



KANSAS CITY IS LOGISTICALLY CONNECTED

IMPORTS/EXPORTS REQUIRE LOGISTICS EXPERTISE

Companies that earn a living by importing goods into the U.S. live under a microscope. Each shipment is closely scrutinized for its contents, origins, travel path, destination and much more – and a single missing document can stop the cargo dead in its tracks.

“Detailed information and documentation about that import/export cargo is required before it enters another country, and the required information often varies by country,” Bentzinger said. “The information about the cargo is as important as the freight itself. It takes unique expertise, since it is a very dynamic environment where the rules keep changing.”

MIQ Logistics (www.miq.com) was founded in Kansas City in 2000 as a spin-off of trucking giant YRC Worldwide, and now operates as a privately held company. For the past 17 years, the company has been developing expertise, not only in the import/export field, but in the complete domestic supply chain arena.

“Importing/exporting is a skill, without a doubt,”
said Dan Bentzinger,
Chief Information Officer
for MIQ Logistics, which
provides international
freight forwarding, trade
compliance, transportation
management and
distribution, among other
services.



“Technology is at our core, since we were born out of the dot.com surge. We integrate into our customers’ supply chain. We literally sit in the middle, and we help them manage their supply chain.”

MIQ handles all facets of logistics, including routing, optimizing and executing. “We use sophisticated routing software that manages the millions of possibilities. We work with all modes of transportation and coordinate movement of goods all around the world.”

KANSAS CITY IS A CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE

Bentzinger has been with MIQ Logistics from the beginning – in fact, he’s employee No. 7 in a company that now totals more than 1,250 professionals globally. About 150 are in the company’s headquarters in the Kansas City area.

“Kansas City is a center for excellence from a talent perspective,” he said. **“With all the railroad and trucking industry that is based here, it has created a nice pool of talent. There is a tangible appreciation for this industry here.”**

Much of Bentzinger’s job is to ensure that technology is integrated with all participants – manufacturers, distributors, third-party logistics (3PL), warehouses, shippers and carriers – regardless of which ERP systems each player is using. Much of this is possible due to EDI standards – Electronic Data Interchange. But partners are at many levels, and the challenge for today’s logistics company is to be able to navigate that terrain.

“Some small carriers are low-tech or even no-tech,” Bentzinger said. **“For those, we’ve created portals on our system where they can enter and receive data electronically.”**

Bentzinger said a “new democracy” has been created in retail goods. “With each dollar we spend, we’re casting a vote. With the online world, we’re seeing a real transformation.” Since online shopping likewise requires some sort of shipping – as opposed to brick and mortar where the customer carries the merchandise home – this area is of great interest to Bentzinger.

“Inventory is moving faster than ever, and consumers more and more want their purchases delivered to their door. Same-day fulfillment will be the expectation.”

As for the next ‘big thing,’ the technology is currently available, but the public won’t see it for another five to 15 years, Bentzinger said. He’s talking about autonomous trucking.

“Is it deployed yet? No. Does the technology exist today. Absolutely.” Public acceptance and a myriad of regulations are two major hurdles that still need to be cleared.

“We accept that human error will create a certain amount of accidents and fatalities every year, but we won’t accept that for autonomous vehicles. The standards will be exponentially higher. But I think we’ll be there sooner than we expect.”



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