Single Window
Facilitating seamless exchange of information between the trading community and government
Government and the Trading Community
Governments have set an extensive range of agency-specific and country-specific regulatory and operational requirements for international trade without much co-ordination either internally or amongst each other. As a result, traders are confronted with duplicative and redundant reporting requirements, forms, systems, data sets, data models, and messages. Governments and the trading community have had to develop and maintain different systems to meet these costly requirements.

The lack of coordination has become a more prominent issue in recent years as a result of the requirements for faster information delivery, often in advance of shipping, for security and other purposes, and the expanding requirements for data standardization in international supply chains. The ability to handle data efficiently and swiftly has become a key element in international competitiveness, especially in international supply chains.

Challenges to Trade Facilitation
Companies involved in international trade have to regularly prepare and submit large volumes of information to governmental authorities to comply with requirements. Traditionally, the required documents are submitted through several agencies using multiple systems. The requirements and compliance costs represent a burden to both governments and the trading community, and the complexity of the process creates a barrier to development of international trade. Government agencies face increasing workload through:

- Increasing trade volume
- Proliferation of global cooperative trade agreements
- Smarter adversaries, more complex enforcement
- Demand (in some cases mandates) for eGovernment increasing
- Increasing need to collaborate due to increasing globalization

From the Physical to the Virtual Border
A single window is defined as a facility that allows parties involved in trade and transport to lodge standardized information and documents with a single entry point to fulfill all import, export, and transit related regulatory requirements.¹

(1) See, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Recommendation on Establishing a Single Window (Recommendation 33, ECE/TRADE/352).

**Single Window**

Single Window is designed to overcome this complex system of data submission and regulatory control. Single Window solutions enable seamless, electronic processes between the trading community and government and between government agencies. This ensures harmonization and transparency, i.e. the creation of a level playing field with the greatest predictability possible. Furthermore, electronic processes must be considered more secure, from both the perspective of an economic operator and from governmental level, since integrity and harmonization is then improved. For example, the use of information and communications technologies (ICT) results in less opportunity for individual officers to infringe the process of decision making in various situations.

**How Does It Work?**

The Single Window environment aims to expedite and simplify information flows between the trading community and governments and bring meaningful gains to all parties involved in cross border trade. The Single Window environment includes:

- An electronic system that attempts to simplify international trade procedures for both trade and government
- A facility enabling the provision of standardized information with a single body to fulfill all import, export and transit related regulatory requirements
- A tool that allows businesses to submit all the data that is required by a government to clear import/export goods only once
- One “entrance”, either physical or electronic, that is managed by one agency that informs other appropriate agencies, and/or directs combined controls
- An ability to analyze information and risk profile traders, facilitating faster and more predictable supply chain movements

A single window environment can be seen as a practical application of trade facilitation concepts to reduce non-tariff trade barriers and deliver immediate benefits to all members of the trading community and governments.

**Current Situation for Government and Traders**

![Current Situation for Government and Traders](image1)

**A ‘Single Window’ Environment**

![A ‘Single Window’ Environment](image2)

**Electronic**  **Paper**
Single Window Program

A Single Window can take various forms and represents close cooperation between all involved departments and authorities. Single Window does not necessarily require implementation of ICT technologies; facilitation can be greatly enhanced by identifying and adopting leading practices and processes as well as technologies. When considering process models it is important to acknowledge that although many businesses and trade practices are common across all countries, each country will have its own unique requirements and conditions.

Benefits

Government and industry have a significant stake in the success of the Single Window implementation. The Single Window supports the effective and efficient deployment of resources. For government, the benefits include correct revenue yields, improved trader compliance and the enablement of risk management tools. For traders, the benefits relate to cost cutting through the reduction of delays, faster clearance and release, and the predictable application and explanation of rules.

Value Assessment – Public Service Value (PSV) Model

As part of Accenture’s ongoing research into measuring public value, the Accenture Public Service Value Institute has developed a Public Service Value (PSV) Model that can be applied to a particular Trade Administration. The model assesses how effectively a Trade Administration is using its resources to generate value and can determine if performance is improving over time. By generating consensus about the outcomes to be delivered by the Trade Administration, the PSV model gives it management and government leaders a more realistic picture of value creation. It arms them with the performance information needed to make critical decisions, which combined with their expert knowledge of the customs industry, enables them to steer the Administration towards its strategic objectives.
Public Service Value Model for Customs: Outcomes and Rationale

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<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
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<tr>
<td>Maximize User Convenience (20%)</td>
<td>Streamline and optimize trade procedures, such as customs, ports, inspection, and permission procedures.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maximize Legitimacy and Security (30%)</td>
<td>Maximize the availability of trade related institutions and services in terms of open hours, disaster prevention of ports, capacity of warehouse, etc.</td>
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<td>Optimize Revenue Collection (20%)</td>
<td>Provide standard lead time so that the users are able to predict how long it takes for trade procedures.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improve Compliance and Integrity of Law/Policy (30%)</td>
<td>Reduce the cost of trade, such as customs, ports fee, brokerage costs.</td>
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<td>Cost Effectiveness</td>
<td>Maximise legitimate trade, prevent illegal drugs, illicit material goods, and prohibited firearms from coming into and going out of the trade region.</td>
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<td>Prevent hazards (e.g. infection/pest) through the import/export of animals, animal products, plant, and food, etc.</td>
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<td>Maximize fairness, reduce opportunities for fraud, and maximize revenue collection.</td>
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<td>Improve compliance with statutory and international obligations.</td>
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<td>A cost effective agency optimizes its use of budgets and expenditures and agency assets (opportunity cost of capital) in order to generate maximum level of outcomes per resource employed.</td>
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About Accenture

Accenture is a global management consulting, technology services and outsourcing company. Combining unparalleled experience, comprehensive capabilities across all industries and business functions, and extensive research on the world’s most successful companies, Accenture collaborates with clients to help them become high-performance businesses and governments. With 178,000 people in 49 countries, the company generated net revenues of US$19.70 billion for the fiscal year ended Aug. 31, 2007. Its home page is www.accenture.com.

Revenue, Customs and Border Management Practice

Accenture has extensive experience of partnering with government organizations in the field of Revenue, Customs and Border Management with over 2,100 professionals having successfully worked with more than 80 agencies and departments worldwide. We have experience in the area of strategy definition, product and solution design, business process definition and systems development.

Accenture has developed strategies and delivered innovative solutions to fit the needs of Customs clients looking to improve service today and tomorrow.

Our relationships with the world’s leading technology companies means tailored solutions that take advantage of your existing resources whenever possible. We can also ensure that the chosen technology can scale to grow with your administration as necessary.