



CASE STUDY: UNILEVER

How FourKites Helped Unilever South Africa Overcome Border Delays in a Pandemic



Multinational Consumer Goods Company Partners with FourKites for Real-time Visibility

Unilever is a multinational consumer goods company based in London, United Kingdom, and Rotterdam, Netherlands. Of the company's more than 400 brands used by roughly 2.5 billion consumers worldwide each day, Unilever distributes more than 5 million shipments annually over truckload, LTL, rail, ocean and air. Its global team of 155,000 is spread across the almost 200 countries where Unilever goods are sold.*

Unilever began the search for real-time transportation visibility in 2018. The company was looking to empower its employees to plan proactively, optimize internal processes and collaborate more closely with customers. The initial goal of Unilever's visibility deployment was to improve customer service by tracking the location of the truck and ensuring the on-time delivery of goods in transit.

MEET THE TEAM



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Unilever's objectives and key results included:



Receiving predictive visibility into real-time location and estimated time of arrival (ETA) for shipments



Providing proactive communication to key stakeholders about delays in critical monitored shipments



Reducing manual workload, both within Unilever teams and externally, including fewer calls and emails to understand shipment status and location



Improving carrier performance, benchmarking and scorecarding, as well as strengthened carrier relationships

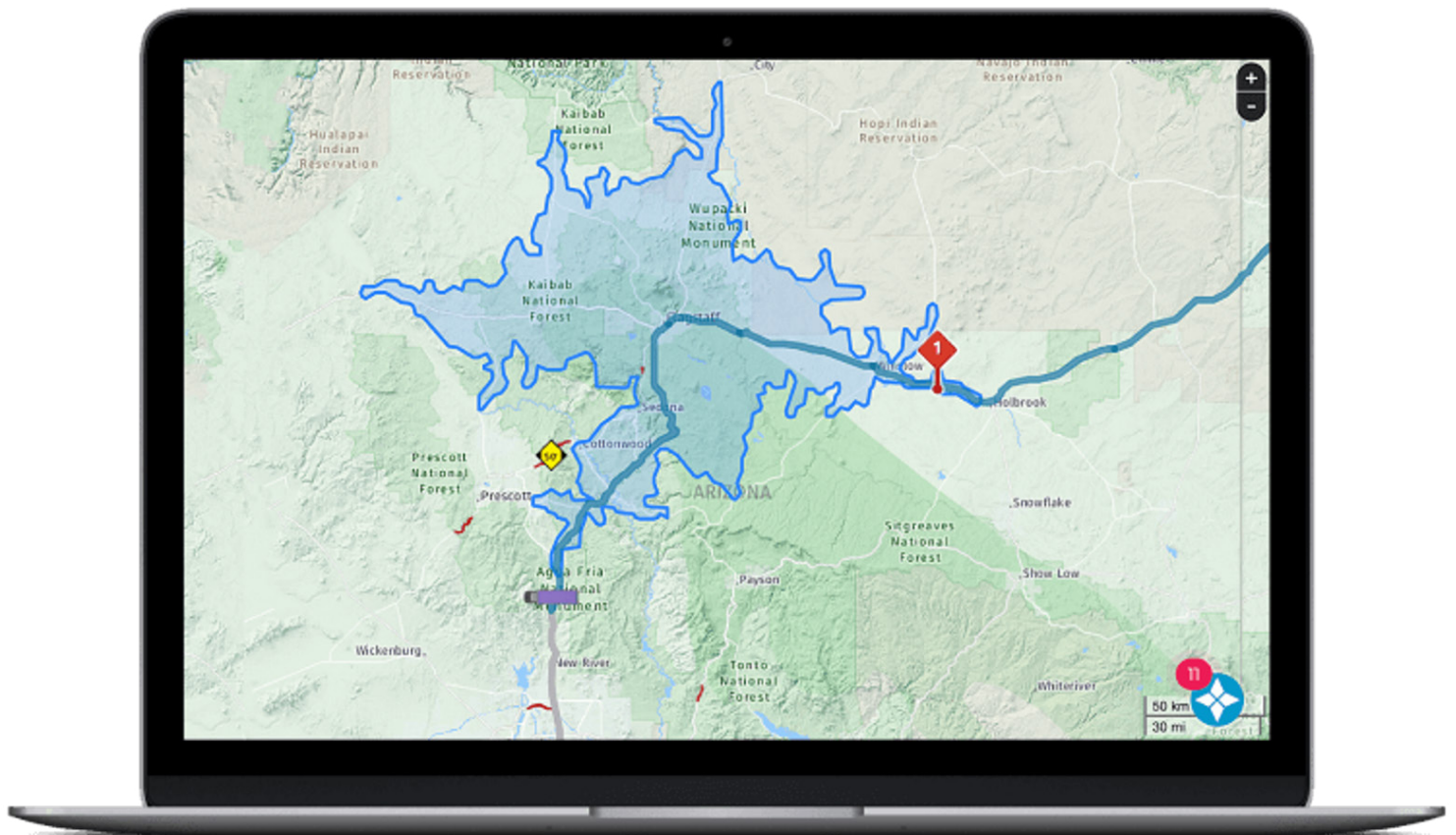


Reducing wait times at customer facilities, resulting in improved customer satisfaction and carrier relationships

The Journey Begins with Quality Data

Unilever's journey with FourKites began in early 2019 with a technical integration between Unilever South Africa's TMS and FourKites' real-time transportation visibility platform, which runs on AWS, followed by scoping and onboarding of carrier partners and assignment of a dedicated customer success manager (CSM). In the early months, the focus was on data quality and tracking consistency, as it is with many early-stage shippers.

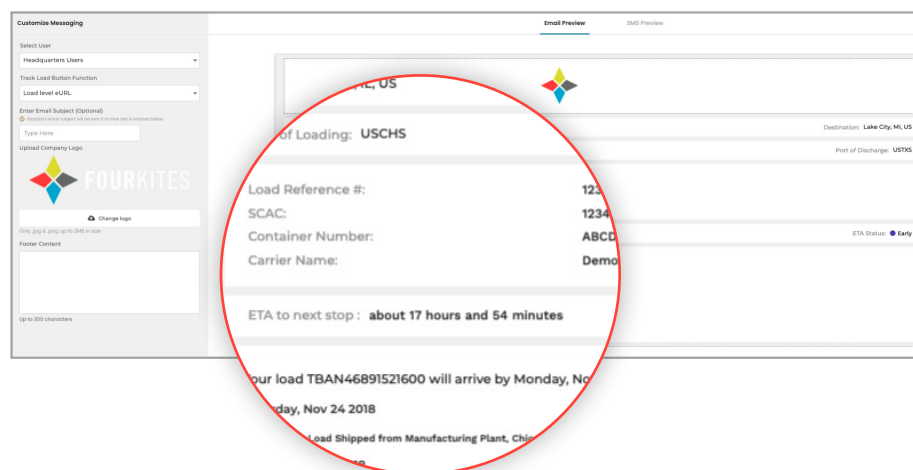
FourKites' long-term goal, however, was to turn Unilever's transportation management group into a team of visibility-savvy super-users. By September 2020, Unilever South Africa had visibility into 80% of their shipments in FourKites. They had adopted several tools within the FourKites platform, and were actively using the real-time visibility platform and Secure Shipments, a suite of advanced security and compliance features, to optimize workflows within their supply chain.



Once the basic groundwork had been set, Unilever began to reap the true benefits of end-to-end transportation visibility. Using FourKites capabilities, such as access to detailed, **real-time shipment information, status** (Late, Early, On-time) and **ETA to the delivery stop**, Unilever employees could better respond to customer queries on the status of their shipments — both planned and in-transit.

Unilever configured FourKites' **Notifications & Alerts** to automatically alert employees when a truck's wait time at a facility exceeded 4 hours, which enabled them to take appropriate action based on the notifications and reduce driver wait time at the facility. By recording not only planned entry and exit times, but actual timestamps for updating Completion of Delivery (CoD) events, FourKites made it possible for Unilever to eliminate the highly manual task of gathering entry and exit information from employees' workloads, and instead let employees focus on more value-add tasks.

Finally, by implementing FourKites' **end-to-end visibility** and **24-hour tracking updates**, the Unilever team was able to reduce outbound calls made to carriers, drivers and transporters seeking shipment updates, as tracking information was now readily available.



Unilever's Key Results

Within the first 12 months of working with FourKites, Unilever noticed several key results:



Unilever South Africa's Transport Team now leverages the FourKites platform daily to optimize their work, which has improved communication and collaboration across teams.



Over 2,500 targeted notifications for elevated facility wait times have been sent from FourKites to the Unilever team, enabling both immediate corrective action and historical trend analysis.



Proactive customer communication on load status and delays, which provides total visibility on shipments.



FourKites in Action: Crisis Management in a Pandemic

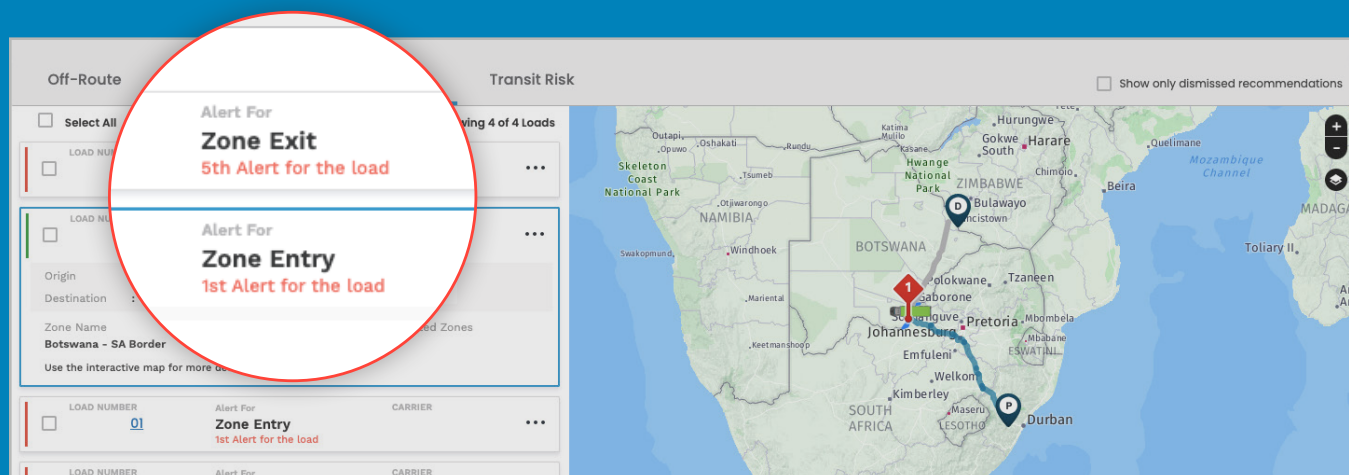
One of Unilever's biggest challenges during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic was establishing end-to-end visibility on carriers hauling cross-border shipments.

Border crossings are traditionally a difficult challenge for supply chain and logistics professionals, and this was no exception for Unilever's South Africa team. South Africa shares a border with six other sovereign nations, two of which are located entirely within South Africa itself. To make matters worse, the country was hit particularly hard by COVID, with a unique strain of the virus arising relatively early on.

All of these obstacles escalated an already-difficult situation into a crippling challenge. In normal times, the average wait time at South Africa's borders is between 4 to 6 hours. With the onset of COVID-19, these wait times skyrocketed to more than 10 hours a day due to congestion and new checks at the border. With delays at the borders increasing and demand for consumer packaged goods on the rise throughout the greater Sub-Saharan region, the Unilever team needed a solution, and they needed it fast.

THE FOURKITES SOLUTION

Unilever leveraged FourKites' Custom Geofence capability to bolster its limited resources with proactive, predictive data. Using this solution, Unilever created custom zones around border crossings and ports of entry, configuring FourKites to automatically issue alerts to team members whenever a shipment entered, exited or had been delayed at a border for longer than a specified time. This allowed Unilever's team to make targeted decisions and limit their attention to shipments that were in danger of being delayed or that were experiencing major delays at border crossings around the country.



These alerts helped the Unilever team to identify the cause for the delay (if any) and reschedule the appointment time with the customers based on any known delays. Using FourKites' custom zones helped Unilever overcome a difficult situation by providing border visibility when a truck arrives, waits and departs from the border.



About FourKites



FourKites® is the #1 supply chain visibility platform in the world, extending visibility beyond transportation into yards, warehouses, stores and beyond. Tracking more than 2 million shipments daily across road, rail, ocean, air, parcel and courier, and reaching 176 countries, FourKites combines real-time data and powerful machine learning to help companies digitize their end-to-end supply chains. More than 600 of the world's most recognized brands — including 9 of the top-10 CPG and 18 of the top-20 food and beverage companies — trust FourKites to transform their business and create more agile, efficient and sustainable supply chains.

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