

Driving Containerized Cargo Growth with Global Trade Intelligence from Descartes Datamyne



With strong, ever-present competition from rival ports along the eastern North American seaboard, global trade intelligence is crucial for the Port of Halifax to compete effectively as a regional cargo hub. To fuel continued growth in containerized shipping operations, the Port uses Descartes Datamyne™ to help identify, win and retain customers, driving up sales and diversifying revenue.

“With Descartes Datamyne, we can offer existing and new customers the services they need because the data on U.S. shipments is both comprehensive and timely and we can act upon research results quickly. With so much competition, you must be fast. It’s difficult to imagine how we could have competed as effectively over the years without having quick access to such information.”

Rob McInnes

Manager of Business Development, Halifax Port Authority

Company Profile

Port of Halifax
Shipping Port

Descartes Solution

Descartes Datamyne™

About the Client

The Port of Halifax handles more than half-a-million twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) in containerized throughput annually, as well as generates \$2.45 billion in economic activity. It is the connecting port to shippers from more than 150 countries and employs 13,600 people.

Quick Overview**Challenge**

Driving Growth Amid Strong Competition

Solution

Detailed Import/Export Data on
Prospective Trade Lanes

Results

- Enhanced Competitive Analysis
- Timely Trade Intelligence
- Simplified Market Research
- Ongoing Partnership

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Challenge: Driving Growth Amid Strong Competition

The eastern seaboard of North America is dotted with more than 15 major ports all vying for shippers—whether retailers, distributors, manufacturers, or freight forwarders among others—to use their port facilities and services into and out of the United States and Canada. To help drive business growth, the Port of Halifax needs insights on import/export trade flows for market research, supply chain and logistics analysis, and competitive strategy. The information has to be in-depth, accurate, and up-to-date. It must also be generated in a format that is easy-to-understand to spur informed decision-making.

Solution: Detailed Import/Export Data on Prospective Trade Lanes

Since 2008, the Port of Halifax has been working with Descartes Datamyne as its principal source of global trade intelligence. The cloud-based solution is used to continually assess how the Port fits into the global containerized cargo marketplace, as well as to proactively research business development opportunities.

Rob McInnes, Halifax Port Authority Business Development Manager, shares that the solution immediately stood out when he was first introduced to it because of its user-friendly interface and powerful search and analysis tools. It provides historical data for macro-level perspectives on longer-term trends, as well as highly granular data on, for instance, a particular commodity or trade lane, to support more focused research efforts. The Port relies on a series of standing reports for ongoing quarterly analysis and can also create ad hoc queries as required.

McInnes elaborates, “It is difficult to make complicated data sets simple and straightforward, especially when you have a wide range of skill sets using them. With the Descartes solution, users can understand the information generated whether or not they have expertise in data analysis. We can easily glean competitive insights to identify new opportunities. It’s like finding that needle in the haystack, and that’s golden.”

McInnes also gives high marks for Descartes Datamyne customer support personnel who have always been quick to respond to questions or specialized queries and help the Port obtain the most value possible from the solution.

As the Port remains focused on maximizing the use of its marine assets for the economic benefit of the region, Descartes Datamyne provides a business development edge in a highly competitive environment. McInnes adds, “Having subscribed to the solution for many years, we continue to find it an invaluable tool in helping us to make Halifax the east coast choice for cargo arriving via ship to then be sent to central Canada and the midwestern U.S.”

Results:



Enhanced Competitive Analysis

The Port of Halifax successfully uses the solution to identify new business with U.S. and Canadian importers and shippers to help increase TEU throughput, diversify its revenue base, and keep regional rival ports at bay.



Simplified Market Research

The Port simplifies research into complex international trade queries with easy-to-use capabilities, such as customizable dashboards to easily visualize market opportunities, and drag and drop tools to analyze market share by product, country of origin/destination, carrier or NVOCC.



Timely Trade Intelligence

With U.S. bill of lading detail on import shipments available in Descartes Datamyne as soon as 24 hours after CBP clearance, the Port of Halifax leverages extremely current information on the movement of goods to credibly build its containerized operations.



Ongoing Partnership

The personal level of interest in the Port’s business demonstrated by the Descartes Datamyne customer support team has contributed to a strong partnership aimed at optimizing the Port’s use of the solution.