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Panalpina joins Blockchain in Transport Alliance – BiTA

Panalpina has joined the Blockchain in Transport Alliance (BiTA), a forum of leading tech and transportation companies for the development and implementation of blockchain standards in the freight industry. The company sees many advantages of blockchain technology for freight forwarding and logistics operations in general, but also for specific areas such as perishables in particular.

Panalpina has joined the Blockchain in Transport Alliance ([BiTA](#)), bringing over a century of experience in the freight forwarding business into the

development of blockchain technology, which has the potential to disrupt the sector.

BiTA is a forum of leading tech and transportation companies for the development and implementation of blockchain standards. Members aim to educate the market on blockchain applications and encourage their use through implementation.

Blockchain creates a digital record of every transaction made in a decentralized and secure way using cryptography. BiTA standards will address how the technology will impact contracts, freight payments, asset maintenance and ownership history, chain of custody of freight, and other issues facing the industry.

“Our goal is to bring together leading companies in the freight and technology industries that have a vested interest in the development of blockchain technology. As an asset-light company with a very long history in the freight forwarding and logistics industry, Panalpina’s contribution will be very valuable,” says BiTA president Chris Burruss.

Blockchain use in freight forwarding and logistics is still in the early adoption phase, but Panalpina is already being approached by vendors, partners and customers inquiring about it.

Twofold approach to integrating blockchain technology

“It is likely that many blockchain clusters will emerge, for example centered around ports and customs authorities, carrier groupings, as well as third-party logistics providers and regional logistics networks. When it comes to using blockchain applications and managing and interacting with all these different clusters, we have chosen a twofold approach that will be coordinated by a new digital innovation unit,” says Ralf Morawietz, chief information officer at Panalpina.

“On the one hand, we will look at ways to integrate blockchain technology in complex core systems in the long run. Here the focus is clearly on reliability, standardization and partnerships with bigger, established companies. We will also take part in the wider industry discussion in this context,” explains Luca Graf, Panalpina’s head of digital innovation. “On the other hand, we will run

pilots and trials using blockchain, likely together with start-ups. The focus here lies on exploration and specific market and customer needs.”

Blockchain benefits

Panalpina sees many advantages of blockchain technology for freight forwarding and logistics operations. One advantage is the better tracking of orders and assets. Because of the decentralized nature of a blockchain, no single entity is in control of the tracking process, which will increase transparency in the supply chain and ultimately improve consumer trust. In the area of perishables, for example, blockchain technology can be used to reliably track products from farms to grocery stores, which allows for very precise and quick reports or recalls.

Other benefits range from better scalability of operations to optimized capacity monitoring and pricing, fewer errors in payment processing and auditing, improved compliance, easier identification of attempted fraud, theft prevention, ease of building trust and gaining real-time feedback from customers.

About Panalpina

The Panalpina Group is one of the world's leading providers of supply chain solutions. The company combines its core products – Air Freight, Ocean Freight, and Logistics and Manufacturing – to deliver globally integrated, tailor-made end-to-end solutions for twelve core industries. Drawing on in-depth industry know-how and customized IT systems, Panalpina manages the needs of its customers' supply chains, no matter how demanding they might be. Energy and Project Solutions is a specialized service for the energy and capital projects sector. The Panalpina Group operates a global network with some 500 offices in around 70 countries, and it works with partner companies in another 100 countries. Panalpina employs approximately 14,000 people worldwide who deliver a comprehensive service to the highest quality standards – wherever and whenever.

Contacts



Maiken Riise Andersen

Press Contact

Head of Corporate Communication

Maiken.R.Andersen@dsv.com

+45 43 20 30 74



Christian Kroglund

Press Contact

Senior Director, Corporate Marketing & Communication

christian.kroglund@dsv.com

+45 28 44 22 35