

ASSOCIATED BRITISH FOODS · RATE MANAGEMENT

Decentralized by Design, Unified by Ship Angel

How Associated British Foods manages its global ocean freight network on a single platform.

CUSTOMER Associated British Foods plc Food, ingredients & agriculture	£19.5B REVENUE	67 USERS	443 LANES	45,560 DATA POINTS	2.5 yrs PARTNERSHIP
---	-------------------------------------	-------------------------------	--------------------------------	---	--

When Maddy Jones, Regional Category Leader - Freight & Logistics, went to market with an ocean tender that touches multiple business units at ABF, she had hundreds of lanes, a room full of carrier responses, and a decision window measured in weeks. What she didn't have, and didn't need, was time to rebuild her view of ABF's ocean network. It was already there.

That tender is one way to understand why Associated British Foods runs Ship Angel. It's a moment where decentralization, scale, and deadline pressure all arrive at the same time, and where the strength of the system underneath shows.

/ THE COMPANY

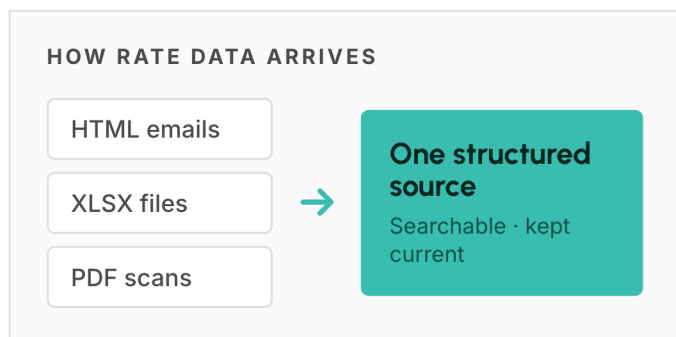
Associated British Foods is one of the world's largest diversified food, ingredients, and agriculture groups: £19.5 billion in revenue, 138,000 employees, and operations in 56 countries. The group spans

Twinnings, ABF Sugar, AB World Foods, Westmill, AB Vista, Mauri, Ohly, GWF, PGP International, and more. Each runs as an independent business with its own leadership, customers, and freight operation. ABF is decentralized by design.

That independence is a real strength. It is also one of the hardest operating models to build shared visibility on top of, especially in ocean freight, which is global, volatile, and full of surcharges that refuse to sit still. The question underneath ABF's ocean network isn't "who ships the most?" It's "how do you see it as one?"

/ WHAT SHIP ANGEL DOES

Ship Angel is an AI-native operating system for beneficial cargo owners. It gives global shipping teams a single workspace for the work that runs their freight network: rate management across ocean, air, and trucking; spot rate procurement; ocean bookings; and invoice audit. Rate data arrives in whatever format it comes in (HTML emails, XLSX files, PDF scans), gets structured automatically, and stays current as surcharges and contracts change.



/ THE CHALLENGE

Before Ship Angel, ABF's rate landscape looked like most global shippers' do, because no one had built anything better for the problem. Rate history lived in email threads, carrier attachments, BU-specific spreadsheets, and the heads of the people who had worked the lanes longest. That setup can function until something moves.

A BAF change. A carrier re-contract. An ETS update. A tender. Each of those events forced days of consolidation before any real decision could begin. Experienced teams were being asked to do slow work with fast stakes.

Underneath all of it sat a harder question: how do you build a view of a decentralized shipper without centralizing it? Any platform that tried to force the separate business units into the same procurement workflow was going to fail, and rightly so. ABF didn't need a system that would homogenize independently run businesses. It needed one that could hold them as they actually are, and still make the whole visible to the people who needed to see it.

“ It gives you a single source of truth in your ocean freight rates. And makes managing them way easier.

Maddy Jones, Regional Category Leader - Freight & Logistics, Associated British Foods

/ THE SOLUTION

Over the last 2.5 years, that's the shape Ship Angel has taken at ABF. Today, 67 users across multiple business units work in the same platform at the same time. They manage 443 lanes together. Hundreds of rate uploads have been processed and kept current. Rate data that used to arrive as HTML emails, XLSX attachments, and PDF scans now sits in one place, structured, searchable, and ready.

Every business unit keeps its own way of working. Ship Angel absorbs that diversity rather than flattening it. Each BU uses the platform on its own terms, while leadership and cross-group teams finally see the portfolio without anyone having to change how they operate.

The real payoff isn't the dashboard. It's what the dashboard makes possible: readiness. Ship Angel holds 45,560 populated data points across ABF's ocean network. Not only a snapshot of what rates looked like last quarter, but a live view of what the group is paying, right now, everywhere it ships.

/ THE RESULTS

When Maddy ran that tender across the group, the foundation was already in place. Ship Angel held the rate landscape structured, current, and ready, so her team could move fast and confident from day one, with the right baseline underneath every decision.

The same readiness shows up in quieter ways every week. The team answers cross-BU questions in minutes instead of days, and checks with confi-

dence that what is being invoiced matches what was agreed. New business units onboard onto a platform where the group's structure has already been built, not started over.

What began 2.5 years ago as a foothold in a handful of BUs is now the shared operating surface of ABF's global ocean freight network: 67 users, more than 15 businesses, 443 lanes, one system. Decentralization kept. Visibility gained. No trade-off.

67	443	15+	45,560	2.5y	1
Users	Lanes	Business units	Data points	Partnership	System

/ WHY IT WORKS

There's a reason ABF fits so well on Ship Angel, and it isn't coincidence. Maddy had been looking for this platform for a year and a half before it existed.

"I was considering [this] before Ship Angel was born. About a year and a half before Graham started Ship Angel I was like, there's a gap in the market. Why is nobody doing this for BCOs, rate management? Somebody needs to do this.

Maddy Jones, Regional Category Leader - Freight & Logistics, Associated British Foods

Graham Parker was the one who built it. The collaboration has made Ship Angel sharper, faster, and built more tightly around the way a large, decentralized shipper actually operates.

It isn't every day a platform gets to be built, from day one, with the kind of shipper it needs to serve sitting at the table. ABF's story on Ship Angel isn't

about software replacing spreadsheets. It's about what becomes possible when a decentralized global shipper can finally see itself as one operation, without any of its businesses losing the independence that makes them good. ■

GET STARTED

See your network as one operation

www.shipangel.com/demo →