



### At a Glance:



Saddle Creek Transportation is a wholly owned subsidiary of Saddle Creek Corp., a nationwide provider of warehousing, transportation, packaging, and integrated logistics services. Saddle Creek Transportation offers a broad menu of both asset-based and non-asset-based transportation services, including truckload, LTL, dedicated and consolidation services as well as air freight. Integrating Saddle Creek's transportation services with its warehousing, logistics and contract packaging operations allows customers to streamline their supply chain.



## Strengthening The Supply Chain

### *Saddle Creek's integrated solutions deliver value to GPS manufacturer*

Meeting tight retail delivery windows, identifying the most cost-effective shipping options, closely monitoring the transportation pipeline . . . These are just some of the ways that Saddle Creek Transportation is helping a leading personal navigation device manufacturer to control costs and deliver superior customer service.

The manufacturer uses Saddle Creek to handle its bulk shipments in the U.S., but Saddle Creek's service goes beyond moving products from point A to point B, explains Michael DelBovo, senior vice president, Saddle Creek Transportation. "We've helped to automate their information management process, improve control of their deliveries and strengthen communication," he says. "Saddle Creek's custom solution has really made a difference in their operations."

### The Business Challenge

Working closely with one of the manufacturer's other logistics partners, Saddle Creek Transportation regularly delivers thousands of pounds of personal navigation devices to the DC networks of more than 25 top retailers— serving nearly 100 separate locations.

Fast decisions and smart solutions are required amidst the heavy shipping volumes. For example, as seven truckloads of GPS kits were en route to a major U.S. retailer in the Northeast, it was discovered that the kits needed to be significantly altered to comply with new specifications from the end retailer. All 20,150 units needed to be relabeled before reaching the retailer. Timing was critical to meet a tight delivery window.

Leveraging its warehousing, packaging and logistics services, Saddle Creek offered an integrated solution guaranteed to meet the crucial deadline. The 3PL diverted the trucks to its Charlotte campus. Over the weekend, the team at Saddle Creek's Charlotte facility worked to design and print new labels, so they were ready when the trucks off-loaded the product on Monday morning. In just seven hours, they completely re-labeled 20,150 units with a new label as well as a label to block out the incorrect label and got the shipment back on the road. The result? The kits were delivered on time with the correct labels. The personal navigation device manufacturer had a record sale day while avoiding significant late shipment penalties.

"Our integrated logistics capabilities enabled us to guarantee on-time delivery – a promise that other providers were unable to make," says DelBovo. "That assurance was critical to the manufacturer."



## Manufacturer Chooses Saddle Creek Solutions

Saddle Creek uses its carrier network, its own dedicated fleet and strategic partners to manage much of the bulk transportation for the manufacturer's personal navigation systems. The 3PL also leverages its comprehensive warehousing, packaging and logistics resources, as in the case of the GPS units.

Saddle Creek offers solutions in three key areas:

### Controlling customer deliveries

Saddle Creek manages the entire transportation process for the manufacturer, beginning when GPS orders are dropped into the Red Prairie WMS platform. Saddle Creek coordinates activities for each end destination, including scheduling inbound shipments and providing optimal ship dates to ensure on-time delivery.

As Saddle Creek receives details of all upcoming shipments on a daily basis, the 3PL begins coordinating the most effective transportation routing from its own dedicated fleet, its alliance fleet or air freight when needed. Based on optimal routing information, Saddle Creek pinpoints when each shipment must be sent out in order to meet the commit date with the end retailer.

"Having visibility to orders as they are dropped allows us to more effectively manage all aspects of transportation, including consolidation efforts to large retailers," explains Saddle Creek's DelBovo. "For example, we are able to combine four shipments into a single truckload by working with the retailer and setting up a single delivery appointment, thus freeing up dock space and cutting costs for the manufacturer."

### Constant communication

Every day, Saddle Creek sets aside several hours for its customer service team to communicate with the appropriate parties about label specifications, how outbound shipments need to be configured and when they need to arrive. It is Saddle Creek's responsibility to understand and meet retailers' routing guides for transportation requirements. Thanks to an onsite IT solution, Saddle Creek can immediately print labels for each outbound shipment and communicate with the scheduling system before bringing the materials into Saddle Creek's transportation pipeline.

Once shipments are in transit, Saddle Creek's team constantly monitors them to make sure they are on schedule. The team

updates and reviews milestone tracking on every shipment to avoid challenges and immediately address any discrepancies.

### Customized IT solution

To streamline the information management process, Saddle Creek developed a customized web portal that goes beyond standard track-and-trace. It includes information on upcoming shipments, orders going out that day, scheduled transportation arrangements, and the dates when materials must be shipped in order for Saddle Creek to deliver them on time and cost-effectively. Once the carrier picks up the materials, the track-and-trace process continues through delivery. Saddle Creek manages and updates the portal with new delivery information on every shipment.

Saddle Creek recently upgraded the portal to store scanned hard copy proofs of delivery (POD). The manufacturer does not invoice retailers for shipments until the POD can be affixed to the invoice. "Many transportation providers are not able to accommodate that practice," explains DelBovo. "We developed a solution that corresponds with the manufacturer's internal procedures. Within 24 hours, their accounting team can go directly onto our web site and see all loads in a shipment and download individual PODs to immediately invoice those retailers."

Automated reporting and on-line access allow the manufacturer to immediately know the status of each delivery, and more importantly, expedites the billing process to the key retailers—helping improve cash flow and efficiencies within the business. Saddle Creek has been instrumental in improving their results.

### The Next Step

Saddle Creek's relationship with the manufacturer is still relatively new, but the track record thus far suggests that the outlook for the future is bright.

"They tell us that they've never had relief in their supply chain like they've found with Saddle Creek," DelBovo says. "We look forward to providing that relief for years to come."



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3010 Saddle Creek Road  
Lakeland, Florida 33801  
863-665-0966 • 888-878-1177  
[www.saddlecrk.com](http://www.saddlecrk.com)