

PRESS RELEASE

Amtrak gives collections high visibility with on-line NetDespatch service

Bristol, UK, 27 April 2004 – Amtrak, in association with web services company NetDespatch, has launched an enhanced on-line collections service for goods being returned. The service allows the exact status of any collection to be viewed on the web and provides facilities for Amtrak's 100 regional depots to print bar code consignment labels in advance of a collection being made.

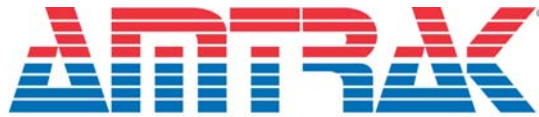
Amtrak collect parcels from anywhere in the UK and the company wanted to improve both efficiency and accuracy of the collections operation. Collections are 'returned' items such as incorrect orders of faulty equipment being sent back to the customer. Amtrak has been one of the UK specialists in this market - a result of its work with many of the UK's leading office and computer equipment suppliers.

With the new service, Amtrak's 100 strong regional depot network is a key beneficiary. Each depot can view their collections on the web, print bar-code labels, and produce a customer receipt. The system is designed to give totally visibility so collections made by any depot can be tracked allowing customers to be kept fully informed.

"Handling returns can be complicated but it has long been an Amtrak strength. With the enhanced on-line collections system we are able to provide higher levels of service with much more accurate tracking data, as well as reducing costs for our depots" says Jonathan Smith, Managing Director of Amtrak.

The addition of advance label printing is particularly important as it ensures effective tracking; something that has traditionally proved difficult with returns. As soon as a collection is requested, a label with unique bar code ID can be generated by the collecting depot. This gives a consistent ID for tracking back through the network and onto the customer. The label, which can be printed from any web-connected PC on a proper label printer, is linked to a central database so Amtrak can check and alert a depot if a request has been missed.

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P2/NetDespatch Amtrak Collections

The web-based on-line collections system was first developed for Amtrak by NetDespatch to allow requests for returns to be controlled and tracked in real-time using the Internet. Previously, using PC based solutions, it was only viable to set up customer systems for companies requiring a large number of daily collections. Now it does not matter if an Amtrak customer is requesting one collection or a hundred; the service can be used by anyone wishing to offer a professional nationwide returns service.

"The company-wide project to enhance the collections service was completed in less than 4 weeks. It is another example of how web technology has revolutionised our business. With NetDespatch we can now implement applications throughout the entire collection and delivery network in no time at all and very cost-effectively" comments Joe Dudley, Amtrak's Business Service Manager.

Using NetDespatch also gives enterprise-wide access to a host of live management information. With the touch of a button, summaries can be displayed on-screen showing every collection request made for any given period, an audit of the bar code labels produced, and the next morning a full report of consignment status is available. The data can also be easily downloaded into a customer's own database for further reporting.

About NetDespatch

NetDespatch (www.netdespatch.com) is a provider of innovative enterprise strength solutions for transport companies, based on web services architecture, and accessible through any web browser as a hosted, pay-as-you-go 'utility computing' service. The comprehensive portfolio includes customer-centric applications for web booking, quoting and tracking; a powerful weight/mileage pricing engine; enterprise bar code labelling, agent/network distribution, management information, integrated mobile communications, and XML servers to handle requests for web services invoked by other servers.

About Amtrak

Amtrak Express Parcels Ltd is one of the UK's leading and fastest-growing express parcels companies with a range of collection and delivery services that cover the UK, Europe and the rest of the world. It has more than 100 strategically located depots across the UK and operates a fleet of more than 1,000 delivery vehicles. Amtrak has an industry-leading reputation for outstanding service quality and value for money and surpasses the stringent BSEN ISO 9002 quality standard.

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