New platform Validaide: assessing suppliers and transport routes for pharmaceuticals, perishables and high-value cargo

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Prevention is better than cure

Online supplier qualification and risk assessment

In an increasingly digital and automated freight forwarding environment, Panalpina is using Validaide, an open online platform it has co-developed, to qualify its key suppliers. The [recently launched](#) tool is already live in the first Panalpina business units, with all the remaining business units scheduled to go live by the end of the first quarter of 2018.

"Our customers, especially healthcare customers, trust us to work with

qualified suppliers in order to assess risk in the supply chain. That's why we maintain one of the most sophisticated subcontractor management and lane assessment programs in the industry," says Markus Muecke, global head of Air Freight procurement and product management at Panalpina. "Validaide makes the process of qualifying suppliers and identifying risk along transport routes more efficient, dynamic and transparent."

Collecting, maintaining and sharing the capabilities of logistics suppliers is a topic that has gained significant interest particularly in the healthcare industry since the [EU Good Distribution Practice (GDP)](#) guidelines were updated in 2013. Under these regulations, producers of medicinal products must assess the capabilities of their logistics suppliers.

Open platform

By using Validaide, Panalpina can qualify suppliers and assess transport routes much faster and easily share the findings with customers. "Validaide is an open platform with a unique community approach," explains Eelco de Jong, co-founder and managing director of [Validaide](#). "The community members on the platform, for example airlines, ground handling agents and trucking companies, can showcase their capabilities to existing and potential customers, meaning third-party logistics providers such as Panalpina. If they choose, they can also give direct access to the customer of a 3PL, so for example a pharmaceutical company. The suppliers are responsible for their data and decide with whom they want to share it."

Transparency at the fingertips

With Validaide, supplier data is accessible in one place around the clock for everyone that is granted online access – and kept up-to-date at all times by the suppliers themselves. "This can be particularly useful when an airline changes its handling agent at a specific airport, or when handling agents invest in new airport facilities such as cool cells," says Daniel Lutz, who oversees operational and quality aspects in Panalpina's department for Air Freight standards and governance. "Through Validaide, we can offer our customers enhanced visibility and options globally. They get to see who can do what along the transport chain, where potential risks are and how they can be mitigated. Thanks to real-time information and reporting, customers can make fast decisions based on facts – and streamline their auditing process."

Panalpina is Validaide's launch customer and has been on the start-up's advisory board since it was founded in 2016. The two companies have worked closely together to build a secure online platform with standardized checklists and a smooth electronic workflow that makes supplier qualification more efficient and reliable. Directly via the platform, Panalpina is inviting airlines and other suppliers to submit their data. For every business unit worldwide, Panalpina is also in the process of capturing all the relevant data that demonstrates its own capabilities across the board – be it in terms of GDP compliance, security or QHSE matters. In conjunction with the supplier data and hundreds of transport routes assessed by Panalpina's experts, the new platform provides customers with very high supply chain transparency at their fingertips.

Pharmaceuticals, perishables and high-value cargo

As Panalpina continues to roll out the platform in business units across the world, its initial focus for using Validaide is on air freight transportation of pharmaceuticals. "A single shipment of pharmaceuticals is easily worth millions, so you want to make sure that temperature control and security are tight from beginning to end. Prevention is better – and less costly – than cure," says Andreas Sahli, globally responsible for Panalpina's healthcare business. Panalpina also uses Validaide to qualify suppliers and routes for the transport by air of perishables and high-value cargo.

"We are very excited to work with Panalpina and to support the company with the thorough assessment of suppliers and transport routes for its global air freight network. Our partnership will be a key driver for the adoption of the new community platform across the air freight industry," adds de Jong.

Panalpina's cooperation with Validaide is the latest example of how the company is pushing digitalization in the freight forwarding and logistics world. Internally, the company continues to roll out its new operational platform SAP TM, with the U.S. going live this month. In September, Panalpina announced it would begin with the phased roll-out of a new customer portal in the first quarter of 2018. The first component of this new portal will be a fully automated online quotation and booking platform for ad hoc air freight.

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Contacts

Maiken Riise Andersen
Press Contact
Head of Corporate Communication
Maiken.R.Andersen@dsv.com
+45 43 20 30 74

Christian Krogslund
Press Contact
Senior Director, Corporate Marketing & Communication
christian.krogslund@dsv.com
+45 28 44 22 35