

Sea Freight Forwarding Market Size & Share Analysis - Growth Trends and Forecast (2026 - 2031)

> ****Industry:**** Freight Forwarding & Multimodal (Logistics & Supply Chain)
> ****Source:**** <https://www.mordorintelligence.com/industry-reports/sea-freight-forwarding-market>
> ****Scraped Date:**** 2026-09-17

Executive Market Summary

Market Metric	Details
:---	:---
Base Market Size	USD 378.37 billion
Projected Forecast (2031)	USD 378.37 billion
Growth Rate (CAGR)	5.26 %
Largest Market Region	N/A
Fastest-Growing Region	N/A

Market Visualizations & Infographics

![Major players in Sea Freight Forwarding industry](images/chart_2.png)

![Sea Freight Forwarding Market Size](images/chart_3.png)

![Sea Freight Forwarding Market Share by Service Type, 2025](images/chart_4.png)

![Sea Freight Forwarding Market Share by End-User Industry, 2025](images/chart_5.png)

![Sea Freight Forwarding Market CAGR (%), Growth Rate by Region](images/chart_6.png)

![Sea Freight Forwarding Market Concentration](images/chart_7.png)

![Icon](images/chart_8.png)

![footer background image](images/chart_10.png)

![Mordor Intelligence on Facebook](images/chart_12.svg)

![Mordor Intelligence on Pinterest](images/chart_14.svg)

![Mordor Intelligence on Instagram](images/chart_15.svg)

![ESOMAR](images/chart_17.png)

![GPTW](images/chart_19.png)

Comprehensive Research Analysis

Overview Points List Flex 49 Share Feature End

Market Overview

Study Period

2020 - 2031

Market Size (2026)

USD 378.37 Billion

Market Size (2031)

USD 488.97 Billion

Growth Rate (2026 - 2031)

5.26 %

Fastest Growing Market

North America

Largest Market
|

Asia Pacific
|

Market Concentration
|

Low
|

Major Players

*Disclaimer: Major Players sorted in no particular order

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|

Market Overview

Sea Freight Forwarding Market Analysis by Mordor Intelligence

The Sea Freight Forwarding Market size was valued at USD 358.31 billion in 2025 and is estimated to grow from USD 378.37 billion in 2026 to reach USD 488.97 billion by 2031, at a CAGR of 5.26% during the forecast period (2026-2031).

The global sea freight forwarding market is growing steadily, supported by resilient trade flows and ongoing supply chain realignment. Growth is reinforced by large-scale infrastructure investments, such as the ~USD 1.2 billion expansion of Bremerhaven port to enhance capacity and efficiency, and increasing strategic alliances among major carriers to improve schedule reliability and network optimization. While Asia-Pacific continues to dominate global volumes, nearshoring trends and port investments are accelerating growth in North America. At the same time, persistent disruptions and rising digital adoption are pushing freight forwarders toward more integrated, technology-driven, and value-added logistics solutions.

Key Report Takeaways

* By service type, full-container-load services held 60.31% of the sea freight forwarding market share in 2025, while the less-than-container-load segment of the sea freight forwarding market is projected to expand at a 4.67% CAGR between 2026 and 2031.

* By cargo type, Dry cargo accounted for a 71.40% share of the sea freight forwarding market size in 2025, while the reefer cargo is projected to grow at a CAGR of 4.23% between 2026 and 2031.

* By end-user industry in 2025, retail and e-commerce accounted for 25.43% of the market share, while the pharmaceuticals and healthcare sectors are set to lead with the highest projected CAGR of 5.45% between 2026-2031.

* By geography, Asia-Pacific dominates the sea freight forwarding market with a 40.52% share in 2025, while North America is projected to grow at a significant CAGR of 5.23% during 2026-2031.

Key Market Trends

Market Trends and Insights

Drivers Impact Analysis of Sea Freight Forwarding Market*

Driver |
(~) % Impact on CAGR Forecast |
Geographic Relevance |
Impact Timeline |

Growth in Global Trade Volumes

|

+0.9%
|

Global with focus on Asia-Pacific and North America

Medium term (2-4 years)

Expansion of E-Commerce and Cross-Border Sales

|

+1.2%

Global led by Asia-Pacific, North America, Europe

Short term (≤ 2 years)

Demand for Cost-Effective Bulk Transport

|

+0.7%
|

Emerging markets in South America and Africa
|

Long term (≥ 4 years)
|

Port Modernization and Deepening Projects

|

+0.8%

|

Asia-Pacific, Middle East, South America

|

Medium term (2-4 years)

|

Need for Temperature-Controlled Logistics

|

+0.6%

|

North America, Europe, Asia-Pacific pharma lanes

|

Medium term (2–4 years)

Shift to Larger Container Vessels

|

+0.5%

Transpacific and Asia-Europe routes

Long term (≥ 4 years)

Source: Mordor Intelligence
|

Competitive Landscape

Competitive Landscape

The sea freight forwarding market remains fragmented. Kuehne+Nagel, DHL Global Forwarding, and DSV hold the majority of the combined share through global networks and digital platforms. Smaller specialists win compliance-heavy sectors such as pharmaceuticals and aerospace. Blockchain documentation, including TradeLens and Global Shipping Business Network, trimmed clearance from 7.2 days to 4.1 days and reduced paper bills by 90%, shifting value creation away from manual processing toward advisory services.

Technology adoption differentiates leaders. API visibility, predictive analytics, and embedded insurance allow premiums of 8-12% for guaranteed service levels. Start-ups offering instant quotes and simplified booking captured 4-6% of Asia-North America e-commerce flows by appealing to younger procurement teams. Consolidation remains limited amid antitrust scrutiny, but alliances to share capacity and co-fund green-fuel surcharges are growing.

Integrated logistics conglomerates hedge bunker risk through captive tonnage and fuel contracts, while many mid-tier forwarders struggle with quarterly surcharges. Specialization in hazmat handling, project cargo, and emerging-market compliance gives regional players defensible niches despite shrinking transactional margins.

Sea Freight Forwarding Industry Leaders

*

Kuehne + Nagel

*

DHL Global Forwarding

*

Sinotrans

*

DSV A/S

*

Expeditors International

*

*Disclaimer: Major Players sorted in no particular order

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Component Component 3 Scope Of The Report Bottom

Global Sea Freight Forwarding Market Report Scope

Sea Freight Forwarding is a method of transporting large quantities of goods using cargo ships where goods are packed in containers and loaded onto ships. A typical freighter can carry about 18,000 containers, making ocean freight a cost-effective way to transport large quantities over long distances.

The Sea Freight Forwarding Market report provides insights into the market, Market Overview, Market Dynamics, Value Chain / Supply Chain Analysis, Technological Trends, Investment Scenarios, Government Regulations and Initiatives, Sea Freight Transportation Costs/Freight Rates, Insights on the E-commerce Industry, Sea Freight Forwarding Market, and Industry Attractiveness. Furthermore, the report also provides company profiles of leading market players to understand the market's competitive landscape.

The Sea Freight Forwarding Market Report is Segmented by Service Type (Full-Container-Load, Less-Than-Container-Load), by Cargo Type (Dry, Reefer), by End-User Industry (Electronics and Semiconductors, Chemicals and Petrochemicals, and More), and by Geography (North America, South America, Asia-Pacific, Europe, Middle East and Africa). The Market Forecasts are Provided in Terms of Value (USD).

By Service Type

Full-Container-Load (FCL)
|

Less-than-Container-Load (LCL)
|

Segmentation Accordion Item

By Geography

North America
|

United States
|

|

Canada
|

|

Mexico
|

South America
|

Brazil
|

|

Peru

|

|

Chile

|

|

Argentina

|

|

Rest of South America

|

Asia-Pacific

|

India

|

|

China

|

|

Japan

|

|

Australia

|

|

South Korea

|

|

South East Asia (Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Vietnam, and Philippines)

|

|

Rest of Asia-Pacific

|

Europe

|

United Kingdom

|

|

Germany

|

|

France
|

|

Spain
|

|

Italy
|

|

BENELUX (Belgium, Netherlands, and Luxembourg)
|

|

NORDICS (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden)
|

|

Rest of Europe

|

Middle East and Africa

|

United Arab of Emirates

|

|

Saudi Arabia

|

|

South Africa

|

|

Nigeria
|

|

Rest of Middle East And Africa
|

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the projected value of the Sea Freight Forwarding Market by 2031?

The Sea Freight Forwarding Market is forecast to reach USD 488.97 billion by 2031, growing at a CAGR of 5.26% from 2026.

Which region is growing fastest?

North America leads at 5.23% CAGR to 2031, driven by nearshoring that shifted 12% of U.S. electronics imports to Mexico.

What is driving reefer cargo demand?

Pharmaceutical GDP rules and consumer preference for fresh produce are pushing reefer to 4.23% CAGR despite tight pharma-grade capacity.

How are digital platforms changing forwarding?

Blockchain documentation cut clearance from 7.2 days to 4.1 days, reducing manual value-add and elevating advisory services.

What share does Asia-Pacific hold?

Asia-Pacific accounted for 40.52% of market share in 2025, supported by RCEP tariff cuts and China port automation.

Which service type dominates?

Full-Container-Load held 60.31% share in 2025, yet Less-than-Container-Load is expanding faster at 4.67% CAGR.