

Cost-Saving Secrets for Shipping

The best way to save time and money is to PLAN AHEAD!

Don't underestimate the amount of money it can cost you to ship your tradeshow display and supplies. The following information will help prevent sticker shock and teach you strategies that will ensure your freight arrives on time, free of damage with the least cost to you.

Working with a trucking company experienced with tradeshow shipments is critical to your bottom line. Trade show shipping is very different from the motor carrier shipping that is familiar to most carriers. Trade show shipments rarely take place on predictable schedules and each destination is different. Complications are added due to requirements by decorators, scheduling of I & D labor, strict schedules for pickup and/or deliveries, etc. Experienced truck drivers know where marshalling yards are located and the proper timing required.

Exhibit Experts is proud to work with *Nations Express* for all our shipping needs. They offer a dedicated trade show division that provides solutions for companies that ship to and from temporary events. **Call us to discuss your entire tradeshow schedule. We will coordinate with Nations Express to calculate if a show to show shipping strategy might save you money. This will also reduce wear and tear on your booth.**

Please share the following recommendations and information with your tradeshow manager and everyone involved in shipping your display materials.

- **Read your Exhibit Kit thoroughly.** Review your kit as soon as it arrives and note discounts available for early ordering of needed items. Note the move in/out schedules to maximize cost savings when scheduling shipments. Be sure to send in the Independent Contractors permission form if you will not be hiring the decorator's labor force. Don't forget to calculate the cost of drayage (getting your crates from the dock to the booth). Make special note of the material handling forms. Take time to fill out your bill of lading and prepare shipping labels. If you need help, call Exhibit Experts.
- **Insurance. ALWAYS** make sure you have adequate coverage. Check with your carrier to be sure your exhibit is covered during transit. Identify the box that carries all the value. Even if you palletize boxes and container, be sure to put the shipping address on every one.
- **Provide your carrier with complete dimensions and weights.** This advance information will dictate the size and type of the truck, which could save you money. Your containers will be reweighed by the carrier and convention decorator.
- **Schedule pickup and deliveries to and from the show site for the earliest possible weekday time.** This will save on wait time charges that occur when the driver sits on the dock waiting his turn and most importantly, your shipment won't be loaded or unloaded on overtime rates which average \$75 to \$125 per hour.

- **Packaging your materials.** Crates and customized containers designed for trade show shipping are most likely to escape damage. Before you get packing, check your containers and make repairs or replacements. Never ship reused or worn boxes. Sturdy shipping containers are an investment that will pay for themselves. Over-sized items should never exceed the length of the pallet. Custom booths and some equipment/products may require pad wrap services. This requires very specialized handling and will increase your cost, not only with shipping and labor but also higher material handling rates. Consider purchasing crates if at all possible, especially if you are shipping to numerous shows. If shipping numerous items, you may benefit from palletizing everything and covering with shrink-wrap. Label each package prior to palletizing.
- **Send your tradeshow freight to the advance warehouse.** Drivers don't have to wait and freight can be delivered Monday thru Friday during normal business hours. The material handling rates may be slightly higher, but savings will result in wait time charges as well as special charge that usually incur when shipping direct to show. In addition, your exhibit will be waiting for you in your booth so you can easily schedule staff and I & D people.
- **Ship Direct to Show Site** – Always advise us if your show is targeted and make every effort to schedule delivery at your target date/time to avoid additional expenses. If the show is not targeted, we suggest you schedule your shipment to arrive at the earliest possible time. E.g., if move-in is between 8am and 4pm, schedule delivery for 8am. Shipments received late in the afternoon will probably be off-loaded on overtime rates by the decorator. Wait time usually increases the later the driver checks in as drivers are usually taken on a first come, first serve basis. It's always best to check in as early as possible to minimize wait time whether you are moving in or out of a show.
- **Schedule outbound pickups the morning after the show breaks.** Instead of waiting around for your containers to be returned to your booth, scheduling the dismantle labor too early and rushing to pack up, consider having everything picked up first thing the next day.
- **Move-out** – Nothing happens until proper material handling forms are filled out and turned in. State your carrier of choice. Write Nations Express or your carrier's name on the Bill of Lading. Use the pre-printed waybill and labels provided by your carrier. Return completed paperwork to the service desk before you depart. Never leave your paperwork at the booth.