

# CASE STUDY



## TAS-tms: the engine behind the success of Tanktransport Thys

[www.tas-tms.com](http://www.tas-tms.com)

## tanktransport thys

### ■ THE CHALLENGE

Tanktransport Thys was looking for more data in order to make detailed analyses. Amongst other things, the company wanted an overview of time deviations during loading and unloading. The company also wanted to use its planners as efficiently as possible and reduce the number of telephone calls.

### ■ THE SOLUTION

The solution was found in TAS-tms's TAS-tmsTransport Management System. TAS-tms combines the data of both the onboard computers and the FMS CAN Bus, and then links those to customer contact information and orders. TAS-tms is the basis for the information flow between the Planning Department and Tanktransport Thys' drivers.

### ■ THE GAINS

Peace and tranquillity has returned at Tanktransport Thys' Planning Department. Loading and unloading data can be used by the transport company to support and justify its claims in any discussions. Loading and unloading times have decreased by 20 to 30 percent in some cases. Tanktransport Thys now uses five to ten percent less fuel, thanks to the combination of TAS-tms on the onboard computers.

"We have been doing quite well these last few years." It is with this simple and positive statement that Frank Thys, Managing Director of Tanktransport Thys, describes the atmosphere within the company. All is well in the IT Department, judging by the ICT Award the carrier won in 2012. "The cornerstone of our company is TAS-tms by Wolters Kluwer Transport Services. We've linked as many elements as possible to it, so that we can keep providing our customers with better data, while also generating reports and analyses of our transports."

The tranquil atmosphere in the offices of Tanktransport Thys says it all. The Antwerp office, situated in the municipality of Merksem, appears modest in size, but it is the company's beating heart, where planners manage the schedules of some fifty drivers and at least as many transports. It is obvious that the IT infrastructure is running smoothly: drivers receive directions via the lorries' onboard computers, with the TAS-tms Transport Management System for Carriers being the basis for the information flow. In this Flemish company, everything revolves around quality. "This holds true for our drivers, as well as for all communications with our customers. Our drivers do more than just drive; they also have to know how to handle the compressor used to unload the freight." As the company name indicates, Tanktransport Thys specializes in the transportation of liquid food products by means of tank lorries.

### Smooth synchronization of transport data

Over the years, the planners at Tanktransport Thys have steadily improved their overview of the transport activities. The data transmitted by the lorries and their drivers via the FMS CAN Bus and the onboard computers is linked to the TAS-tms data. The system then synchronizes the data without human intervention, so that everyone has access to the exact same information. In the nearby future, this shared information will also be made accessible to customers online. Proof of the smooth synchronization over multiple interfaces is in the ICT Award the company won in 2012.

When a transport order is created by an employee, it is put in a queue in Planning and then forwarded to an onboard computer. The loading, unloading times and weights, relayed by the driver through the onboard computer, are automatically added to the order, which is then confirmed by the administrative department and prepared for billing. The CMR is scanned in the vehicle and is automatically sent to TAS-tms.

### TAS-tms helps to make reference analyses

The TAS-tms Transport Management System for Carriers is not just the basis for Tanktransport Thys' business activities; the system is also used by both the company's senior management and the planners to make reference analyses. "These analyses, with loading and unloading times going back into the system, enable us to draw up an average for each loading and unloading location, and as such they are a big help for our end-of-year calculations." The annual calculations should provide insight into the accuracy of the amount of time estimated by the carrier for a certain action.



*"If anything goes wrong, we need proof to demonstrate that, because customers like to see concrete figures. This proof is what TAS-tms provides."*

*Frank Thys,  
Managing Director  
Tanktransport Thys*



Asked what it would be like to work without TAS-tms from Wolters Kluwer Transport Services today, Managing Director Frank Thys says he doesn't relish the idea: "It would mean hiring more people. We used to have one planner for twenty vehicles, whereas a senior planner now oversees fifty vehicles."

TAS-TMS NV  
Ter Waarde 73  
8900 Ieper  
+32 57 22 17 50

[info@tas-tms.com](mailto:info@tas-tms.com)  
[www.tas-tms.com](http://www.tas-tms.com)

Obviously, over the course of the year the planners regularly check whether things run smoothly. "If anything goes wrong, we need proof to demonstrate that, because customers like to see concrete figures. This proof is what TAS-tms provides." And by being able to produce numerical data, Tanktransport Thys has already managed to shorten the loading and unloading times for several major customers by 20 to 30 percent.

The integrated transport solutions also enable the carrier to approach its customers more proactively in the event of a delay. "It is better for us to communicate delays ourselves rather than the customer having to ask why the transport has not arrived yet."

### More accurate calculations thanks to rich transport data

The rich transport data is very valuable to Frank Thys. "I've noticed that we've been making more and more overviews, with much more focus on loading and unloading weights and their deviations. We want to know more about this ourselves, as do our customers. Customer demand for overviews of the ordered weights, and the actually loaded and unloaded weights, is steadily on the increase. The data the Merksem carrier now has at its disposal can be used to make more accurate calculations. According to Thys, the increased transparency has also put some pressure on transport rates. "That can be interpreted positively or negatively. We want to put a positive spin on it and provide the customer with the most accurate calculations. Without TAS-tms, calculations this accuracy would not be possible."

Asked what it would be like to work without TAS-tms's transport management software today, Thys replies he doesn't relish the idea. "It would mean hiring more people. We used to have one planner for twenty vehicles, whereas a senior planner now oversees fifty vehicles." Communication between the planners and the customers, too, is always getting faster. "We facilitate this even more by scanning consignment notes in our vehicles, speeding up the process of invoicing the customer." And the onboard computer makes the CMR data more accurate than data based on manual activities. "This way of working has made our office staff more cost-effective."

### Linking to other packages

Linking TAS-tms to the Transics onboard computers and the TLN Route Planner has proven fruitful. After all, this combination of IT solutions, resulting in more efficient planning and driving, has led to a fuel reduction of five to ten percent. "And by focussing more on the driving style of our drivers, we can economize even more", says Thys.

Meanwhile, Tanktransport Thys is also linked to Transwides's shipper platform, another solution offered by Wolters Kluwer Transport Services. Several of the carrier's major customers work with this platform, and Managing Director Thys says exporting the data from Transwide into TAS-tms is very straightforward. Cargill and IOI Edible Oils are two major customers for whom the carrier now uses twSource. "For these customers, we want to be able to link orders to one another automatically, as well as confirm them automatically. We are now running tests with an interface to have the data automatically return to our system." Thys also sees another advantage to the TAS-tms shipper platform: "We can use it to book loading slots. I am all in favour of doing that as much as possible. After all, it helps us reduce waiting times during loading and unloading, and it also improves traffic circulation at loading and unloading bays."

Despite already having invested substantially in recent years, Tanktransport Thys will be continuing to invest in the future. The carrier is experimenting with onboard computers directly underneath the tank lorries, measuring the temperature of the transported products. They can also measure ABS and tyre pressure. "We will have to keep developing and improving. Not only does this approach provide us with rich data, but it also enables us to attract more customers and increase their loyalty."