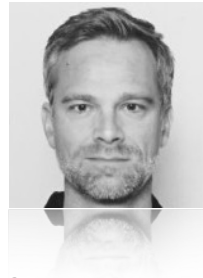


API (Application Programming Interface) - An Interview with Jon Harman and Ronald Huiskamp



Jon Harman
CORT
jon.harman@cort.com



Ronald Huiskamp
RelocationOnline
ronald@relocationonline.com

Following the several discussions had during our previous Conferences we talk again to Jon Harman and Ronald Huiskamp for a recap and see what impact the ongoing technology development will have on our industry

Q - The first discussions surrounding the topic began at the conference in Porto. What made you feel this was a topic that members needed to engage with?

Our Porto discussion was mostly about “apps” and the intersection between technology and human effort in our service delivery. As part of a group exercise we asked the members a number of questions, one of which was about having automated updates between RMC and DSP systems. This was the one item that received unanimous agreement among participants from both parties. In turn, that feedback provided the impetus for a dedicated session on this topic in Malta.

Q – At the Malta conference, the focus shifted towards API’s and their application to the relocation supply chain. What benefits does such a development have for members?

Fundamentally, everybody recognizes that there is little added value for partners in the supply chain to manually re-enter information in each other’s systems or reporting forms. Beyond the obvious - that automating this saves everybody time - the list of benefits is quite extensive. When data flows automatically (facilitated by API

technology), it can be shared in near real-time as processing is no longer dependent on the office hours of the various stakeholders across different



time zones. It will be more accurate too, as there will be less manual handling of the data. It also is more secure, as machine-to-machine data exchange will be fully encrypted. Further, there are opportunities for data and reporting standardization across a wide range of service partners. Lastly, it will help with compliance around complex requirements such as the pending European GDPR regulations. And that’s not getting into the opportunities for automatic tracking of SLA requirements or EuRA Quality Seal KPIs.

Q – You have managed to engage the RMCs in the process and the

session in Warsaw outlined great strides forward – can you update us on the debate as it now stands?

For this to work, all parties need to be engaged and committed. And that’s exactly what’s happening. A number of RMCs are working with their IT teams to establish their version of a supplier API. Likewise, DSPs, with either their own team or in collaboration with their technology partners, are working towards API readiness. We fully expect a few of them to be releasing their APIs later this year.

Q – And how do you see the future and what would you like to get from the session in Dubrovnik?

With the ongoing technology development across our industry, as well as the growing appetite from our corporate clients for more and faster data, it is inevitable that the entire relocation supply chain will need to exchange data automatically. This is not unique to our industry, so we see this happening everywhere. Soon this will mean that having an API-enabled software solution will be a requirement in the next RFP that will be sent out.