

FACING UP TO CHALLENGES CONFRONTING AIR CARGO



Yuval Baruch has been Chief Executive Officer of Hermes Logistics Technologies (HLT) at Magic Software Enterprises Ltd since joining in September 2012. He previously held senior board and management positions at companies including Matrix IT Ltd, Pilat HR Solutions and J.R. Holdings & Development Ltd.

The industry has been accused of dragging its feet around new technology—is this true and what can be done about it?

As a whole, sadly this is true. There are many innovation-oriented individuals with great ideas, but the fragmented nature of the industry, characterized by extreme interdependency between the various players across the supply chain, is a key difficulty.

Investment in technology creates strategic advantages and supports efficient growth while introducing savings, but the strategic nature of such investments and the time it takes to see the full benefit demands time and a disciplined implementation. Introducing new technology does require the operation to change.

There is much hype around blockchain and its potential. What would you identify as its advantages?

Blockchain can act as a decentralized trusted document store, and also a ledger, tracking the progression and changes applied to any document. This lends itself well to managing content such as contracts or waybills not requiring a central point of control, which is what tends to slow down some industries in terms of electronic content transaction.

How can traditional logistics players compete with newcomers who are disrupting the industry?

Innovate, innovate, innovate — players must come up with better ways to serve customers. Offer new products, give customers visibility, communicate with their ecosystem and ensure the level of service they provide is unrivalled in terms of speed and reliability.

Achievable also through alliances with other players in the supply chain that complement their offering; a more consolidated service could create products that are better embedded throughout the customers' activity and therefore contribute to customer retention.

What is the main focus of Hermes Logistics Technologies going into 2018?

Innovation! There is so much to do; with great ideas coming from our innovation and cargo experts creating amazing cargo IP, our roadmap looks better than ever. HLT creates the best value for our customers by ensuring that they will always have the best CMS/HMS in the world at their disposal, and that requires Hermes to continue innovating.

That said, great ideas are not enough, and HLT ensures that the human element is accounted for; otherwise you might end up with systems, in theory very efficient, but in reality that do not fit many individual's needs. HLT will also focus on ensuring its system remains the same reliable product it has always been.

We know that our customers rely on Hermes to run their operation and that down-time must be avoided. Reliable innovation, that is our focus!

What is your favorite aspect about working in the logistics industry?

I have the privilege to meet people from many countries, religions, speaking various languages, but the one thing they all have in common is the passion for the industry they are part of and the desire to see it advancing. The wonder of seeing the versatility of cargo, from e-commerce, to gems, to valuable livestock all the way through sports cars, dangerous goods, medicines, exotic fruits, an endless list.

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