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The past, present,  
and future  
of the container.  
TOC Europe  
2017 – summary

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Interview with Peter Lundgren,  
Sales Director, JLT Mobile Computers



## IT to keep ports working

by Maciej Kniter



Peter Lundgren works at JLT Mobile Computers as Sales Director. In the past Peter held higher positions at IBM and Tella.

IT companies are growing rapidly. Some, like JLT Mobile Computers, come from surprising backgrounds. Once a supplier of hardware control systems to the forest industry it is currently providing hardware and software for ports, and other industries operating in harsh environments. We are talking with Peter Lundgren about the company's recent projects and future plans, conquering new markets, automation as well as the TOC event itself.

■ What was your company's performance last year?

It was a record year for us. Turnover increased by more than 50%, which is a very healthy growth (for detailed figures, please see our quarterly reports which are easily accessible on our website). To give you a couple of examples, we won a big project in the United States, where competition is much higher than in Europe; namely, a million-dollar deal with one of the largest transportation service providers in the world who deployed our JLT1214P vehicle computers in cross-dock forklifts at sites across the United States. We also started an interesting project for ICTSI in Basra, where we have delivered 50 mobile computers. The temperatures here can soar to well above 50 °C in the driver cabins, yet the customer tells us that our rugged computers are running without any problems. That's the best proof that our products are of good quality! It's true that we have a nice and steady growth in ports,

with a visible trend that customers are looking for equipment made in Europe. I can give a quick example – we talked to one customer who bought equipment from an Asian supplier two years ago; now they're closing down and the customer is left with almost new equipment without service, spare parts, and so on. In comparison, we at JLT Mobile Computers keep spare parts for our products for at least 5 years, often as long as 10 years or even more. And this is our commitment to our customers; we want to keep things working.

■ Could you name some fields you want to expand? I mean both conquering new markets, and some new products you offer.

In terms of regions, we are already present globally, from Europe and the USA, to China and Iraq, so I don't see any big challenges in terms of geography. However, we see the biggest increase rather in your second point. I've been in this business for some years now, and my observation

is that the companies, or more accurately, brands, are concentrating. I noticed at least four or five instances when a big company is either taken over by another, or it simply goes bankrupt. On the product side, one new trend that we see is customers asking for new functionalities to be added. In this case we serve them with our mechanics, electronics, software, we increase reliability, adapt our computers to the Internet of Things, etc.

■ What's the role of the container business in all of it?

Seaports are crucial for us, but we also begin to see a growing interest from the inland intermodal terminals. This is because our technology can be successfully applied inland as well. Traditionally, companies are focused on one sector, but we serve all – from dry indoor warehouse environments to offshore. And the same happens in ports, more and more ports handle different types of cargo nowadays.

■ How does automation influence your products?

Automation is a process. It is not an overnight event. Some devices will work without constant control, but I'd like to say something different, it's not only the job of the supplier, it's both sides that participate in automation. The purchaser is often forgotten, but they must strictly specify their requirements. We've been in business

for some 20 years, starting from supplying rugged computers to the forest industry. We used our technology later in mining, offshore, container business, and seaports in general. For me automation means the adoption to different requirements.

■ How has the market changed over the past 10 years?

We are involved in many different industries, and since the markets are developing differently that's a bit of a tricky question. In agriculture, for example, the IT sector is developing really fast. We cooperate with a company in Belgium that inspects carrot seeds on farms. A camera does the image analysing, and the bad seeds are taken away, so only good ones are left. Solutions from ports and terminals can be applied even there!

■ Considering what you have told us, what are your thoughts on this year's TOC?

It's a great show to attend as the maritime business is developing very rapidly. This is the fourth time we decided to come and we don't regret doing this. We were very pleased to see our old friends here, and also to meet new prospects. TOC has always been focused on technology, that's quite natural, but this year there were a lot of automation and IT-related products. That's good; the ports are changing, and that is also contributing to changes in the other sectors. All of it is linked together!