

VOICE OF THE CUSTOMER

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Scott McLaughlin,
President, Stagecoach Cartage
and Distribution, Inc.



STAGECOACH CARTAGE & DIST.

SITUATION.

Stagecoach Cartage and Distribution, Inc. provides a range of transportation and warehouse services from its home base in El Paso, Texas, a busy border gateway to Mexico. Much of the company's business involves cross-border trade.

Stagecoach was founded in 1985 by U.S. Special Forces and Green Beret veteran John R. McLaughlin, who died in 1998. Since then, the company has been run by his sons, Dieter and Scott. Dieter is vice president. Scott is president. Stagecoach became ISO 9002 certified in 1999.

SOLUTION.

One element of Stagecoach's business is a wide-ranging truckload operation with 85 power units and 350 trailers. Those trailers have been equipped with InSight trailer tracking from SkyBitz for over two years now.

Stagecoach President Scott McLaughlin said he had considered several trailer tracking options, "but for any number of reasons I never really felt I had found the long term fit I wanted." Then he found SkyBitz. "When I saw the ease of use, how quickly they were installed, the battery life and the reporting capabilities, I was immediately attracted to the technology. I was impressed from day one," he said.

McLaughlin said SkyBitz has lived up to its original promise and continues to improve. "I've seen several iterations of InSight, the SkyBitz Web interface. I've seen them continue to enhance the information I'm able to draw on. I've seen longer battery lives. I've seen continued investment in the product, continued investment in the information I'm able to get value-added services like SkyFencing and other things they continue to add to the product," McLaughlin explained.

RESULTS.

McLaughlin said SkyBitz has become an important tool, an integral part of daily operations that allows Stagecoach to manage by exception. "When I first put this system up, it would not be unusual to see trailers that have been sitting for 15 or 16 days," he said. SkyBitz has changed that. "Instead of going through the entire fleet on a daily basis trying to figure out what trailers are where and if there's a problem, the system pinpoints exactly where there may be a specific issue on dwell time or if the trailer is in a different location than it should be. It makes you a lot more effective with your time," McLaughlin said.

According to McLaughlin, SkyBitz changes a fleet's perspective on trailers. "Historically no one was really looking at the turns on trailers. Trailers were just a kind of necessary evil you had to have. You managed it as best you could. But it's a tough industry with a high cost of capital and the returns are not terrific. So you make your money by being efficient. I believe SkyBitz gives us a leg up on the competition.

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We can be more efficient and run fewer trailers. We can get better turns on our equipment, maintain less equipment and hold customers responsible for moving our assets,” McLaughlin said.

Holding customers responsible doesn’t always involve charging detention. “I want to salvage a good customer and also get the appropriate number of turns on a piece of equipment. When I can print up reports, I can show (customers) information from the time that trailer got there, perhaps even showing them how they’re using my trailer internally moving their own goods. If I can show that to them, I can get the situation corrected or charge for it,” he explained. “It’s a very good product,” McLaughlin added. “I’m always glad to speak about products I believe in.”