

4 Most-Common Shipping Problems

(and How to Solve Them)

When you select a transportation logistics company, you want to be sure your shipments are being shipped and received on time, every time.

Unfortunately, shipping issues are all too common. Breakdowns in communication and poor decision-making can lead to delayed deliveries, upset customers, damaged cargo, and breach of trust.

Here are four of the most common shipping problems and how to solve them—fast.

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PROBLEM: **DEALING WITH EQUIPMENT FAILURE**

Equipment failure is an unfortunate reality in logistics and one that can cause significant stress, disorder, delays, and added costs for customers. Even something as seemingly minor as a flat tire can lead to shipment delays of up to 24 hours and totally disrupt production at a waiting facility!

Unfortunately, many logistics providers offer a laundry list of excuses when equipment failure occurs, ranging from the old *"We can't fix the problem until morning"* to *"It's too late to do anything about this."*

As a customer entrusting a logistics provider with a time-sensitive delivery, these excuses just aren't acceptable.

SOLUTION: SOLVE PROBLEMS INSTEAD OF MAKING EXCUSES!

When selecting a transportation service provider, look for someone who takes ownership of the problem by using a proactive solutions-oriented approach to equipment failure.

Instead of settling for excuses, select a provider who bases their decisions on solid principles, aiming to create positive experiences for their customers and establish long-term, mutually beneficial relationships.

Exceptional solutions for overcoming equipment failure include:

1. Exhausting all options to fix the equipment as quickly as possible (because your provider is passionate about their work and willing to do whatever it takes)
2. Paying a premium for a recovery truck to ensure the shipment is back on the road (because the principle of doing the right thing is more important than cost)
3. Ensuring equipment failure isn't a customer problem (your transportation provider was trusted to solve problems, not make excuses).



PROBLEM: SECURING AFTER-HOURS CAPACITY

One of the most frustrating experiences for shippers is securing after-hours capacity for shipments. Often, due to the volume of shipments customers have, delays in receiving necessary information are all too common. These delays can lead to a situation where the necessary capacity to cover the shipments is not secured until hours after the fact.

Here's an example scenario that might sound a little too familiar:

You're a shipping clerk. You receive the schedule for outbound shipments at 8:00 AM. Your team begins to build the orders and gets them ready to ship. By 12:00 PM, the orders are ready to be shipped, and you notify your logistics coordinator that the shipments are ready to be picked up by 1:00 PM. The logistics coordinator begins to look for capacity to pick up the shipments before 4:00 PM when their docks close.

However, due to the short time window, they run into capacity restraints and are unable to secure capacity. As a result, the request gets pushed to the following day, causing backups, delays, and wasted time and resources.

Additionally, the issue of last-minute truck bookings—especially in the afternoon—can cause transportation prices to skyrocket.

SOLUTION: COMMUNICATE, COMMUNICATE, COMMUNICATE

Instead of hoping your shipment gets the attention it deserves, select a transportation service provider who will forge relationships with every team member connected to that shipment's lifetime.

An individualized approach to shipping allows for a deep understanding of the shipment process, enabling your provider to make decisions quickly and efficiently based on their unique findings.

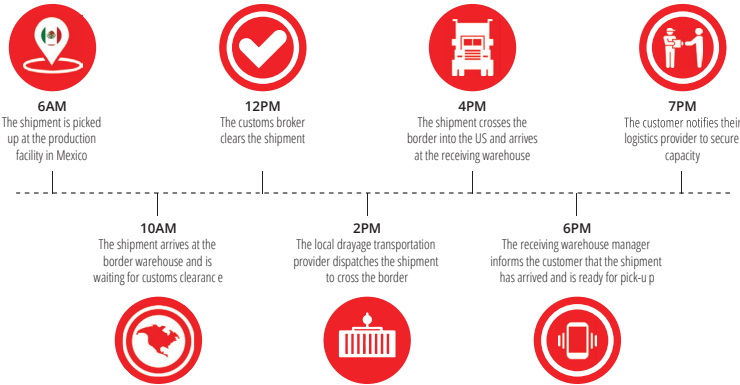
Instead of waiting until the last minute to find trucks to pick up the cargo (especially in the afternoon), your provider should proactively work with any team member involved at the very beginning of the shipment process to secure the necessary capacity ahead of time and lock down a fair rate.

Not only will you save time and money, but proactively collecting information directly from the source also eliminates the risk of the product being unable to be picked up on the desired day.

3 PROBLEM: SECURING CAPACITY WITH CROSS-BORDER SHIPMENTS (US - MX)

Transporting goods from the United States to Mexico involves a complex process that requires attention to detail and an understanding of international regulations. The information must be filtered through multiple people on both sides of the country's borders, but, things don't always go off without a hitch! Issues arise when it comes time to secure the capacity required to transport the products to its final destination.

Here's how a cross-country transport typically plays out:



By this time, the logistics provider has a difficult time securing capacity because it's so late in the evening. As a result, the customer is forced to pay a premium charge for limited capacity or delay the shipment until the next day, which could potentially affect production at the final destination.

SOLUTION: BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH EVERY PERSON INVOLVED IN THE PROCESS OF SHIPPING

A good transportation service provider will have a solution to these frustrations, and start at the source by building relationships with customs brokers and local drayage providers to get continuous updates on the shipment's status throughout the day.



By doing this, your provider can proactively secure capacity based on the information they gather to schedule capacity ahead of time.

That way, when a customer informs them that the shipment is ready at 8:00 PM, they already have capacity secured for a timely pick-up and delivery!



PROBLEM: DOUBLE BROKERING SHIPMENTS

Double brokering happens when one third-party logistics (3PL) knowingly (or unknowingly) outsources a customer's shipment to another 3PL, posing as a carrier.

This decision causes many issues, including poor communication, reduced quality of service, increased risk of fraud, and in rare cases, theft.

All of these issues can be extremely costly, dangerous, and frustrating for shippers caught in the middle.

Here are some negative outcomes of double brokering:



Poor communication. The more layers of people involved in the lifetime of your shipment, the more confusion it causes with miscommunication. Imagine a game of 'telephone': by the time the information provided arrives to the last person in charge of transporting your shipment, the expectations and requirements for that shipment begin to get lost in translation!



Reduced quality of service. The hard truth is, the double-broker has little interest in the success of your organization, and they aren't there to make relationships. Their focus is simply to make a profit based on deception. This causes lack of attention to detail, missing information that's critical to timely pick-up/delivery, and an overall poor execution of the shipment.



Increased risk of fraud. In some cases, the double-broker (which could be a completely fake company) holds the shipment hostage and demands a ransom prior to delivering the shipment.



Shipment theft. The double broker could be a criminal organization disguised as a trucking company. They run off with the customers' products, never to be found again.

SOLUTION: SELECT A TRANSPORTATION COMPANY TRAINED IN SPOTTING IRREGULARITIES

A great transportation provider will have a team trained to spot irregularities in carrier profiles in order to stop the problem before it happens.

From extra layers of technology to identify potential red flags to the willingness to build strong interpersonal relationships, your provider should go above and beyond to ensure your delivery happens on time, and fast.



At RJ Logistics, we are committed to **keeping shipments moving and meeting promised delivery times—even when it costs us more to do so.**

If you're tired of getting the run-around, reach out to RJ Logistics and let's work together to achieve excellence.

Learn more about what we offer **HERE.**

