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PAGE 6

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COVER STORY

## Q&A: **ALL STATE EXPRESS** EXPEDITED SERVICES *When Time Matters*

Linda, a female team driver with All State Express, gives ExpediteNow Magazine a woman's perspective on being an owner operator.

By Lawrence McCord, Publisher

### Tell us a little about yourself.

My name is Linda and I am from North Carolina. I am married and my husband is the one who got me in this industry. I am a team driver with my awesome partner Ann. We travel with Ann's Pitbull Lucy.

### Tell us about your truck.

We drive a beautiful blue 2014 Freightliner Cascadia.

### How long have you been in the trucking industry?

I have been in the trucking industry for a little over 5 years and feel like I made the best decision when acquiring my CDLs.

### What tools, smartphone apps or software do you use to help you on the road or run your trucking business?

We use a Qualcomm in our truck to receive our loads and communicate with our dispatch office. I use an iPhone and iPad in the truck for personal and business.

### Why did you choose time-sensitive, expedited freight?

I enjoy the faster runs, getting unloaded quickly and the best part for me is 99% no touch freight.

### What advice would you give someone who is looking to haul expedited freight?

First and foremost, if you enjoy being over the road it is a great opportunity to make more money with less miles. As a woman working with All State Express, I am treated with the utmost respect. To me that is very important in this industry.

### Tell us about a great loud experience or experience on the road.

I have a lot of great experiences with All State Express. Some of my fondest memories are traveling from North Carolina to Washington State and seeing this country from coast to coast.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8  
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## Q&A WITH ALL STATE EXPRESS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

### How long have you been with All State Express?

I have been with All State Express for 4 years. I started my career with a larger company and got the experience I needed over the road. I personally knew I had always wanted to run expedite and All State Express has been a great fit for me as an OTR female driver.

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The tractor lease program was the best I had seen out there in the expedite business and it is a woman-owned company which really caught my eye. I have enjoyed much success with a great team from the recruiting department, maintenance department, and of course the dispatch office. Everyone is willing to give a helping hand if needed. The company is more like a family than a business.

### What advice would you give someone who is considering finding a new carrier to haul for?

Try and speak with some of the current drivers so you can get a feel for the company.

### Thank you for your time. It's been our pleasure. Any other thoughts that you'd like to share with our readers?

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**ExpediteNow** FEATURE

# MAKING THE SWITCH

from  
**OVER-THE-ROAD TO EXPEDITED TRUCKING**

By Sean M. Lyden, Staff Writer

If you're an over-the-road driver looking to spice up your career and grow your earning potential, consider making the switch to expedited trucking.

**W**hether a manufacturer needs a quick shipment of components to get production rolling, or a healthcare facility orders lifesaving medical devices to treat critically ill patients, or any scenario where goods must arrive "just in time," expedited drivers are essential to making that happen.

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## MAKING THE SWITCH

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16

But when you compare expediting to general freight, what are the advantages? What are the challenges? How do you make the transition from over-the-road driver to expeditor as smooth as possible?

Let's begin with the advantages. What do over-the-road drivers seek to gain from expediting?

### 1. Smaller Trucks

Expedited trucking offers flexibility in the type and size vehicles you operate, depending on your goals and budget. While some expeditors drive tractor-trailers, most operate smaller vehicles, from Class 8 straight trucks to one-ton cargo vans.

"What often happens is that, as over-the-road drivers get older, they decide that maneuvering a 53-ft. tractor-trailer can be a hassle, compared to a smaller expeditor straight truck, which is much easier to maneuver," says John Elliott, chief executive officer for Load One LLC ([www.load1.com](http://www.load1.com)), an expedited trucking carrier headquartered in Taylor, Mich. "And since there's a shortage of adequate parking for trucks, a straight truck has a lot more options for parking compared to semis."

### 2. More Variety

There's also a wide variety of jobs available as an expeditor to keep things fresh and interesting. It might be delivering one box that's absolutely critical to a customer, or

it could be several truckloads for a major manufacturer. It's all precious cargo, and the financial rewards can be lucrative for the hard-working expeditor.

"In expediting, you're dealing with all kinds of different freight, where you travel to all different types of places. It's just a more interesting profession. Some people like that variety and the challenges that go with it," says Elliott.

### 3. Conducive for Husband-Wife Teams

For some couples, a career in expedited trucking means the opportunity to work and travel together – and create a new revenue stream for their family.

"When it comes to husband-and-wife teams, it usually works better when driving a Class B straight truck compared to a tractor-trailer," says Elliott. "You tend to get larger sleepers with the expeditor straight trucks, with more amenities, making them more appealing to a husband-and-wife team than a standard tractor would."

The expedite life also offers opportunities to see the country, while earning money in the process.

"Say you get a load that takes you to San Diego, Calif., and you're thinking, 'Hey, we've never seen San Diego. When we get there, we want to take two to three days off,'" says Elliott.

You can pull an expeditor straight truck onto the campgrounds and park it like an RV, with shore power to plug-in and operate the truck's sleeper

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26

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by Shelly Benisch, T.R.S., C.I.C.

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## MAKING THE SWITCH

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18

amenities. “We’ve seen older married couples who think, ‘Wait a minute! We’ve always wanted to get an RV and travel the country. Now, we can buy a truck and do the same thing -- and make some money along the way,” Elliott says.

### Expediter as “Firefighter”

But even with these advantages, expedited trucking is not for everyone. Extended wait times between loads can be especially difficult for over-the-road drivers who are used to steady freight.

“One of the challenges for younger drivers when they switch over from over-the-road to expediting is dealing with the concept of waiting,” says Elliott. “They’re not used to that. Semi trucks tend to stay loaded and continuously moving, more so than expedite trucks. In expedite, it often can be a hurry-up-and-wait scenario.”

Elliott likens the expedite lifestyle to being a firefighter. “You’re on-call, waiting like firefighters at the firestation. One day, there might be nothing; the next day, it could be extremely busy,” says Elliott. “But when you’re working, what you’re doing is more important, more time-critical than loads you carry in general trucking. Yet, you do have more down time.”

One of the reasons former over-the-road drivers get anxious with wait time is that they assume it means lost revenue. But Elliott says that higher

pay rates for expedited freight helps mitigate that concern.

“Over-the-road drivers who switch to expedite have to get adjusted to the concept of money versus miles,” says Elliott. “They don’t need to run the same number of miles every week to make the same kind of money.”

The pay is higher because expediting is a premium service. “It’s a more time-critical business than general trucking, which is more of a commodity business, where there are far more competitors. Lower supply and higher demand puts a premium on expedite,” Elliott explains.

### So, is Expedited Trucking Right for You?

The answer lies in how well you deal with change and uncertainty.

“You have to understand that this is a hurry-up-and-wait type of business. You will sit. So, you have to be the kind of person who is good with change -- constant change. If you’re a person who needs a certain routine, a set schedule, this is not a good business for you,” says Elliott.

### Making a Smooth Transition

So, you’ve decided that expedited trucking is for you and ready to make the switch. How do you ensure a smooth transition?

“You have to be prepared for at least a six month commitment to really get acclimated to the industry and the business,” Elliott advises. “You can’t just try expediting for a week or month



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CONTINUED ON PAGE 28

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Learn more about the Expedited Freight Industry!

## MAKING THE SWITCH CONTINUED FROM PAGE 26

or couple months. You have to give it some time to get yourself adjusted to it, to the nuances of the business and the lifestyle.”

### Why the Six-Month Period?

“That should give you enough time to get through the seasonality,” Elliott explains. “Expedite is a little bit of a cyclical business. Six months will give you enough time to make an educated, fair assessment whether this is the right business for you.”

### How Should You Prepare Financially?

“You want to make sure you go into the expedite business with some financial reserves,” says Elliott. “The harvest times are great, but there are also quiet times. So, you want to go into it with a solid financial base, with a maintenance reserve for your truck. You never know when you’ll have a \$5,000 to \$10,000 repair. It happens -- and you want to be prepared to ensure your long-term success.”

If you need time to strengthen your finances, consider “test driving” expedite by driving for a fleet owner before becoming an owner-operator.

“Driving for someone else will help you get acclimated to the expedite business, with minimal financial risk,” says Elliott. “You’ll get a good feeling as to whether this is the right business for you, where you can analyze the numbers and put together a solid business plan moving forward.” **EN**

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# Seven Success Strategies

for Expedite Owner-Operators

By Sean M. Lyden, Staff Writer

Perhaps you're in expediting to call your own shots. Or, you always wanted the freedom to travel the country. Or, you dreamed of teaming up with your spouse to enjoy a meaningful second career together after the kids had grown.

Whatever your reason for taking the plunge into the expedited trucking business, your destiny is now in your own hands. No boss to blame. No incompetent coworkers to point the finger to. It's all on you as to how far you go in this business. So here are seven success strategies to help you stack the odds of success in your favor.

## 1. Think Like a Business Owner, Because You are One.

When you were an employee, you could depend on steady paychecks, paid vacations, and health benefits. But now you're the business owner. And that means you must deal with a lot more uncertainty. If you're going to have dependable income and benefits, it's up to you to manage your business in a way that smooths out your cash flow and makes vacations and health insurance coverage possible.

"The money in expediting is very volatile. You can make several thousand dollars one week and the next week only make a few hundred dollars," says veteran expedite owner-operator Linda Caffee. "So, you can't spend all the money you make on any given week; you've got to put some of it away to handle the volatility."

Caffee's advice: Put together a business plan that helps you determine how you can most effectively manage cash flow so that the inevitable slow weeks don't put your entire business at risk.

## 2. Purchase the Right Truck.

Your truck is a tool to make money, and it's also your home away from home. So, it's important to make a smart choice. Otherwise, poor fuel economy, high maintenance costs, or unplanned downtime will take a chunk out of your income and jeopardize your future as an owner-operator.

The first step in truck selection is to work with truck dealers that specialize in the expedite market. (To search expedite truck dealers and trucks online, go to <http://expeditetrucksales.com/>) This is because they have a finger on the pulse of the industry and have honed their truck specifications over the years to strike the optimal balance among key points, such as truck price, performance, fuel economy, longevity, and comfort.

Take engine selection, for example. Truck dealers without expedite expertise often try to sell the smaller Class 7 engine because of the substantially lower price point compared to a Class 8 powertrain. But the Class 7 engine is build for a life of about 400,000 miles, versus 1 million miles for the larger engine. If you're traveling 80,000-100,000 annual miles, you could burn through the lifecycle of the Class 7 engine before the truck loan

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32  
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is paid off, putting you in a dangerous financial position.

The larger engine is also cheaper to operate because it enables the truck to perform at peak efficiency in most expedite applications, unlike the smaller Class 7 engines that often have to operate at much higher RPM's to haul the same load. And this translates into a substantial fuel economy advantage for the Class 8 engine.

A used truck is another option to consider. The lower price of a used truck can help a new expediter get into the business sooner. However, the resale market for quality low-mileage used trucks is still tight. So, the challenge is finding an available used truck that will fit your budget and be reliable for your business. If you decide to go the used truck route, make sure it's equipped with a heavy-duty powertrain, complies with your carrier's requirements, and has been well maintained to minimize unpleasant surprises.

### 3. Select a Carrier that Aligns with Your Business Goals.

One of the most important decisions you make as an expedite owner-operator is selecting the trucking carrier you will lease to because it directly impacts your income potential. Therefore, as you evaluate prospective trucking carriers, keep these points in mind:

**Compensation:** Flat rate per mile or percentage of freight. Percentage pay tends to be favored by individuals and teams because of the higher upside potential, depending on the loads they get. Flat rate compensation is often preferred by fleet owners because it simplifies the revenue and cost projection process, especially when you're having to manage multiple trucks. Run numbers that compare flat

rate and percentage pay plans based on the specifics of your situation to determine which type of compensation would be most advantageous to you.

**Fuel surcharge.** It can be a challenge to accurately figure out which carriers offer the best rates because they all calculate fuel surcharge differently. Therefore, ask each carrier how they calculate their rates and whether they pay on all miles or only on loaded miles. If it's "all miles," find out what the difference is in fuel surcharge for loaded and unloaded miles.

**Pay schedule.** No matter what's included in a carrier's compensation plan, if you have to wait on your money longer than you expect, that delay in cash flow could sink your business before it gets started.

**Expenses.** Carriers typically collect escrow (as much as \$1,000 or so) from drivers to cover insurance deductibles, satellite services, fuel taxes, and other items included in the lease agreement. Find out how much escrow is collected and what's included. Some carriers will offer drivers the option to make weekly payments to help reduce the upfront cash burden.

### 4. Know Your Lease Agreement Before You Sign it.

Before you finalize a lease agreement with a carrier, have an expert -- whether an attorney or someone at the Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association (OOIDA) -- review it for you to ensure you haven't missed anything important. Any unpleasant surprises could disrupt your cash flow and drive you out of business.

(OOIDA offers a free service to its members to review owner-operator lease agreements. Visit [www.ooida.com](http://www.ooida.com) to learn more.)

CONTINUED ON PAGE 34

Learn more about the Expedited Freight Industry!

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## SUCCESS STRATEGIES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 32

To familiarize yourself with trucking lease agreements, refer to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) regulation part 376.12 on “Written Lease Agreements.” (Find it online at: <http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/regulations/title49/section/376.12>.) This will give you an excellent overview of what must be (and cannot be) included in the contract for it to be compliant.

### 5. Make Sleep a Top Priority.

If you’re operating as a team, you’ll spend the bulk of your sleep time while the truck is moving, and this can create some challenges with getting the rest you need to avoid fatigue and burnout.

“The first thing you have to do is come up with a schedule as to when you’re going to go to sleep,” says Caffee. “Then it’s about creating a quiet and comfortable sleep environment. I use earplugs, place pillows on the back wall of the truck, and push myself into those pillows so I have something to brace my back with. It’s important to keep [the sleeper] dark, cool and comfortable.”

Then there’s the challenge of trying to “wind down” when you’re on the road. Caffee’s advice: “Before you go to bed, read a good book and let your mind calm down. And keep your phone away from you, so you don’t check your email or social media right before you go to bed.”

### 6. Bolster Your Financial Health.

Your success as an owner-operator largely hinges on cash-flow. And the lower your expenses, the more money you get to keep to cover those slow weeks and ultimately invest into your future.

“One of the things you have to realize is that you’re not going to be home all that often,” says Caffee. “So, if you own a boat, a camper and ATV’s [all-terrain vehicles], are you going to have time to enjoy those when you go home? Are they really necessary? Most expediters find out that when they get home, the last thing they want to do is jump into a pickup and pull a camper. So, why keep paying for those things?”

Examine your household expenses and assets. Are there areas where you can cut to help reduce your monthly outflow? Are there assets that you can sell to generate cash to have on-hand for emergencies to keep your business afloat?

### 7. Invest in Your Continuing Education.

Become a diligent student of the expedite business by attending educational sessions at the annual Expedite Expo (<http://expediteexpo.com/>), subscribing to ExpediteNOW magazine (<http://www.expeditenow.com/>), and tapping into a vast library of articles and resources on ExpeditersOnline.com.

Also seek out successful expediters who would be willing to serve as mentors, providing real-world perspective on the opportunities and potential pitfalls that come with the expedite business.

### The Bottom Line

The expedited trucking business can be lucrative for owner-operators. But it takes a lot of business savvy, hard work, and discipline to fully capitalize on the opportunities. These seven strategies are intended to help point you in the right direction; how far you go is entirely up to you. **EN**

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# Haji:

## The Michigan-Man Fleet Owner rolls with Fyda

Although he graduated from Ohio University, Joey Haji is a Michigan man, through and through. He is an automotive enthusiast, he pulls for the Wolverines on Saturday afternoons, and he bleeds maize & blue. But Haji also has learned how to grow a fleet in the expedite industry, fast.



In 2009, after not much experience in trucking, Haji became intrigued by the opportunity and thrill of truck ownership. He saw a lucrative market where he could be his own boss. Less than two years later, Haji purchased his first tractor in March of 2011. The very next month he began officially running the truck. Haji was immediately hooked. However, he was not finished or satisfied. Truck ownership was working well for him and the next step was fleet ownership.

Along his journey, Haji was introduced to Bobby Snyder at Fyda Freightliner in Columbus, OH. Snyder came highly recommended to Haji by a top-name carrier with which he was doing business. "Since that point in 2011, I have purchased and traded in many many trucks (from Fyda Freightliner) quite often," Haji raved. "I don't have enough good things to say about my experience with Bobby and Fyda."

In less than five years, Haji's fleet has grown at an impressive rate. When asked about the size and state of his fleet, Haji smiled and responded, "We currently have 20 trucks in our fleet and we are proud to say our oldest one is a 2013."

April of 2016 will be five years since his initiation into this industry, and this man is growing at a rate of over six trucks a year. Haji knows this is an impressive feat.

When asked what type of impact Bobby Snyder and Fyda Freightliner have had on his business, Haji stated, "If you are shopping somewhere else for trucks or equipment and think you are getting a good deal, just call Bobby, and his team can do better. I know we are getting the best deal in town, and the customer service on the sales and finance end is superb." When discussing his overall experience, he responded, "It is easy, relaxing, stress free and I feel as if an older brother is taking care of my purchase deal."

Lastly, we asked Haji if he would recommend Bobby Snyder and Fyda Freightliner to others, Haji immediately replied, "Absolutely. I have already referred 3 different friends and other truck owners to Bobby and Fyda. They all are just as happy as I am and pleased with the services provided by Bobby and his team."

**For more information on Fyda Freightliner, please contact Bobby Snyder at (888)-897-0892.**

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