

## COAC ACE Vendor Survey – Summary of Results – April 2013

**Total Responses: 46**

### 1) What ACE products does your company currently offer and do you have clients using?

Option	# Responses	Response %
4 skipped this question	Total responses 42	91.30%
ACE Entry Summary Entry Types 01, 03 & 11	22	52.38%
Simplified Entry/Cargo Release	7	16.67%
ACE Export (emailing of imaged outbound manifests)	1	2.38%
Ocean/Rail Manifest	21	50.00%
Truck Manifest	14	33.33%
Other: <a href="#">View</a>	12	28.57%

Other Products:

Respondent 1	In-bond
Respondent 2	PMS
Respondent 3	Other ACE queries, overrides.
Respondent 4	In-bond
Respondent 5	QP
Respondent 6	in bond, bond, AD/CVD
Respondent 7	In-bond ocean/rail CVD/ADD
Respondent 8	350's
Respondent 9	Air In-Bond
Respondent 10	QP
Respondent 11	QPWP/QXWX

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### 2) Which ACE products does your company plan to offer in the future?

Option	# Responses	Response %
4 skipped this question	Total responses <b>42</b>	91.30%
ACE Entry Summary Entry Types 01, 03 & 11	20	47.62%
Simplified Entry/Cargo Release	28	66.67%
ACE Export (emailing of imaged outbound manifests)	17	40.48%
Ocean / Rail Manifest	12	28.57%
Truck Manifest	14	33.33%
Other: <a href="#">View</a>	8	19.05%

#### Other Products:

Respondent 1	DIS
Respondent 2	All new ACE programs
Respondent 3	DIS, PGA
Respondent 4	None at this time
Respondent 5	Air
Respondent 6	As they become useful/mandatory

### 3) If you selected "ACE Entry Summary" as a prospective product offering in Question # 2 please advise the number of months you anticipate it will take to complete programming.

Option	# Responses	Response %
22 skipped this question	Total responses <b>24</b>	52.17%
3 months or less	11	45.83%
6 to 12 months	6	25.00%

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Option	# Responses	Response %
12 to 24 months	5	20.83%
24 months or more	2	8.33%

**4) If you have not already created programming for the current ACE Entry Summary functionality please indicate what you would like to be completed before you begin to program**

Option	# Responses	Response %
30 skipped this question	Total responses <b>16</b>	34.78%
Participating Government Agency (PGA) entry summary support for entry types 01, 03 & 11	7	43.75%
PGA entry summary support for entry type 01, 03 & and other entry types	6	37.50%
Entry Summary Edits: Entry Summary edits that were in ACS but are not in ACE.	11	68.75%
Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) Entry Type	4	25.00%
Duty Drawback	2	12.50%
Reconciliation Entry Type and ability to flag/file single and consolidated reconciliation in ACE	3	18.75%
All Other Entry Types Not Already Programed or identified above	4	25.00%
Cargo Release: Mechanism by which International Trade Data System (ITDS) "single window" will be achieved. Including the PGA Message Set, Document Image System, and PGA Interoperability	3	18.75%
Export Functionality	1	6.25%
Electronic Bond Processing	0	0.00%
Critical fixes for deployed ACE functionality	2	12.50%
Other: Please explain. _____	1	6.25%

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**5) Presuming you have begun programming for ACE, what is your routine maintenance and release cycle?**

Option	# Responses	Response %
3 skipped this question	Total responses <b>43</b>	93.48%
2 – 4 weeks	11	25.58%
4 – 6 weeks	12	27.91%
6 - 8 weeks	9	20.93%
Longer than 8 weeks	11	25.58%

**6) If testing time required to push out new ACE functionality is not included in that release schedule, what is the typical time allocated to testing?**

Option	# Responses	Response %
6 skipped this question	Total responses <b>40</b>	86.96%
It is included in our release schedule	16	40.00%
1- 2 weeks	5	12.50%
2 – 3 weeks	10	25.00%
More than 3 weeks	9	22.50%

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### 7) What is the best way to communicate new or forthcoming changes to ACE functionality?

1 being most effective and 6 being least effective

	1 - Most effective	2	3	4	5	6 - Least effective	Total
0 skipped this question <a href="#">[View Comments (2)]</a>	Total responses 46						100.00%
CBP Website	1 (2.94%)	8 (23.53%)	2 (5.88%)	13 (38.24%)	5 (14.71%)	5 (14.71%)	34
CSMS message	17 (47.22%)	12 (33.33%)	6 (16.67%)	0 (0.00%)	1 (2.78%)	0 (0.00%)	36
Email	17 (48.57%)	6 (17.14%)	7 (20.00%)	2 (5.71%)	2 (5.71%)	1 (2.86%)	35
Trade Calls	4 (12.50%)	7 (21.88%)	9 (28.13%)	7 (21.88%)	3 (9.38%)	2 (6.25%)	32
Updates to the ACEopedia	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	4 (11.43%)	4 (11.43%)	7 (20.00%)	20 (57.14%)	35
Webinars	7 (19.44%)	1 (2.78%)	9 (25.00%)	6 (16.67%)	9 (25.00%)	4 (11.11%)	36

Comments:

Response 1	There are many projects going on at one time but we don't have the same amount of programmers available to us as CBP does. We need to focus on one or two (at most) projects at a time.
Response 2	On CSMS email that comes in you must: - click on the link in the email - then click on the message on the CSMS website to open again - then copy and paste the URL within the message to get to what you really need Why can't the links be posted in the CSMS message and be clickable at the website? Would be much simpler.

### 8) What is the best method for communicating the technical requirements for programming changes?

1 being most effective and 6 being least effective

	1 - Most effective	2	3	4	5	6 - Least effective	Total
0 skipped this question <a href="#">[View Comments (3)]</a>	Total responses 46						100.00%
CBP Website	8 (20.51%)	5 (12.82%)	8 (20.51%)	6 (15.38%)	4 (10.26%)	8 (20.51%)	39
CSMS message	17 (39.53%)	12 (27.91%)	7 (16.28%)	5 (11.63%)	0 (0.00%)	2 (4.65%)	43
Detailed guide outlining the changes	22 (55.00%)	8 (20.00%)	6 (15.00%)	2 (5.00%)	1 (2.50%)	1 (2.50%)	40

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	1 - Most effective	2	3	4	5	6 - Least effective	Total
Email	14 (34.15%)	8 (19.51%)	7 (17.07%)	8 (19.51%)	1 (2.44%)	3 (7.32%)	41
Trade Calls	5 (13.51%)	8 (21.62%)	3 (8.11%)	6 (16.22%)	7 (18.92%)	8 (21.62%)	37
Updates to Implementation Guidelines	11 (28.21%)	8 (20.51%)	5 (12.82%)	1 (2.56%)	9 (23.08%)	5 (12.82%)	39

Comments:

Response 1	We prefer face-to-face meetings on a specific project so we can ask questions and get immediate answers.
Response 2	Sometimes changes are not added / updated in the implementation guidelines - this causes great confusion.
Response 3	On CSMS email that comes in you must: - click on the link in the email - then click on the message on the CSMS website to open again - then copy and paste the URL within the message to get to what you really need Why can't the links be posted in the CSMS message and be clickable at the website? Would be much simpler.

### 9) What other improvements to the way CBP communicates updates would you suggest?

Option	# Responses	Response %
11 skipped this question <a href="#">[View Comments (1)]</a>	Total responses 35	76.09%
Webinars	20	57.14%
Project plans	16	45.71%
Status Calls	13	37.14%
Other: <a href="#">[View]</a>	3	8.57%

Comments:

Response 17	Seminars for just development or commercial software companies
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### 10) When you have ACE development issues or concerns, what is the best way to communicate those back to CBP?

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Option	# Responses	Response %
1 skipped this question [ <a href="#">View Comments (6)</a> ]	Total responses <b>45</b>	97.83%
Email to Client Representatives	34	75.56%
Phone calls to Client representatives	6	13.33%
Unsure, this is a constant struggle, please explain below	3	6.67%
Other: [ <a href="#">View</a> ]	2	4.44%

Comments:

Response 1	Participate in weekly ACE CBP Call
Response 2	We need a point of contact for each project. i.e. when ISF was being implemented it was ridiculous as we could not get questions answered.
Response 3	Often times ABI Client Reps are not trained and can take quite a while to get back to us causing delays in development. It would be nice if CBP had a contact person for the specific project similar to what was done for Simplified Entry.
Response 4	They don't always seem to know what's going on as far as new developments, and are reluctant for us to participate in the pilots.
Response 5	Communications to client reps does not always get back to development team. Client reps are not developers and do not always understand the problem.
Response 6	It seems some CBP like to brush some problems under the carpet. that applies to both technical issues that they don't want to solve, and procedural issues. i think both relate to lack of resources. I tend to look for a workaround rather than ask for CBP to fix something.

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**11) When you have ACE implementation issues or concerns, what is the best way to communicate those back to CBP?**

Option	# Responses	Response %
1 skipped this question [ <a href="#">View Comments (5)</a> ]	Total responses <b>45</b>	97.83%
Email to Client Representatives	34	75.56%
Phone calls to Client representatives	10	22.22%
Unsure, this is a constant struggle, please explain below	1	2.22%
Other: [ <a href="#">View</a> ]	0	0.00%

Comments:

Response 1	We also email Chuck Woods or Susan Maskell. We sometimes wait for the weekly conference call for non-urgent matters.
Response 2	Individual client reps help our customers with their implementation and set-up so this varies across the country by the skills of the different client reps.
Response 3	Same as above.
Response 4	same comments as above for this one.
Response 5	Our client representative will allow us to talk with the technical team at times, and this is very helpful in quick resolutions.

**12) Are you aware that CBP has adopted the agile software development methodology?**

Option	# Responses	Response %
1 skipped this question	Total responses <b>45</b>	97.83%
Yes	26	57.78%
No	19	42.22%

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### 13) Do you believe that a 26 week software change schedule will be difficult to keep up with?

Option	# Responses	Response %
3 skipped this question	Total responses <b>43</b>	93.48%
Yes	14	32.56%
No	29	67.44%

### 14) What have been your challenges in the transition to ACE? (select all that apply)

Option	# Responses	Response %
2 skipped this question	Total responses <b>44</b>	95.65%
Budget	19	43.18%
Customers interest	21	47.73%
Documentation	16	36.36%
Communication	9	20.45%
Other: <a href="#">[View]</a>	9	20.45%

Comments:

Respondent 1	Layers of complexity to manage ABI and ACE
Respondent 2	Integration with legacy systems
Respondent 3	ACE is too vast.
Respondent 4	Continual Updates
Respondent 5	not having Lacey be part of ACE rollout is a big issue
Respondent 6	"Work-Arounds"
Respondent 7	Keeping the ACS ABI system current while programming for ACE
Respondent 8	Usefullness

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Respondent 9	not all of the functionality we need for our clients is available
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### 15) Do you find the ACE certification environment satisfies your testing needs?

Option	# Responses	Response %
4 skipped this question	Total responses <b>42</b>	91.30%
Yes	29	69.05%
No	13	30.95%

Comments

Response 1	ACE Cert is not the same as ACE prod. It used to be a carbon copy with the data going to a test environment. Now it is used as a place to test new stuff. We are never sure what version it is at.
Response 2	Need a 3rd environment that has all the <a href="#">production software</a> and files so I can debug client problems. Certification is often out of date and doesn't have even basics, like correct HTS, Customers, MIDS.. I can 'test' to a certain <a href="#">degree in</a> ACS production as a 'test filer". At least that capability would be better than the current method.
Response 3	Really need a sometimes category here. CBP has gotten better with keeping the data more current but there are functions that can't easily be tested that causes us to figure alternate ways to test or to get the client reps to send dummy messages.
Response 4	Databases are too limited.
Response 5	The QP/WP test data was not as thorough as needed to test with and it took longer to test and pass <a href="#">certification</a> due to lack of thorough data.
Response 6	Test cases produced by client reps are minimal and do not cover all use cases.
Response 7	need more consistent <a href="#">database</a> information...hard to determine what importers exist in cert, etc.
Response 8	The lack of basic operations like <a href="#">Currency Exchange</a> Rates, and others features really keep us in the dark till the implementation on production environment.
Response 9	Take a snapshot of production and send to ACE for a total refresh. This should be done weekly. We have found the test environment to be very unsatisfactory.
Response 10	Reference information is not updated often enough

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16) Do you find ACE documents, which are located on the CBP website, helpful?

<http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/trade/automated/modernization/>

Option	# Responses	Response %
0 skipped this question [ <a href="#">View Comments (7)</a> ]	Total responses <b>46</b>	100.00%
Yes	41	89.13%
No	5	10.87%

Comments:

Response 1	Mostly too vague
Response 2	Sure ... when they're eventually found. CBP website is difficult.
Response 3	i did find some inconsistencies in documentation. sometimes i wasn't sure which was current version, and neither was my CBP rep. implementation guides should be standardised and include change history.
Response 4	Sometimes it's hard to find what you need. The download timing out issue continues to be a problem and it's very hard to get those larger documents saved off.
Response	The documents aren't well organized. It's hard to find what you need.
Response 6	Yes but it can be improved. With the CATAIR chapters it will be good to have example files that shows various looping structures. When you add new edits/validations, it would be helpful if it shows what modules are impacted wit the new validations.
Response 7	For the most part.

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**17) Do you find the organization and location of documents easy to find in CBP website?**

**If No, please give us comments and recommendations.**

Option	# Responses	Response %
1 skipped this question [ <a href="#">View Comments (15)</a> ]	Total responses <b>45</b>	97.83%
Yes	28	62.22%
No	17	37.78%

Comments:

Response 1	It is hard to locate
Response 2	Too many places to find related documents. All the ACE E/S stuff should be in one place.
Response 3	Documents are kind of all over the place.
Response 4	It is difficult to find data on the website. I had bookmarked a lot of pages that were helpful only to have the data to be moved so I cannot locate it again.
Response 5	It is not straight forward labeling of documents
Response 6	The current hierarchic organization requires a lot of "drill-down" clicking to reach content. For example, it takes 5 clicks through separate web pages to go from <a href="http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/trade/automated/modernization/">http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/trade/automated/modernization/</a> to the actual location of the message set definitions for truck manifest.
Response 7	CAMIR docs are organized as Word documents - should be PDF. Also difficult to determine what changed between document versions.
Response 8	The website structure is very bad. Sometimes it's easier to go back to google to find a document than navigate within CBP site.
Response 9	Yes, especially when compared to the CBSA website.
Response 10	Some things seem to be down in the depths... plus, there are times when the links don't work.
Response 11	Sometimes it is better to go to google to find the right document. The navigation is not that intuitive on CBP website.
Response 12	We use google to find the information on the CBP website since the CBP search engine is pretty much useless.

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Response 13	Seems had to isolate ACS vs ACE
Response 14	It can be organized better than currently is. For example, error codes are documented in multiple places and it is always difficult determine which has everything. When you make changes to CATAIR chapters it would be better if you make the previous versions available as well.
Response 15	Can get confusing which documentation I need and where to find it.

### **18) Please use the space below to provide additional suggestions/comments that you feel are important to ensure a smooth transition from ACS to ACE.**

1. Full Edits in ACE and all entry types in ACE so we can "flip" the switch to all entries in ACE
2. CBP needs to educate the trade on transitioning from ACS to ACE - not just push out specs and documentation. Webinars and meetings on how they differ should take place
3. Make sure that CBP continues to engage the trade in their development process.
4. Need the edits as soon as possible and for the number of changes, required by software providers, to be minimized.
5. Make ACE worth the brokers' efforts with some financial gain and you will get more interest. Either save time or money and I know my customers would start using it.
6. There seems to be a lot of miscommunication about ACE even within CBP. We have several customers in Puerto Rico who have been getting alarming warnings about switching over to ACE from a CBP official there who clearly did not understand the deadlines (He thought the deadline to switch for the Automated In-Bonds meant that EVERYTHING had to be switched to ACE and we had some panicked clients calling us) We are slowly switching over our customers but aren't sure it's a good idea, given that there are still changes that may come up.
7. With all of the new functionality and fields available in ACE, there is not enough literature for the broker to determine how to use the new fields, what is required in the fields, and when it is required. We spend too much time fielding calls from brokers asking how to fill out a field, what is required, etc... These are not programming, but operational issues. Currently the broker has nowhere to go for this information.
8. We would like to file all entry types using ACE including our FTZ weekly entries Entry Type 06.
9. We Need MUCH better communication regarding the application of CBP policy with regard to ACE status notifications. These often vary from port to port and CBP officials will rarely put anything in writing.

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10. Our Customs reps (especially Eileen Johnson in Philadelphia) are outstanding and they make every transition as smooth as possible.
11. Having a knowledgeable Client Representative like Janet Mulder, ACS Specialist in CBP Blaine, WA made all the differences to a successful transition.
12. Full support to all transactions on ACE and ACS would give us more confidence to go live as fast as we can!
13. We've been running most of our files through ACE that meet your criteria of non-Lacey and entry types 01, 03, and 11. Our business also runs through some air through ACS since minutes count and ACE is a little slower in returning our releases on air shipments. In-bond appears to be going OK although air in-bond going to ACS and non-air going to ACE makes more work.
14. The multi-threading of messages caused us many problems.
15. When making design changes it would be helpful if you share the use cases with the software developers. Because as software vendors, we also need to go through gather requirements from the user and we would like to ensure that the use cases align.
16. If you could fix the cargo manifest query response time that would be awesome!!