

10 Ways to Make Yourself an Attractive Shipper



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LOGISTICS





I have a hard time getting a truck to show up for my cargo.

Sound familiar? Securing reliable, on-time truck capacity can be difficult, especially if you don't know what carriers look for in an ideal shipment.

Here are a few tips on how to give your freight an edge that will make carriers fight to work with you.

5 WAYS TO MAKE YOUR LESS THAN TRUCK LOAD (LTL) SHIPMENTS MORE ATTRACTIVE

Industry Standard Packaging

Ensure your product can travel safely when co-mingled with other products from different companies. A carrier will want to maximize their trailer space by co-mingling products, and they don't want to risk damaging your freight because it was packaged poorly. As the shipper, you are responsible to package your cargo so that it can withstand the normal rigors of transportation. Inadequate packaging is the most common reason for carriers to deny a damage claim. If you're not confident in your packaging, contact a packaging engineer—some local Universities will do it for free.

Clear Labeling

Packages that are well labeled and easily identifiable with the consignee name, address, and other critical information. Why is this important? Well, imagine that your shipment comes into the warehouse loose and some of the boxes get separated. This will create delays in loading and could mean your product gets misplaced. Ensuring your packaging is clearly labeled will speed up the loading process and make sure your shipment gets to its destination in a timely manner.

Accurate Descriptions

Identify your product accurately to the carrier. List on the Bill of Lading everything from exact National Motor Freight Classification (NMFC) descriptions to individual shipping dimensions of each pallet. If you provide the wrong NMFC, the carrier has the right to change it and charge you, especially if it's a higher class.

Quality Four-Way Pallets

Use quality 4-way pallets to guarantee safe handling by a lift truck operator. Make sure your pallet is in new or good condition, before palletizing your freight. The last thing you need is for your pallet to fall apart during the trip and damage your goods.

Standardized Dimensions

Standardize your shipping dimensions by ensuring your product doesn't hang over the pallet. Avoid putting too much on one pallet, split it up or change the configuration of the boxes to ensure there's minimal to no overhang. Lift truck operators try to utilize all the space they can and having overhanging product will increase the chance of damage, as your cargo will inevitably come into contact with other freight.

5 WAYS TO MAKE YOUR FULL TRUCK LOAD (FTL) SHIPMENTS MORE ATTRACTIVE

24 Hours or More Lead Time

Give a carrier at least 24 hours lead-time from the day you want to ship, this will help to optimize your pricing. The more advanced the notice, the better. If you try to secure a truck with a narrow timeframe, the pool of available carriers could be limited, and rates may not be ideal.

Flexible Hours

Carriers make their money by turning shipments as quickly as they can. This means that first-come-first-

serve facilities—that can efficiently get trucks loaded and unloaded—are generally preferred by most carriers. Going beyond two hours to load or unload could lead to additional charges, since that time counts against the number of hours a truck can legally run in a day.

Consistent Lanes

Do you have cities that you ship to and from regularly? If so, this can be attractive to a carrier. Why? It's predictable, meaning it's something they can count on and build their schedule around. It could also save you money by establishing a consistent carrier base for that lane.

Palletized Freight

Cargo that cannot be efficiently loaded and unloaded by a forklift can be, not only time consuming to load and unload, but also more difficult to secure, which can increase the chance for damage.

Driver Facilities

Provide a well-lit area where drivers can get out, stretch, and relax. Make a rest room available, a vending machine,

or fresh water that truckers can access. A safe place where a driver can park overnight, is also particularly attractive.

Interested in learning more about how to secure reliable capacity? Lets talk.

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