



Technology

Part of Little Rock's success is the ability to communicate with our drivers. Little Rock is small enough to know each driver by a first name, but also big enough to play fairly with the big competition.

Little Rock uses state of the art computer technology to dispatch, track, and communicate with the drivers. Little Rock's massive data base gives an added bonus of changing and adapting to the customer's needs easily.



Little Rock is able to give customers real time details about their load using our satellite tracking system. Dispatching in the dark is a thing of the past.

Dispatching is never easy but our systems allow different departments to work together more efficiently. We are crossing borders easier with the help of our technology to forward paperwork through the custom brokers electronically.

We are a medium size company and we use big technology... and **Big Trucks!** ☺

January 2008 – Happy New Year – Focus On Safety

Mark's Message

In forming an outlook for the new year, one really has to look back on the old one. What was your 2007 like? Some experienced sadness and grief. Perhaps a relative or loved one lost to a disease or accident, financial set backs, relationship problems and so on. Others have had a year of triumph. Maybe completing a project or achieving a personal goal previously set.

For those who have experienced a year of hardships, keep your head held high! You made it through, and you deserve a "pat on the back"! Try your best to ensure your character has been molded by your hardships in a positive way. For example, now that you've experienced those adversities, you should have the sympathy and compassion to help others who may experience those same things in 2008 and beyond. Helping someone else goes a long way in healing yourself.

For those who have had a great 2007, don't get cocky! You may think you have it all under control, but one event can bring you to your knees. When those times come, and they will, remember your success's of 2007. You have all the ability to make it back to the top!

One thing I know for sure about the year 2008...nobody can predict it. It helps to realize that some things you can control, and some things you can't. So, control what you can...your *temper*, your *physical fitness*, your *mouth*, your *mind*, your *personal hygiene* and maintaining *tidy surroundings*. Especially your mind...remember that what goes in must come out. Fill your mind with positive healthy things, and you become a positive healthy person.

For the things we can't control...well, that's why we have each other.

Itinerary Is Incorrect?

Sometimes a customer doesn't provide enough details about addresses or phone numbers. Every customer is in our data base. If you see a mistake in your itinerary like misleading directions, phone numbers or even street addresses. It can be easily changed. Just let us know!

WELCOME

To The Rock

Brent Stevenson - Local

Kevin Neil - Live Haul

Derek Power - The Shop

Say "HI" to Tracey Grant and Dave Reuber next time you are at TruckFix.



The Rock Solid News

LITTLE ROCK FARM *Trucking*



Highway Haulers

Steve's secret to dispatching is the fact that he has been driving for many years before taking his dispatchers seat. It's truly phenomenal that he can tell you a name of a gas station to turn at in the middle of nowhere land. This knowledge can't be learned from a textbook.

Trucking is one of those work places where the game plan changes from hour to hour. Telling drivers too far ahead on what's happening is a risky thing to do. It's a natural instinct to want to know what's next to gear up our minds; however, there is a big let down factor when the plans change. Drivers are thinkers and strategize themselves while sitting there in their seats. However, when the plans change, it causes drivers to be confused and upset several days in advance to when the next load will come along. Steve believes in keeping the drivers informed, but letting dispatchers worry about the contracts and then communicating when he knows for sure it's a go!



Administration

Did You Know?

- Little Rock's Computers are directly linked with T-Chek. When a driver enters a trip number into the card machine or tells a cashier, T-Chek automatically matches up the driver to a trip number. That information is sent directly to Little Rock. Little Rock knows all about fuel purchases even before a driver comes home. Drivers still have to write it on their envelopes for auditing reasons.
- Mileage on a trip envelope is just as important as putting your trip number and name. Little Rock is required by law to record all mileage for every truck under its control. Even if a driver is paid local flat rates, mileage is still a must. Filling in the mileage into the payment section is required for driver's to have their paychecks released through the system. Besides, missing mileage of drivers who are paid by the mile causes the payroll department to theorize miles which could be less.

Announcements

Steve Cover returns from his "Vacation" in London in January. We are glad you are back. ☺

Jim Ferris retired in December. Jim had 20 ½ years between Little Rock & DAC. Safe Journey Jim and we thank you so much for your dedication over the years. ☺

Dé·jà vu of an MTO Test – Know Your Signs?



Know What French Words On Signs Mean?

La circulation = Traffic

Douane = Customs

Ralentir= Slow Down

Arrêt = Stop

Une Autoroute – Motorway

La route = Road

Au Pas = Slow

Sortie = Exit

Travaux = Road work

Ralentissez = reduce speed

Poids Lourds - Truck Route

Hauteur Limitée - Low clearance

Chantier - Road Construction

à droite - to the right

à gauche - to the left

TRUCKER ESSENTIALS BELOW

Café = Black Coffee

Crème – creamer

Sucre – Sugar

Lait = Milk

Salle de Bain = Washroom



The Rock Solid News

LITTLE ROCK FARM *Trucking*



Brian's "Local" Motion

Are you glad the Christmas Seasons has come to an end? For our local drivers, this break is a sigh of relief!

Consumers are wrapped up into the seasonal traditions such as turkey dinners, gifts, drinks and parties. Most people celebrate it in their own way, but one thing in common is that it all happens in a very short time frame. Manufacturers are under severe pressure to meet the demands, which in turn, goes down the pipeline to pressure the carriers to get their products to the distribution centres immediately. Lots of manufacturers fall behind for their own reasons but when they are ready to ship, the timing gives carriers no flexibility to say, "Maybe we can do it tomorrow!"

Little Rock's drivers really came through this season with higher than expected levels of service. Our driver's fought through the worse storms this past month. Reporters say the worst storm since 1944 in Toronto alone.

It's very unusual for customers to call and be concerned about the level of safety that our drivers would be facing by tackling the storm head on. Our drivers were geared up and ready to go... it was customers who cared enough about our drivers to say it can wait one more day!

Brian had two new employees come on board in this the middle of this chaotic time of year, Richard and Brent. He recognizes it wasn't easy to learn the ropes under the pressure.

Brian expresses many thanks to everyone for their help!



Teri's Chicken Coop

It's tough on drivers when the weekly schedule falls apart in front of their eyes, it's even worse for Teri for scheduling reasons.

Chicken is one of the areas in our company where the trucks are schedule extremely tight together. Connections and farm times appointment times have to be dead on.

Bad weather or even a breakdown can throw the schedule into chaos; however, the customer still demands the same level of service as if it never happened.

One phone call from a customer can change an entire week. One late connection can cause an ACE Border Crossing to be invalid or a trailer not dropped in time for the next driver.

With 22 drivers to monitor, and tons of loads to complete, it is not an easy thing to keep everyone happy in the loop. Teri does try her absolute best.

If it was simple, all trucking companies would haul chicken!

Brake Before Turning

Jackknifing often develops while braking for a curve. Do your braking or gearing down well before the turn, get down to a safe and easy turning speed, then take the turn with all the wheels rolling.

Underpasses

Low subways and underpasses are marked with a clearance measurement. In winter, ice or packed snow can accumulate on the road, increasing the clearance height. Watch for reduced clearances.



The Rock Solid News

LITTLE ROCK FARM *Trucking*



Shop Talk... Repair Forms

The shop relies heavily on driver feedback about the condition of its fleet. After all, the driver is the expert when it comes to knowing something isn't quite right about the truck. Maybe it sounds strange, vibrates a little too much, or there is an obvious problem that needs to be addressed.

Nothing is worse than drivers who slip seats into a truck, upon a pre-trip realizes that bulbs are burnt out, oil is extremely low, and/or lack of fluids to allow the truck to run. Items that maybe the driver before knew about, but forgot to write up a *Repair Form* when they got back to the yard.

For drivers who start up at 3am in our yards, this sort of thing can instill frustration and in some cases, the reason not be able to leave for a trip. Communicate any mechanical deficiencies by writing up a repair form. ☺

Sandy's Safety

The focus of this month's newsletter is safety. On December 27th 2007, Little Rock held a safety meeting at The Deck Youth Centre in Walkerton.

The purpose of a safety meeting is to bring all driver's and office personnel up to date with the many changes to laws and/or company policies and/or to educate how Little Rock is doing overall with safety.

A great deal of work is involved in coordinating a safety meeting. Items that are a problem have to be addressed, especially if we all are falling down when it comes to a required procedure. A lot of work is involved with gathering Little Rock Statistics to share with all of our drivers. After all, it's our drivers who are the front line to officers if stopped for a safety violation.

Meeting Minutes will be distributed. Please Read. Highlights Are Attached.

Opinion - Dodging Detours

I just had a really rough weekend here at LRFT. Plans that were set up collapsed for one driver due to an unpredictable mechanical break down. Unfortunately, it created a damaging domino affect with other driver schedules.

It took several calls to dispatchers and mechanics at home to solve. The shop... to get the truck back on the road. Dispatch... to reschedule and handle customer relations. Drivers... to relay information directly to the customers and willingness to accept changes.

Part of a successful business is the need for good planning, moreover, the ability to see the entire company through it all as one team.

If life didn't have detours, we would never need back up plans for "*WHAT IFS*". However, when something new arises and we are forced to re-shuffle our cards, it's the overcoming of the new challenges that becomes a significant reason to celebrate our success. Business wise, and personally too!

I have learned that every step needs to be figured out and completed before moving onto the next. Five minutes of waiting feels like an eternity. We work in emergency mode even though we need to allow time to go by to see results.

When the problem is finished, we can look back and see what we could have done differently. It's that learning process that makes a good company *GREAT!* It's obvious that we have a great team of people here.

So... when other companies are boasting about their teamwork and services in order to gain customers... we can sleep easier knowing it truly exists here at "The Rock"! Thank You ☺

