provided Intuitive's IT personnel with a single point of control (as mandated by SOX) over security, data processes, and authorized user access for all shipping locations. Agile's RFC connector provided operators with real time information from SAP.

AgileShip is a production shipping application available within AgileElite which provides Intuitive warehouse personnel with the ability to automate weighing, carrier service selection, rating, carrier compliant labeling, and Bills of Lading processing. Intuitive shippers scan in SAP delivery #s and AgileShip instantly accesses header and line item information from SAP. AgileShip checks for dimensional weight requirements and accesses carton characteristics from a product database. AgileShip also verifies consignee account #s to ensure proper billing. Once the shipment is processed, AgileShip updates SAP with accurate carrier costs and tracking information.

For international shipments, Intuitive no longer has to manually prepare export documents or go to AES Direct's web site to file Shipper's Export Documents. AgileExport automatically verifies tariff codes, descriptions, unit costs, duty payer options against product information accessed from SAP. AgileExport submits requests electronically to AES Direct SKUs and retrieves ITN #s when the filing has been confirmed with US Customs. AgileElite then generates all the forms and documentation required during shipment processing for the destination countries. Costs, including duties, are returned back to SAP.

## **Solution Summary**

- One enterprise platform, single SAP interface
- Automate UPS, FedEx, LTL, and TL
- Accurate dimensional weight, accessorial fees
- Automate export documents & AES filings
- Financial visibility and cost control
- Track and trace critical shipments

All transaction data, including digitized documentation, are stored in a central database and made available for authorized users across Intuitive's enterprise. With one shipping database for all locations and users, Finance personnel are able to use AgileManage to generate consolidated management reports to analyze costs, reconcile carrier invoices, allocate costs to product lines, and take action on any variances that appear. Accounts receivable get PODs to support collections and FDA requirements.

CSRs are now able to search shipping status by any field, for any carriers. AgileView enables drill down from customer to order to shipment to carton to line item detail. CSRs can now provide hospitals and health practitioners with the information they need to ensure Intuitive products arrive in time for critical care.

## **Results**

Intuitive's CIO states: "By implementing AgileElite, Agile has helped us establish visibility and control over all our outbound transportation processes. As a result, we have reduced compliance risk, improved efficiency, and empowered all of our employees with critical shipment information they need to achieve Intuitive's mission to offer immediate responses to its customers.



## **For more information:**

*Agile-Network*  
*Offices Nationwide*  
*Call toll-free: 866-686-AGILE*  
*Visit our website at:*  
[www.agile-network.com](http://www.agile-network.com)