

case study

Kingsdown

Transportation Services



at a glance

COMPANY

Kingsdown

INDUSTRY

Furniture and Bedding

GEOGRAPHIC AREA SERVED

United States

CHALLENGE

Maximize efficiency and tighten inventory controls while providing premium service in the delivery of high-end bedding products to retailers.

SOLUTION

Dedicated contract carriage (DCC) equipped with advanced transportation technology that increases visibility and data access throughout the supply chain.

RESULTS

- Reduced overall transportation costs
- Increased on-time delivery rate
- Enhanced inventory control
- Improved customer service and key performance metrics

Kingsdown Finds Dream Solution in High Tech Fleet Management

Kingsdown is one of the largest independent sleep-system manufacturers in the United States. Building on a nearly 100-year-old tradition as an industry leader, Kingsdown's premium sleep systems combine handcrafted quality with innovative technology. The company called on UPS Supply Chain Solutions to bring the same kind of attention to detail and advanced technological capabilities to the management of its delivery fleet.

Client Challenge

Kingsdown is headquartered in Mebane, North Carolina, and operates four additional manufacturing facilities in Virginia, Tennessee, Florida and Oklahoma. The company distributes its premium sleep systems to hundreds of retailers throughout the United States and internationally.

Previously, Kingsdown outsourced its domestic delivery fleet to a third-party logistics provider. In order to continue growing its business, Kingsdown made the move to UPS Supply Chain Solutions, capitalizing on a long tradition of professional service, an extensive logistics network, and advanced IT systems.

"We made the right choice," said Patrick Flippin, Kingsdown President and Chief Operating Officer. "With UPS Supply Chain Solutions, we moved up from a basic dedicated contract carriage service to one with the kind of automation that has expanded our opportunities, lowered costs, and increased customer service."

Our Solution

UPS Supply Chain Solutions introduced advanced transportation technology to the Kingsdown delivery network, increasing visibility and providing real-time confirmation throughout every key phase of the operational loop.



UPS Supply Chain SolutionsSM

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—Patrick Flippin, President and Chief Operating Officer, Kingsdown



UPS Supply Chain SolutionsSM

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Dispatch operations supervisors use automated routing tools that map out optimal trip plans for dedicated Kingsdown operations and trucks that depart from the company’s five manufacturing centers. The routing tool also aids in the loading configuration of the tractor-trailers to ensure that unloading proceeds efficiently.

Sophisticated handheld computers with global positioning system (GPS) and scanning capabilities bring tremendous value to the solution. Complete trip plans are accessible, including a tag number for each product to be delivered and the delivery stop associated with it. As items are loaded onto a trailer, tag numbers are scanned and the data is simultaneously uploaded into the handheld computer and the dispatch management system. At each stop, product verification is captured by the handheld units. This delivery confirmation is transmitted via satellite to the UPS Supply Chain Solutions dispatch system, enhancing visibility and tracking capabilities throughout the Kingsdown fleet.

“Not only are we reducing days in our billing cycle, we’re also getting information about scheduling, routing, deliveries, and any discrepancies in real time,” Flippin said. “With our previous system, once the trucks left the loading dock we were unable to track them. Now the delivery trucks are an electronic extension of our manufacturing operation.”

Flippin views UPS Supply Chain Solutions as a critical part of his business. “Our fleet is on the front line to deliver solutions that meet our customers’ demands,” he said. “The entire UPS Supply Chain Solutions team works hard to help us accomplish our goals.”

While on the road, directions for each stop on the route are accessible via handheld computers. The automated trip plan estimates the time and mileage required to arrive at each stop. Operations supervisors can communicate with the fleet using the text messaging feature of the computers, enabling proactive responses in case of unexpected delays.

In addition, the automated route planner also determines if raw materials can be efficiently picked up for Kingsdown on return trips, or if the empty trailers can be filled with third-party freight. Maximized route planning helps drive greater efficiencies across Kingsdown’s transportation fleet.

Key performance metrics captured by the DCC system provide accountability throughout the delivery cycle. Regular management reports validate that UPS Supply Chain Solutions consistently exceeds 98 percent on-time delivery performance and reduces Kingsdown’s total transportation costs.

“The synergy of the information technology that UPS Supply Chain Solutions brings to our company and our customers is vital,” Flippin said. “Our expertise is in the furniture and bedding industry. There is no way that we could provide the sophisticated technology that UPS Supply Chain Solutions employs to get us to where we are today.”