

Newport's

Heavy Duty Trucking

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those goods reach the U.S.

"The hallmark of FedEx in all of its operating companies is absolutely reliability and custodial control," he says. "We monitor the movement of every shipment and we give great visibility of that movement to the customer. Those are things you'll find in all FedEx operating companies."

And while many other U.S. trucking companies are scrambling for drivers, FedEx Freight should be in pretty good shape. For years, the company has had an apprentice program that starts young people as freight handlers in one of their facilities. From there they can train to become P&D drivers, then line drivers. Some prefer to stay behind the wheel; others become driver trainers, dispatchers or supervisors.

"If we can get a worker through the first year – the night work, the stress and everything else – we generally keep them for almost a career, because there are lots of opportunities for them to advance and grow within the company."



Hankook tires are manufactured in Asia and shipped to the United States where Evans Distribution uses its regional JIT expertise to ensure timely delivery to Michigan and Ohio automotive plants. Inside a truck, Evans associates affix multiple 2-D barcode labels to each tire to track manufacturing information critical for assembly sequencing and accountability purposes.

ing and other value-added services we provide," says Leslie Ajlouny, vice president of business development for Evans Distribution.

Globalization, she says, has changed and expanded what their customers expect as a logistics provider. "Instead of just cross-docking or delivering shipments as they come in, we're now frequently asked to provide quality inspection or relabeling." The company also offers a variety of packaging and inventory control services. "We're adding a lot more value through the supply chain – beyond just providing transportation," she notes.

Evans has no plans to expand overseas; instead they're looking for strategic alliances and partnerships that will allow them to be a part of their customers' global logistics chains.

Doug Ostrowski, general manager, transportation, notes that many of the big 3PLs are looking for small, regional providers like Evans. A relatively new trend is 4PLs, which coordinate 3PL services. "They've already got the

globalization advantages with offices overseas. It's more advantageous for us to partner with them than to compete for those accounts."

Along with demands for extra services, globalization has put more pressure on final delivery, he says. "If you go back 25 or 30 years, the total automotive supply chain was maybe 200 to 2,000 miles and it was all domestic, so transit times were a day or two. Now the supply chains are thousands of miles and transit times can be as long as a month. If you're at the last day or two in that cycle there's a lot of added pressure to perform, to get the information to customers as things happen and to keep our on-time percentage extremely high."

Some of that is accomplished through investments in information technology in order to make the supply chain as visible as possible. "Nobody likes surprises, so part of our job is to eliminate surprises," notes Ajlouny.

Success also requires planning and flexibility. "We put a lot of



EVANS DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS: WORKING THE REGIONAL NICHE

Evans Distribution Systems was started in 1929 as the Central Detroit Warehouse Co. Today it's a full-service warehousing, packaging, transportation and third-party logistics provider with facilities in the Detroit area, Boston and Norfolk, Va. Although Evans is relatively small compared to other 3PLs, company officials feel they've found a big and important niche.

"We want to support our global customers, and one way to do that is by offering our regional expertise in trucking and in warehousing

time into operational contingency plans," Ostrowski says. "If there's a problem, dispatchers and operational managers will know about it in advance and they'll know how to respond."

One example: Evans provides custom packaging, inspection, warehousing and transportation services for Diageo North America's Crown Royal product. During the holidays the Canadian whiskey is sold in premium packages with collectible, hand-blown glassware from the Orient. One year the custom packaging, made in New York, was late arriving, so Evans had to quickly add an extra packaging line in order to meet holiday delivery targets.

Ostrowski says there have been instances when their Norfolk facility got the port to open on Sunday night so they could get a couple of hot containers released. "If you have a strong relationship with the provider handing off to you and with the provider after you, you can work together to come up with ways to make all this work for the customer," he notes.

Another client is JOKER Messelogistik GmbH, a European 3PL that coordinates the shipment of German-made show vehicles to the North American International Auto Show held each January in Detroit. The cars are shipped in ocean containers to Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, and then sent to Detroit by rail. In Detroit, Evans either takes them directly to Cobo Hall, where the show is held, or to their local service center for unpacking and sequencing. Evans also handles materials for the often elaborate and complicated displays. Everything must be

delivered to Cobo Hall in the exact sequence for setup. After the show the displays must be dismantled and shipped out in precisely the right order.

Because Evans has worked in the Detroit auto industry for so many years, they're well acquainted with Cobo Hall and its receiving and shipping processes. As Ajlouny notes, the JOKER account illustrates the value of regional experience as well as industry expertise.

Evans has a dedicated fleet of about 50 trucks, including a mix of company drivers and owner-operators. It also maintains a database of about 180 trucking companies that serve its various locations. Ostrowski estimates that over half of the for-hire carriers working with 3PLs are smaller companies – less than 300 or even 100 trucks. "If you can build a relationship with the smaller carriers, you can help them grow and, at the same time, get the service you need on a personal basis," he explains. "You're not calling into a national call center. A lot of times you're dealing with the company owner or operations

manager. We have good relationships with our carriers. We've seen many of them grow, and when they add capacity they usually give us first crack."

The company's slogan is, "It's Easier with Evans," and Ajlouny says that's not just a claim, it's a goal. "Being easy to work with is our number one priority. People like us. We understand and anticipate how things are changing and how the changes affect our customers, their supply chains, and the customers' customers. We're always trying to be in the right place with the right services and the right mix of technology to make it easy for everyone to do their jobs."

LANDSTAR SYSTEM: TAKING ITS BUSINESS MODEL OVERSEAS

Early this year Landstar put the various operations of its multimodal group under one umbrella, Landstar Global Logistics. One reason for the change was to better define what those businesses are, says Ron Stanley, vice president and COO, Landstar System.



Landstar System is targeting small to mid-size shippers, both here and abroad, with its new Landstar Global Logistics intermodal group.