

Partner 
Ship®



a guide to stress-free shipping

introduction

PartnerShip conducted a survey of customers to learn a little more about their freight shipping habits. As a logistics provider servicing thousands of customers and handling hundreds of shipments a day, it is important to us to understand our customers' needs and concerns when it comes to their shipping operations. The survey consisted of 15 questions geared towards less-than-truckload (LTL), volume, and truckload freight shipping. The survey responses gave us an in-depth look at shippers' main issues, equipment needed when shipping, and top items shipped – to name a few findings. The feedback we received from the survey was extremely valuable and we're working to address your freight shipping concerns and challenges through our content, customer service, and freight shipping tools.

In this white paper, we'll identify what customers saw as their main issues and challenges when shipping their freight. As you can see from the graph to the right, customers gave a variety of answers. Managing the price of their freight, the timing of their shipping, and minimizing damages/losses were listed frequently. These issues will be the focus of this white paper and we'll provide information and tips to put your mind at ease when shipping your freight.





First, we'd like to address a common misconception among businesses that they do not need freight shipping. This oversight is easy to make if there are no pallets assembled in their facility and no semis in their parking lot – however, these companies

may be overlooking some important aspects of their operations that could use some freight optimization.

We'd like to reiterate an idea that we stress frequently – inbound shipping is one of the easiest and most overlooked ways to save money on your overall shipping costs. Many businesses do not factor in the freight shipments they receive from suppliers, as many times, the consignee is not being *directly* invoiced for those shipments. However, costs initially written off as 'free' often rear their head in the price of the actual goods that are being moved – *meaning the costs are not non-existent, just hidden*. As the customer receiving the goods, your company has a say in how that freight is routed and billed, and you should factor it into your overall freight plan. You'll see this point addressed again in this white paper, since inbound shipping management can solve many shipping woes.

a guide to stress-free shipping

Another common way companies avoid freight shipping is to break the shipment down into smaller portions and send through a small package handler. These companies are making shipping harder and more expensive for themselves. As a general rule, one big order ships for less than three smaller orders. That means businesses should consider ***consolidating multiple orders into a single large shipment whenever possible***, and always try to minimize the number of packages it sends. All too often, shipments are arranged as they come in from sales or order processing. However, a little planning and visibility will go a long way towards saving on shipping costs, supplies, and time.





It should come as no surprise that shippers are worried about the cost of their freight, but there are some basic steps you can take to be sure you are not overpaying:

- **Choose the correct partners** – Working with a Third Party Logistics company (3PL) is one of the easiest ways to keep your freight costs in check. Through their buying clout, 3PL partners can, in many cases, secure better pricing with carriers than a single business could on their own. 3PLs will not only save you money, but the best 3PLs will also save you time by auditing your invoices, providing top-of-the-line technology and tools, and by making a point to keep you informed of freight industry tips and trends. Choosing the correct carrier partners, whether on your own or through a 3PL, will also save you money in the long run – as some carriers operate more efficiently in different geographic areas and offer different equipment specializations for your freight.

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- ***Pay attention to your inbound shipping*** – Déjà vu, right? As a brief review, many companies that have outbound freight will more often than not have shipments coming into their facility from vendors and suppliers. These shipments are often billed to the consignee even though the consignee has no control over how the shipment is shipped or handled by the carrier. Even if your company isn't seeing a direct invoice for these shipments, there's no such thing as "free shipping" and the charges are probably being hidden elsewhere. In short, staying on top of your inbound shipping cultivates a healthy bottom line.
- ***Avoid commonly made mistakes when shipping your freight*** – We have another [white paper](#) on this subject and it's designed to help you shy away from and correct the most costly shipping mistakes. From inaccuracies in your Bill of Lading (BOL) to improperly handling your claims, there are wrong turns in the complicated world of freight shipping that can cost you big.





We've all seen and heard lost and/or damaged shipment horror stories. Whether it's a friend's incident, a YouTube video of a not-so-careful delivery, or a firsthand experience - there is a definite fear of damages and losses in shipping. Believe it or not, a large

portion of damaged and lost shipments can be attributed to packaging error rather than freight mistreatment.

- **Packaging** – Shipments must be properly packed to ensure damage-free transportation. While there are many nuances to different items that may be shipped, the overall advice we give is to use common sense when packaging your specific commodity. You wouldn't package ball-bearings the same as you would package glassware. Don't be afraid to spend an extra couple of dollars on packaging to ensure you're not spending even more later. Be conscious of your chosen container's maximum weight capacity, choose quality materials, leave enough room in boxes/containers for cushioning, and properly seal boxes with enough tape. Be mindful of these basic practices and your shipment will be well-packaged and protected during normal shipping and handling.

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- **Palletizing** – The pallet will give your shipment a solid base to sit on and make movement on and off the truck easy and safe. When stacking your pallet, be sure your items sit squarely on the skid with no overhang. Box flaps and corrugations should face up. Make the top surface as flat as possible and secure cartons to the skid with banding, stretch-wrap, or breakaway adhesive.
- **Labeling** – To ensure correct and timely delivery, freight needs to be labeled appropriately. Always follow these guidelines:
 - Remove or completely cover old shipping labels.
 - Place labels on each box and each side of the overall shipment.
 - Do not place labels over a seam or closure on top of sealing tape.
 - Place a duplicate form of address information inside the container for added protection.
 - You should always be able to locate a full return address on the shipping label.

Even the best laid plans can go awry, that's why it's always a good idea to be well-versed in the [steps to take if a shipment happens to be damaged or lost.](#)





Managing the logistics of shipping can be a trying task with multiple, and seemingly endless, steps along the way. Gathering materials, correctly packaging freight, and accurately completing your

paperwork seems like a lot in itself, but the most important step lies ahead – making sure it gets to where it needs to go on time. All previous work is rendered pointless if this stage is not completed.

Before shipping your freight, here are items to keep in mind to ensure there are no hiccups in your transit:

- **Accuracy on your bill of lading (BOL)** is key to keeping your shipment on track and avoiding time consuming reweighs or reclassifications from carriers. Knowing your freight class, as well as accurately weighing your shipment, is extremely important to getting your shipment to its destination on time.



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- No one likes paying more for their shipping, but **knowing which accessorials or additional services to add** when scheduling your freight shipment will save you from situations like a refused delivery that could have been avoided by including a lift gate. Accessorials like advance notification can also help you and your company better manage your time when shipping freight.
- **Considering guaranteed pick-up and delivery options** from carriers will provide you with more insurance when scheduling a shipment where you may be unsure about the time-frame's likelihood. While the guaranteed options cost a bit more, paying a little extra when you know you need it is better than the fallout that comes from the alternatives.

Setting yourself up for a properly timed shipment mostly occurs before the carrier is even dispatched to your location, but there are a few measures you can take while your freight is in transit:

- **Late pickups** can be frustrating, but they occasionally happen as drivers can get detained with earlier pickups, encounter trailer capacity issues, are caught in heavy traffic, etc. Our customer service team at PartnerShip does a great job staying on top of pickup times and securing a time commitment from the carrier's dispatch when needed. However, often times it makes sense for you to call the carrier directly in the event you need to work out a new time or solution.





- Stay on top of your shipment by using **shipment tracking** tools to check the status of your shipment and get an estimated time of delivery (ETA). Typically, all you will need is the tracking, pro, or BOL number and the carrier you used for your shipment.
- If you find yourself sending multiple freight shipments of similar specifications to the same consignee, as many companies do, **making notes and keeping a close eye on your shipping history** can help you effectively prepare for the future. Track your experiences with certain carriers as they use different lanes to transport shipments.

in summary

1. Know your shipping operation to optimize efficiencies.
2. Price of freight can be curbed by choosing reliable partners, paying attention to inbound shipping/freight, and avoiding commonly made freight mistakes.
3. To avoid damaged or missing shipments, carefully package, palletize, and label your freight.
4. Before shipping your freight, be accurate on your BOL, identify needed accessorials, and secure needed services. After scheduling your freight shipment, stay on top of carrier pickup times and in-transit tracking and be sure to stay organized with notes on your shipping history.

As identified by shippers - price, transit times, and damages/losses were the most referenced challenges in our survey. We know that those challenges are not all encompassing but hopefully we answered most of your concerns. The feedback we received from the survey was extremely valuable and **we're always here to address any and all concerns you may have about your freight.**





about us

PartnerShip handles hundreds of shipments a day and we've seen it all. We're here to help and to answer any questions you may have about your shipping. We're also here to ease your mind of any and all shipping concerns that you may have and help you cultivate an efficient shipping operation.

Request a free shipping analysis by following the link below and providing some brief information about your company's shipping habits. One of our experienced freight shipping experts will analyze your operations and we'll let you know if you're already an efficient shipper or if freight shipping challenges are holding you back.

Visit PartnerShip.com/Analysis

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