

## Case Study



### APO Box and ABOL Software

## The Company

APO Box™ is a privately held company that forwards packages shipped via FedEx®, UPS®, and DHL® to military APO, FPO, and DPO box addresses overseas via the US Post Office (USPS). There are currently two operating locations; Bancroft, IA servicing South America and the Pacific regions, and Clifton, NJ servicing Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

## Background

U.S Military Forces are stationed at more than 820 installations in at least 39 countries, but many major US retailers will not ship packages directly to these addresses. In fact, the USPS is the only entity that delivers packages to APO, FPO and DPO box addresses, even though most online retailers have negotiated contracts with UPS or FedEx to secure the best shipping rates.

Inspired by the demand for an efficient APO shipping solution, APO Box founder Carson Garner started the company in his basement in 2006. Carson says “I started the company because we were active duty military posted overseas and found it frustrating that major companies like Target, Best Buy and Dell did not ship to APO, FPO and DPO box addresses.”

APO Box grew rapidly, and companies like Apple, Amazon and Target have adopted APO Box to coordinate shipping to military addresses -- in fact, Apple gives APO Box members free ground shipping from Apple to the APO Box warehouse on all orders over \$50.

APO Box needed a solution to accomplish several things:

- streamline the processing and manifesting of USPS International packages
- quickly implement an easy to use system
- obtain the best possible USPS rates
- accommodate multiple locations
- ensure scalability for future expansion and expected volume growth
- generate USPS compliant labels and bar codes

ABOL Software provided APO Box with the comprehensive solution they needed to expand smoothly. The solution was ABOL Software's iabol API.

## **Solution**

iabol API is a Web Service used to transmit a ship request transaction with customer data including name, address, order number, weight and package dimensions from their custom order management system. This Web Service is a compliant Microsoft .net service designed for easy and fast communications.

While at ABOL the unique APO Box order number is "married" to the USPS tracking number so customers or APO Box personnel can track the shipment via the order number or the USPS tracking number. The interface returns the label elements back to APO Box along with the other pertinent information. Upon receipt, a USPS compliant shipping label is generated at the outgoing warehouse facility.

Once a package has been processed, an invoice, including the USPS tracking number, is emailed to the customer. The customer is now empowered to track their own shipments and receive package status and final delivery information.

iabol API provided quick integration and participation in the USPS Work Share Program to ensure USPS discounts. By implementing iabol API, APO Box made a seamless transition to e-VS compliance and saved valuable time to market. This helped APO Box gain significant savings on postage while streamlining their USPS entry process and eliminating paper manifesting.

**Through ABOL Software, APO Box is now the only company to use an e-VS compliant manifesting system to ship overseas to APO, FPO and DPO Box addresses.**

## **The Future**

By offering a discounted postage rate, APO Box has a unique opportunity to stand out in a competitive marketplace by offering a lower flat postage rate for all shipments. With ABOL Software's help, Carson and the crew at APO Box look forward to continued growth while remaining fast, flexible and affordable.

To learn more about APO Box, visit [www.apobox.com](http://www.apobox.com).