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Unishippers Offers Expert Logistics Advice in Time of High Gas Prices

Tips from Nation's Largest Shipping Reseller Help Small Businesses Ship Smartly and Save

Salt Lake City, UT – Unishippers Global Logistics, LLC, the nation's first and largest small package and freight shipping reseller, is offering expert shipping advice to the many small businesses that are being severely affected by high gasoline prices.

Unishippers prides itself on being the trusted shipping advisor for many small businesses by providing Shipping Consultants at each local office to help individual customers efficiently and effectively utilize packaging and shipping services.

"Our business is focused on serving the unique shipping needs of small businesses," said Dan Lockwood, CEO of Unishippers. "With high gas prices squeezing many small businesses, it is important for us to help them in any way to survive and grow."

Rising gas prices have wreaked havoc on many of the operations of small businesses, forcing some to pass on additional charges to their customers to make up for higher costs.

Relief for America's small businesses appears to be far off as the U.S. Energy Information Administration projects gas prices to average around \$3.70 a gallon during the peak driving season (April through September), and exceeding \$4.00 during the summer.

One area small businesses are hit hardest by increased gas prices is their shipping operations. Because of the large volume of gasoline carriers consume, they have had to institute higher fuel surcharges for their deliveries. These increased rates affect not only what small businesses pay to have something shipped, but also what they pay to have something delivered.

"An unfortunate result of high gas prices is that shipping rates are going up for everybody," added Lockwood. "One way to combat uncontrollable rising fuel prices is to control what you can control and ship as smartly as possible."

Since every business has to ship, just eliminating the cost is impossible. Unishippers, who specializes in offering tens of thousands of customers highly competitive rates through its carrier partnerships, has a lot of knowledge about how small businesses can ship smartly and save, especially during times of high gas prices.

Unishippers recommends the following cost-saving shipping tips, from packing to measuring, for every small business:

1. **Use the right filler** – Packing too much, too little or with the wrong materials can lead to higher charges, along with unnecessary delays or costly damage. Shipping smaller, denser packages is less costly as larger and bigger packages take up valuable space on trucks. Shippers should be mindful of the type and amount of filler they use, as it can add weight or jeopardize protection. With the UPS Packing Advisor electronic tool, offered free to Unishippers and UPS customers, shippers can input information about their package and its contents to receive detailed recommendations.

2. **Measure twice, ship once** – All packages should be measured accurately as declaring the wrong dimensions to a carrier will lead to added charges. A simple formula to measure dimensions for common domestic air and ground shipments is Length X Width X Height / 194. Getting measurements right from the start helps shippers avoid delays and incurred fees. A resourceful tactic is to use boxes two inches under the next size minimum to avoid a higher measurement charge since the box bulges when stacked.
3. **Ship as a family** – When shipping multiple lightweight packages to the same address, place them into one box to avoid each individual fuel surcharge and any additional charges for shipping more than one package. Some carriers offer customers special services that allow individual packages to be aggregated into one shipment. For example, UPS's Hundredweight service will aggregate packages with total weights that exceed 100 lbs. for express services and 200 lbs. for Ground or 3-day Select.
4. **Watch the weight** – Shippers can avoid additional shipping costs by keeping the weight of their packages under control. Declaring the wrong weight can incur fees much like the wrong measurements. Also, many carriers have weight limits that cannot be exceeded without an additional charge.
5. **Compare costs** – Shopping for the right rates should be a routine for every shipper. Rates can fluctuate for each carrier, especially during times of rising gas prices. For businesses shipping freight, Unishippers offers customers the useful Freight Manager online transportation management system that much like Expedia lists current rates and service levels for over 30 carriers. Customers select the service and carrier that fits their needs and budget.
6. **Print and track electronically** – Shippers can save money and time by using available electronic systems featured by Unishippers and some carriers. Labels can be quickly and accurately printed to avoid any hand written mistakes that lead to additional charges later. Unishippers' online shipping tools offer customers "smart" features, such as an address verification tool, for printing labels with the most accurate information possible.
7. **Know when to insure** – While it's always better to be safe than sorry, many shipments can do without extra insurance coverage. If a business is shipping durable goods like steel, chances are very low that it will be damaged. However, anything fragile or of high value should always be insured, which can save money in case of accidents.
8. **Arrange proper pickup service** – Small businesses can save money by choosing the most cost-effective pickup service based on their shipping needs. The unique partnership with UPS provides Unishippers' customers a plethora of pickup options they can arrange through the Express Manager online tool as they create their shipments. Services range from day-specific daily pickup to UPS Smart Pickup (SM) on a fee scale of \$5 per request to \$20 per week of pickup each business day. Plus, UPS charges a per-request fee for an on call pick up where there competitor charges a per-package fee, so when companies call in once with multiple shipments they save.
9. **Control the inbound-** Reducing inbound shipping costs is one of the easiest, yet most overlooked ways to reduce overall transportation expenses. When customers control and route their own inbound shipments they can significantly lower costs. If customers

allow suppliers to route their shipments and invoice you for shipping charges transportation costs are probably higher than they should be. The shipper determines what they purchase from a particular vendor, and they can also determine how it is shipped to them.

Unishippers makes saving on inbound shipping easy. Customers can save on small package and freight shipments coming into their business every day. As the buyer and receiver of the goods, they can-and should-designate the carrier and arrange for shipping charges to be billed directly to them at their discounted rate. This is called routing shipments inbound "Collect." Collect is a billing option, in which you are invoiced by the carrier. It does not mean paying the driver at the time of delivery. Routing shipments inbound "Collect" can save significant dollars. When customers allow vendors to prepay for shipping and add it to their merchandise invoice, in most instances they will continue to pay more than they should for incoming product.

10. **Consider the speed you need** - Customers should consider when a shipment really needs to be there. There are several service options for both small package and freight (Overnight AM, Overnight, Second Day, Next Afternoon, Three-Day, Ground, Expedited etc.). The quicker you want it there the more it costs and in many cases, services like Ground (depending on where the package is going) can arrive as quickly as 2 or 3 day services and cost half as much with tracking capabilities available. Something as simple as choosing an afternoon delivery over an AM delivery can mean significant savings so customers should carefully consider their needs when choosing delivery service levels and be sure to manage the employees that ship as well to reduce costs.

“These are many of the useful tips that we provide to all of our customers to help them ship efficiently and cost-effectively,” said Lockwood. “They can be used by both small businesses and large businesses.”

Partnering with more than 30 regional and national shipping carriers, including UPS[®], YRC[™], Estes, and Saia, Unishippers can offer small and mid-sized business owners complete shipping options, attractive pricing, and local customer service that its customers can't receive anywhere else. As one of only two companies authorized by UPS to be their official shipping reseller, Unishippers has found success with this partnership because each company complements the other.

About Unishippers

Founded in 1987, Unishippers has grown to the largest reseller of shipping services in the nation with more than 285 franchise locations. Headquartered in Salt Lake City, UT, the Unishippers concept is simple – work with major carriers including UPS[®], Saia, Estes and YRC[™] to handle the pickup, transport and delivery of customers' shipments. All the while, local franchisees work to provide customers with service and support. By leveraging the combined shipping volume of all its customers, Unishippers gets deeply discounted rates from its carriers, resulting in lower shipping costs. Unishippers serves more than 50,000 small to mid-sized businesses annually, and has been recognized as a top franchise in 2009-2010 by *Entrepreneur*, *Franchise Times* and *AllBusiness*. For information on Unishippers, including information on franchising opportunities and price quotes, visit www.unishippers.com.

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