

SKLZ CASE STUDY:

Purolator Helps San Diego Manufacturer Cut Days from Canada Transit Time

Demand for high quality sports equipment knows no international border, so when this San Diego-based manufacturer decided to expand to Canada, it was confident of demand for its products. What caught the manufacturer by surprise though, was the exceedingly slow pace at which products arrived in Canada, and its current logistics company's apparent inability – or unwillingness – to help improve transit time.

The situation improved dramatically though, when the manufacturer's logistics and supply chain management team met with representatives from Purolator International in San Diego. Purolator International is the U.S. subsidiary of Purolator Inc, an iconic brand in Canada and the leading provider of courier and integrated freight services in that country. As such, Purolator International offers unmatched expertise and resources in providing solutions for U.S. shipments bound for Canada. And as it turns out, Purolator's San Diego branch manager had been vying for a chance to meet with a representative from this equipment manufacturer, because he was confident Purolator could provide an ideal solution.

In fact, Purolator's proposed solution exceeded the manufacturer's expectations in key areas including transit time, cost and service.

Service to Canada two days faster than prior carrier

Since expanding sales to the Canadian market, the sports equipment manufacturer has amassed an impressive —

and growing — customer list comprised mainly of sporting goods retailers, including large chains and small specialty stores. Retailers regularly comment that consumers are impressed by the quality, innovation and attractiveness of the manufacturer's products, and demand is strong across the inventory line. This has caused an enviable problem for the manufacturer — how to quickly move inventory from its San Diego distribution center into Canada to keep stores stocked, and avoid disappointing customers.

The manufacturer had initially enlisted an internationally-recognized logistics provider, assuming that since the company was so widely known, it must be the best. But that logistics provider offered a transit plan that required five days to reach the border.

So when Purolator International responded with its logistics proposal, the manufacturer was pleasantly surprised. Right off the bat, the manufacturer was pleased by the personalized attention it was receiving. Purolator representatives asked detailed questions, and drilled down to understand the nuances of the manufacturer's business, along with its objectives. After a thorough analysis, Purolator submitted a proposal that would have the manufacturer's goods arrive in Canada a full two days faster than the previous carrier, at a considerably lower price point.

Two days faster! How could that be? A couple of reasons actually. First, Purolator's extensive distribution network both in the U.S. and in Canada means more options are available for developing a customized solution. Customers no longer must operate within the confines of a carrier's rigid "one size fits all" schedule. In addition, Purolator maintains a network of distribution facilities close to the Canadian border, which means a shipment can enter Canada from any number of induction points, based on where in Canada it is headed.



The manufacturer's shipments are picked up at its San Diego facility and travel to Purolator's Chicago processing center — a capability most logistics providers cannot match. Instead, shipments from southern California are often routed through Arizona, or face multiple stops as the truck makes its way north.

Upon arrival in Chicago, packages are sorted and consolidated into larger shipments for efficiency and cost savings. Shipments are cross-docked for maximum efficiency, meaning packages essentially remain in constant motion. Because a large number of the manufacturer's customers are located in eastern Canada, shipments are processed through Purolator's Ontario facility after leaving Chicago. This customized solution is an example of the high level of service that distinguishes Purolator from other logistics providers.

Purolator also ensures that every shipment arrives at the border with all Customs documentation pre-filed, and thanks to Purolator's "trusted trader" status, eligible for expedited clearance by Canadian border services agents. Once in Canada, shipments enter Purolator's extensive distribution network, and travel directly to their end destination.

Use of Technology Ensures Shipment Accuracy and Route Optimization

Technology plays an important role in every Purolator solution. Purolator has developed — with strong input from its customers — a customized technology solution that allows customers to integrate their data directly into Purolator's system. This facilitates the shipment preparation process, and also guards against labeling and sorting errors. Purolator also relies on technology to ensure that routes are optimized. Unnecessary stopovers and wasted miles are avoided so that shipments can travel directly to their intended destination.

The combination of Purolator's extensive distribution network, expertise in the Canadian market, and reliance on technology meant it could have the sports equipment manufacturer's products in Canada a full two days faster than most other carriers. If the manufacturer was skeptical at first that Purolator could actually perform at

this high level, any concerns have been put to rest. Since taking over the manufacturer's business, Purolator has consistently met — and often exceeded — expectations.

Unexpected bonus — Purolator's high level of customer service

When the manufacturer's logistics team first asked Purolator to develop a proposal, they were not surprised by the level of attention they received. What did surprise them though, was that the level of attention did not diminish after Purolator was awarded the account. In fact, it increased. This was the opposite of what had happened whenever they attempted to contact their other logistics provider.

Shortly after Purolator's proposal was accepted, the manufacturer was assigned a dedicated "client relations representative" (CRR). The CRR works directly with the manufacturer, and is thoroughly aware of all aspects of the manufacturer's business. When the manufacturer has a question, or needs to make a change, the CRR is a quick phone call away. In fact, the CRR sometimes calls with a proactive recommendation for making a change to a schedule, or just to check in and make sure the manufacturer is satisfied.

This high level of customer service has been a tremendous help to the manufacturer. Just knowing that the CRR is accessible, and "has its back" allows the manufacturer a high level of confidence in making delivery promises to its Canadian customers. It's a dramatic turnaround from the constant worry and disappointment that hung like a dark cloud over its previous experience.

Next Up — E-commerce Expansion with a Purolator Solution

The manufacturer is grateful to Purolator for solving its Canadian transit problem, and for its tremendous level of customer service. During the course of the two parties' initial discussions, the manufacturer learned about Purolator's unique "PuroPost" service, which is ideal for e-commerce shipments traveling between the United States and Canada.

Through PuroPost, shipments travel via a ground solution at a courier-like level of service. In fact, PuroPost ground shipments arrive in Canada faster than they would via certain carriers' air solutions! Then, once in Canada, Purolator guarantees coverage to 100 percent of Canadian residential, business and P.O. addresses. No other carrier offers comprehensive coverage throughout Canada.

Purolator is able to offer this level of service through its unique partnership with Canada Post, Canada's national postal system. Once a shipment arrives in Canada, it is routed into Canada Post's network for guaranteed last mile service.

The sports equipment manufacturer has plans to sell directly to Canadian consumers through an e-commerce platform. The company has been so impressed by Purolator's B2B solution, that talks are underway to implement PuroPost to service its B2C customers.

The manufacturer has come to realize the importance of a trusted and reliable logistics partner. As for Purolator, the company is pleased to have solved this manufacturer's problem with a unique solution made possible by its deep experience in the Canadian market.

©2014 Purolator International, Inc.