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*Getting your ship(ments) together.*

According to an article in the August 2016 edition of Logistics Magazine, extended driver detention times are increasing.

Based on a survey by DAT Solutions of 257 carriers, nearly 63% spent more than 3 hours at a shipper's dock waiting to get either loaded and unloaded. And 54% experienced wait times of between 3 and 5 hours, with 9% experiencing wait times of 5 hours and longer.

Carriers are concerned, with 84% ranking detention as one of the top 5 business problems they face.

With increased road traffic, limitations on the number of driver hours (for good reason), and fewer truck drivers, there is certainly more pressure on carriers to get their goods to their final destinations without having to deal with extended detention times at pickup and drop-off locations.

Vendor compliance requirements are a necessity for suppliers who wish to sell their goods into markets such as retail, grocery, government, pharmaceutical, and other industries. Compliance requirements include both technology (e.g. Electronic Data Interchange) and operational (e.g. barcode labeling, carton pallet stacking, distribution paperwork, shipment scheduling).

Vendor companies can find themselves scrambling to put together their shipments at the last minute as they finish up labeling cartons, properly stacking cartons on pallets, completing and printing packing lists and the bill of lading, all while making the truck carrier wait. This carrier detention can be the result of the shipper (the vendor company) failing to plan their operations workload accordingly right down to the timing of the arrival of the carrier.

The DAT Solutions survey stated that 3% of the carriers were paid on 90% of their detention claims at a rate of between \$30 and \$50 per hour. What this tells me is that carriers can – and do – charge the shipper for extended wait times. Shippers should be wary of aggravating a carrier who might decide not to continue to provide services due to consistent detention times or unpaid detention claims. And why continue to incur unnecessary operational expenses and fees due to inefficiencies?

Regardless of the cause of the delays, getting goods loaded and the truck carrier on their way should be a top priority of the operations at a warehouse or distribution center. Late shipments that cause delays in getting goods to their final destination can result in out-of-stock situations (and thus lost sales) or late deliveries (with possible added costs for expedited work or shipping) through the supply chain, doing no one any good.

Letting drivers do what they do best – moving goods on schedule – is beneficial to everyone.

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