

Logistics managers gain new insight on U.S. ports thanks to Descartes Datamyne

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By Patrick Burnson, Executive Editor · June 15, 2017

More evidence of the digitalization of the ocean cargo supply chain surfaced recently with the release of research compiled by Descartes Datamyne (<https://www.descartes.com/>).

The company's searchable trade database – covering the global commerce of 230 markets across 5 continents – provides supply chain managers with fresh news on domestics ocean cargo gateway trends and productivity in its U.S. Port Report, listing top 20 payers in import throughput.

Brendan R. McCahill (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/brendan-mccahill-a6452b10>), the Senior Vice President of Trade Data Content at Descartes Datamyne told SCMR – a sister publication – in an interview that the “granular nature” of the information can be leveraged in several ways by stakeholders.

“Shippers entering contract negotiations can see where specific commodities are headed, and which ports are providing the best intermodal connections,” he says. “NVOs and the carriers themselves are seeking the same information on their partners and competitors.”

Since ports are often a focus point of micro and macroeconomic changes, fluctuations in volume and commodities are a key indicator of industry developments, note spokesmen. This report reveals the top 20 U.S. ocean ports ranked by inbound twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) and key products imported through each port by Harmonized System (HS) code as well as Bill of Lading (BOL) shipment counts and values.



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Making the Case for a Modern-Day TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Rank	Port	2016 TEU	2015 TEU	TEU Change	2016 Value	2015 Value	# of BL
1	LOS ANGELES, CA	4,519,661	4,135,746	9.3%	\$240,853,202,220	\$238,854,609,732	2,207,636
2	LONG BEACH, CA	3,159,963	3,541,284	-2.6%	\$55,571,495,815	\$59,142,046,648	1,620,924
3	NEW YORK/NEWARK AREA, NEWARK, NEW JERSEY	3,202,832	3,243,562	-1.3%	\$156,707,019,597	\$168,506,947,249	1,904,848
4	SAVANNAH, GA	1,663,366	1,624,215	2.4%	\$59,263,763,789	\$61,698,354,035	674,844
5	NORFOLK, VA	1,155,718	1,050,775	10.0%	\$44,170,773,449	\$43,226,414,446	493,107
6	TACOMA, WA	950,332	872,340	8.9%	\$43,773,762,429	\$42,159,947,287	432,692
7	CHARLESTON, SC	881,143	836,040	5.4%	\$46,050,082,331	\$49,278,840,103	381,420
8	HOUSTON, TX	879,046	840,444	4.6%	\$49,763,257,282	\$59,753,794,374	415,666
9	OAKLAND, CA	858,786	823,922	4.2%	\$30,218,532,888	\$27,733,584,349	359,654
10	SEATTLE, WA	484,710	485,784	-0.2%	\$15,199,989,779	\$15,510,463,107	233,103
11	MIAMI, FL	429,701	419,981	2.3%	\$14,452,263,686	\$14,969,971,266	245,196
12	BALTIMORE, MD	418,827	387,366	8.1%	\$35,919,618,827	\$35,802,893,116	174,327
13	PORT EVERGLADES, FL	341,322	324,878	5.1%	\$10,436,341,945	\$11,976,406,999	178,282
14	PHILADELPHIA, PA	262,713	240,841	9.1%	\$17,664,373,420	\$18,790,724,871	113,571
15	JACKSONVILLE, FL	204,753	183,360	11.7%	\$17,367,663,913	\$15,862,134,776	71,853
16	WILMINGTON, DE	182,494	173,380	5.3%	\$6,916,661,740	\$5,661,671,621	23,476
17	SAN JUAN, PR	157,379	155,194	1.4%	\$5,417,837,709	\$5,964,218,267	74,518
18	BOSTON, MA	119,609	115,740	3.3%	\$7,665,466,270	\$8,816,799,159	63,340
19	NEW ORLEANS, LA	110,819	116,865	-5.2%	\$56,416,150,185	\$57,056,557,629	46,834
20	WILMINGTON, NC	102,408	125,033	-18.1%	\$4,286,195,766	\$5,156,083,276	41,340

According to spokesmen, keeping “a pulse on port volume trends” is critical for evaluating changing demand and determining where goods should cross borders. With fluctuating labor trends, larger ocean vessels and ever-changing logistics technology, the top U.S. ports have had to adapt to stay competitive and meet changing volume demands year over year.

Brendan observed that other trends were unveiled in recent research suggesting that “the cold chain” is having an impact on vessel calls.

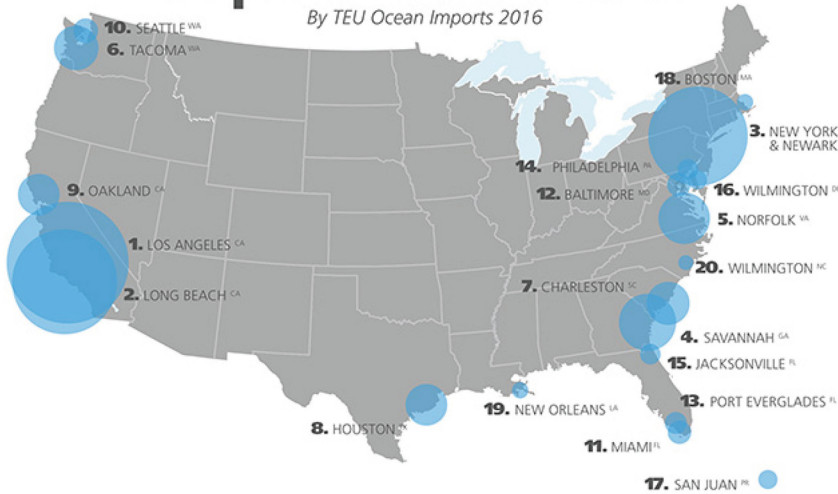
“The Port of Baltimore has really benefitted by this,” he says, “as have the smaller ports of Philadelphia and Wilmington.”

Another conclusion drawn by this study suggest that the newly-widened Panama Canal may continue to divert freight from the West Coast to the East Coast.

“We are also looking at how the new carrier alliances will change the volume picture,” he says. “It’s still too early to tell where the capacity will shift, and there’s a great deal of dynamism in the marketplace now.”

Top 20 U.S. Ports

By TEU Ocean Imports 2016



The U.S. ports data in this report has been gathered by Descartes Datamyne from bills of lading (BoL) that document inbound ocean shipments and are filed with U.S. Customs Automated Commercial Environment (ACE) (<https://www.cbp.gov/trade/automated>). Twenty- foot Equivilant Units (TEU) volumes reported are derived from bills of lading, as released by U.S. Customs, excluding empty containers and shipments with freight remaining on board (FROB). The value of imports is as reported by U.S. Census.

About the Author



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Patrick Burnson is executive editor for *Logistics Management* and *Supply Chain Management Review* magazines and web sites. Patrick is a widely-published writer and editor who has spent most of his career covering international trade, global logistics, and supply chain management. He lives and works in San Francisco, providing readers with a Pacific Rim perspective on industry trends and forecasts. You can reach him directly at pburnson@peerlessmedia.com.



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