

IAS Launches InterTurn™ Service to Power Virtual Container Yard Initiatives Nationwide

Web-Based Service Will Increase Street Turns, Boost Equipment Utilization and Reduce Traffic and Smog

OAKLAND, California – March 5, 2007 – International Asset Systems (IAS), the global leader in data-enabled solutions for equipment management and tracking in the container transport industry, today announced the launch of a next-generation, web-based service that allows container operators to make quick and easy street turns of their empty equipment.

Called InterTurn™, the service is the first one available to automate the much-talked-about “virtual container yard” (VCY) concept, in which empty containers are moved directly to the next loading point instead of first being drayed back to a terminal or rail ramp.

“Today, there is too much empty container mileage,” said Paul Crinks, CEO of IAS. “Every member of the transport chain suffers – ocean carriers, trucking companies, shippers, ports and terminals, and even the public. With InterTurn powering virtual container yards across the country, we have the ability to eliminate those inefficiencies, reduce congestion and reduce emissions into the environment.”

IAS estimates that at any given moment, 30 to 40% of intermodal trucks are hauling empty containers – the result of an inefficient system in which containers are routinely returned to port terminals or container depots after being unloaded. InterTurn eliminates those needless empty trips by matching available containers “on the street” with shippers’ needs for equipment. Instead of first being hauled back to the terminal, the empty containers are delivered directly to the shippers, who load them with cargo. In that way, two empty drays between the terminal and the shippers’ facilities can be replaced with one cross-town dray.

Because of the current difficulties in arranging street turns – numerous faxes, phone calls and emails – IAS estimates that only around 2% of street-turn opportunities are realized. By automating the matching of available empty containers and shippers’ loads, InterTurn will make street turns much easier and more convenient than in the past.

Benefits to Container Operators, Trucking Companies, Shippers and Communities

By using InterTurn, container operators can save hundreds of dollars in gate fees, storage charges and terminal handling fees. They can also reduce their container fleet size by turning the equipment faster, and eliminate the administrative overhead involved in arranging street turns.

Trucking companies, meanwhile, avoid hours-long delays at terminal gates, make more revenue-producing runs, use fuel more efficiently and minimize empty vehicle miles. Shippers benefit from being able to source containers "on the street," and for the public, fewer terminal-area truck movements and fewer miles driven on the road translate both to improved traffic conditions and less air pollution.

The first virtual container yard program, sponsored by the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach together with the Alameda Corridor Transportation Authority in Southern California, uses IAS technology and has been operating since July 2006. In the program, IAS is working in partnership with eModal LLC, which is responsible for outreach to the Southern California trucking community.

"With 99% of the trucking companies serving the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach already registered with eModal, users are able to optimize the re-use of containers with a simple point and click," said John Cushing, president of eModal.

Officials of the Port of Long Beach, who have taken the lead in the regional VCY program, believe the street turn service opens the path to many of the port's goals for efficiency and environmental sustainability.

"The ports of Los Angeles/Long Beach and the Alameda Corridor Transportation Authority strongly support the virtual container yard initiative," said Richard Steinke, Executive Director, Port of Long Beach. "We are working with IAS and eModal to implement a VCY, and this effort is central to the ports' efforts to reduce traffic congestion and emissions in Southern California."

Trucking companies are upbeat about InterTurn and its potential for improving their efficiency.

"California Cartage is happy to help the ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles by supporting the virtual container yard street turn project," said Bob Curry, Owner & President. "We feel that any process that will reduce congestion at the terminals only benefits our drivers and our company. It is a win-win situation."

"We canvassed trucking companies for their ideas on how to make InterTurn easy and useful," IAS CEO Crinks said. "The trucking communities are key to VCY. We needed to make sure the service responded to their needs."

Shippers also expect to benefit from the faster and easier availability of containers on the street, the ability to arrange street turns without undue administrative effort, and the greater overall cost efficiency that street turns provide.

"We operate in a low-margin commodity export industry where every dollar counts," observed Dwight Robinson, general manager of operations for Los Angeles Harbor Grain Terminal. "We are constantly looking for ways to reduce trucking costs and be more efficient with our drivers' time."

With VCY, we can do both. VCY provides the win/win solution that we have been searching for.”

How InterTurn Works

A central feature of InterTurn is the ability to integrate it with ocean carriers’ equipment management systems. As the carrier’s system updates the status of each container, the information is transferred to InterTurn and made available to approved trucking companies via the InterTurn website. A set of business rules allows only trucking companies authorized by each ocean carrier to see available containers; however, trucking companies can use InterTurn to view available boxes from several container operators at once.

An approved trucking company can log on with a booking number for one of the ocean carrier’s customers. Another set of business rules researches the booking to ensure the available container matches the load. For example, a refrigerated container will not be released for a load of scrap metal. When an appropriate match is confirmed, InterTurn issues an electronic equipment interchange report and the trucking company is authorized to pick up the empty container and deliver it directly to the new customer.

InterTurn offers many other useful features as well:

- Automation to minimize manual keying and ensure ease of use for trucking companies
- An easy-to-use search mechanism that finds available equipment by city, zip code or distance
- The ability for ocean carriers to identify "lease off-hire" and "for sale" containers and communicate them to trucking companies
- A detailed reporting and audit trail that helps locate further opportunities for operating efficiencies

Reducing Traffic Congestion and Air Pollution

Beside reducing operating costs and increasing container utilization, transportation industry participants who use InterTurn to implement a virtual container yard also benefit the public through a reduction in traffic congestion and diesel emissions around ports and other container facilities. Traffic and air pollution in port regions are critical community concerns, and the VCY is a vital part of a comprehensive strategy to address them.

“Ports and container depots want to be good environmental citizens,” Crinks said. “InterTurn and the virtual container yard are important steps forward to make container transportation a more environmentally friendly industry.”

About IAS

Founded in 1998, International Asset Systems is the global leader in technology-based solutions for equipment management and tracking in the container transport industry. Through innovative management applications and Web-based services, IAS enables participants throughout the transport chain to increase container visibility, improve asset utilization, lower operating costs and improve customer service. IAS offers a management team with extensive experience in the container transportation industry. IAS's operational headquarters are in Oakland, California, with additional offices in Chicago, Hong Kong, Aarhus, Jaipur, Nice and London.

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