

DATA LEADS THE WAY

AROUND DISRUPTION

How Data from Jarrett Informs Grimco's Successful Supply Chain Decisions Throughout Disruptions

OVERVIEW

No manufacturer in business during and after the pandemic has been immune to disruptions. Grimco, an international distributor of sign supplies, media and equipment, is a case of how it has affected some less than others and how data-driven decision making is the path to success when moments matter.

BACKGROUND

Founded in 1875, Grimco operates a hub and spoke network of over fifty warehouses and three manufacturing locations in the United States, Canada, and Europe. The supply chain within Grimco is extraordinarily complex due to varying sizes of products, reliance on less-than-truckload (LTL), and just-in-time requirements of their customers.

Grimco's established relationship with Jarrett Logistics gave them an advantage in securing LTL

capacity despite a broken supply chain. It also helped them leverage technology to maintain a proactive stance in the face of continuous disruptions.

CHALLENGE

Unusually long lead times were a sign of the times throughout much of 2020 and 2021. Grimco sources product from all over the world and ships to locations throughout the United States and Canada. Using LTL has special freight challenges because Grimco's products cover dimensional oddities including giant banner roles, large format printers, squeegees, and inks. In a market where the top twenty-five carriers handle 90% of capacity, Grimco's often oversized products made their freight less attractive in a seller's market.

Port congestion, rail disruption, and tight LTL capacity increased their lead times from thirty days to three months. Those delays had Grimco looking for faster alternatives to keep customers happy.

“You have to start with people. So recruit and retain top talent, number one. And then make investments in the technology. Technology provides you with opportunities to perform things more automated, more efficiently, to allow you to maintain an optimized supply chain.”

— MIKE JARRETT, PRESIDENT AND CEO, JARRETT LOGISTICS

“A delayed response can mean no sale, no inventory turn and no cash flow,” says Chris Ellwood, Director of Logistics and Operational Strategy at Grimco. “Data is the key for rapid response. You have to constantly know what the market is doing and where your inventory is to make good decisions.”

That’s hard for a company like Grimco to achieve on their own. To do that, they need to work with dynamic and flexible partners who have the technology and talent to help Grimco make pivots and move their products where they need it to be in the most economical way.

SOLUTION

Being able to draw capacity from Jarrett’s well-established relationships with the major LTL carriers was a key benefit that provided the capacity Grimco needed during and after the pandemic. Grimco’s transportation needs are complex, though, and being able to rely on Jarrett for data and forecasting lent a greater degree of sophistication in data collection and management that proved invaluable during the pandemic.

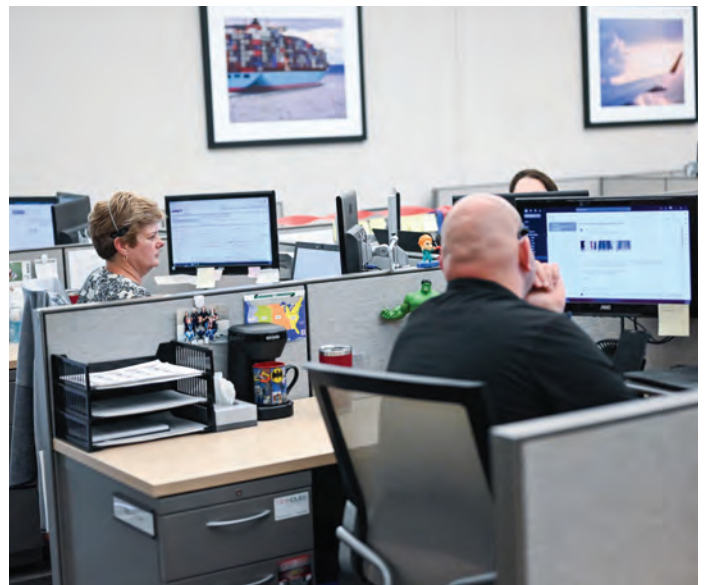
Data from Jarrett—trusted, clean and in a usable format—enabled the team to make quick switches to different transportation modes and choose different carriers based on performance and surcharges.

“Everyone knows that data is vitally important in making important supply chain decisions. But being able to put that data into a format where customers actually use requires a significant investment in technology. In order to use things like artificial-

intelligence, clean, reliable, organized data is an absolute must,” says Mike Jarrett, President and CEO, Jarrett Logistics.

Grimco directly connected internal analytics systems to Jarrett’s technology through advanced programming interfaces. Behind the scenes, Jarrett employed artificial intelligence (AI) to automate many functions. The jShip Transportation Management System from Jarrett provided Grimco with one platform for visibility over all shipments and enabled them to keep costs contained.

Jarrett also provided an important people aspect. Jarrett uses a customer account team approach to respond quickly to customers. Additionally the Jarrett Logistics Systems (JLS) Routing Center acts as an extension of Grimco’s team by answering customer, carrier and vendor queries instantly via phone or rapidly by email.



RESULTS

Taking proactive measures on procuring LTL capacity before, during, and after the pandemic paid off for Grimco. Jarrett managed transportation for over 100,000 shipments from 2019-2022 in America and Canada. Almost 75% of those shipments have been outbound LTL.

In all, Jarrett delivered approximately \$1M in value through proactive savings, correcting carrier bills, and recovering freight claims. That success is a unique partnership anchored by Jarrett's customer service team.

"Our sales folks look to them when they need to. Our warehouse teams do too. When they need to get a bill of lading, or a booking, or a follow up on something—they almost feel like they're calling an extension of our company," says Chris Elwood, Director of Logistics & Operational Strategy at Grimco.

Elwood credits response time as a differentiator, and through JLS Routing Center, Grimco's response time was definitely different from other suppliers during COVID. From 2019-2022, Jarrett processed over half a million emails. The average time to answer the first email was less than eight minutes. In 2021 alone, almost 4,000 customer service phone calls were answered with an average answer time of less than 7 seconds.

Jarrett was able to increase Grimco's efficiency and reduce operational expenses by handling communication with the carriers, executing contracts, maintaining service levels and rapidly changing from carrier to carrier. That freed Grimco for the big picture work like sourcing and product development that enabled them to grow and solidify their customer relations throughout this period of disruptions. In good times and bad, it pays to be proactive with a partner like Jarrett.



100K+ SHIPMENTS
*shipments managed for Grimco
from 2019-2022*



500K+ EMAILS
*email queries processed
from 2019-2022*



PROVIDED \$1 MILLION
*in value across disputes,
corrections, and claims*

