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Volume 14,
Issue 3

EXPEDITE NOW MAGAZINE

8 Point Checklist

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SLEEPER FOR COMFORT AND
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Expo Event Manager

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Business



14 3 Fleet Owner Tips
to Recruit (and Keep)
Good Drivers

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Expedite Now is written for professional owner operators and drivers working in the expedited trucking industry.

Our editorial policy encompasses informing drivers, fleet managers and carriers of the news and information about the expedited trucking community.

News and feature articles are compiled to keep owner operators and drivers apprised of industry trends and events, and other issues which impact those who move this industry.

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EXPEDITE NOW MAGAZINE **Q&A**

Kristy Lohre,
Expo Event Manager

Talks About

expedite
expo **17**

KRISTY, CAN YOU TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND AND WHAT LEAD YOU TO THE EXPEDITE EXPO?

I was at my previous job for 13 years. I planned trade shows and conferences for another company that produced magazines also. My biggest job for the company was the largest sign show in Mexico City, which I did for 10 years. I was lucky to travel to all sorts of great places and meet great people but the 45+ minute commute was a killer, and my kids started telling me they liked me at home. I was so lucky to find this job with a great company that allowed me to more often put my family first, and it's only 4 miles from home!

ARE YOU A KENTUCKY WILDCATS OR LOUISVILLE CARDINALS FAN?

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AS THE EVENT MANAGER, WHAT ARE SOME ARE SOME IMPROVEMENTS AND ADVANCEMENTS TO THE SHOW THAT YOU HAVE SEEN OVER THE YEARS?

I think some of the improvements we've made to the show is providing some really fantastic workshops, and this year we are changing up the show hours to prove how much we are committed to providing great content to our attendees. All drivers need to realize that driving a truck is a business, not just a job. A focus of 5 hours of workshops so that you can be the best you can, presented by your peers who have excelled in the industry sharing their insight. We are also adding in networking roundtables where you have the opportunity to talk in small groups on specific topics and learn more and meet new people.

I think the advancements we've made in recent years is really focusing on the drivers and those in the industry. We've really had great quality attendees.

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WHAT WILL BE NEW IN THE 2017 EXPEDITE EXPO?

I am really excited about Expediter of the Year award - the opportunity to pat the drivers on the back who work so hard is awesome. The chance to acknowledge drivers for being safe drivers involved in their community is great!

FOR MANY ATTENDEES, THE EXPO CAN BE THE MOST PROFITABLE WEEKEND OF THE YEAR. HOW SO?

Because drivers are working so hard on the road, if they can take off just the two days of the Expo I feel that what they learn in just one workshop could save or make them the money they lost from being down. Also the chance to meet with other expeditors and share stories can really encourage the driver and let them know they support each other out there.

WHAT YOU THE MOST EXCITED ABOUT FOR THE 2017 EXPEDITE EXPO?

I love the opportunity to meet so many of the people I talk with often face-to-face. I love the buzz of business in the Expo hall and of course Casino Night is not to be missed - some of those people are real card sharks.

Our show is a great show to come to if you are already in the industry, for the chance to learn more and advance your business. It's also a great place to come and get great information if you are just thinking of getting into the industry. Great research will make you the better driver in the long haul.

IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH OUR READERS?

Never in a million years did I think my job would take me into trucking, I have to admit I am obsessed with looking at every truck on the road and see how many of the companies I know. I love to find a big sleeper on the back and I have never been so conscious about the trucks on the road - I move over and always let them in! **EN**

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3 Fleet Owner Tips TO RECRUIT (AND KEEP) GOOD DRIVERS

By Sean M. Lyden, Staff Writer



EXPEDITE
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MAGAZINE

INDUSTRY

“Usually I'll put the word out to my existing teams. That's where most of my drivers come from. Every once in awhile, I'll place an ad, but most—as far as good ones—usually come from my drivers, which is good because they get a feel for how good that person would be.”

Dave Corfman, who has been a fleet owner in expediting for over three decades, recalls a story about a father and son team he hired several years ago.

“There was this laziness factor where they didn't want to take a load even though they'd have a good run staring right at 'em,” says Corfman, who operates a fleet of six straight trucks. “The father wanted to retire and let the son make most of the decisions and do most of the work. But they'd get a 2,000-mile load and complain, ‘That's just too far.’ Or, ‘I'm too tired.’ Then we say, okay, we'll hand them the short loads. But they would refuse those, too, saying, ‘Nah, that doesn't really pay enough.’”

After about six months, Corfman let them go. “When they start costing you money because you still have to pay for the truck, but they're turning down loads, you've got

to move on,” says Corfman.

And it turned out that the father-and-son agreed. “They said, ‘Yeah, you know, we're deciding that maybe [expediting] is not for us. We're gonna try something else.’”

You may not always be able to prevent situations like this one from happening. But, over the years, Corfman has learned that there are things you can do to stack the odds in your favor when it comes to finding drivers who are a great fit for your fleet. He offers these three tips.

NETWORK THROUGH DRIVERS

How should you go about finding drivers in a tight market? How do you compete for them?

“Usually I'll put the word out to my existing teams. That's where most of my drivers come from,” says Corfman. “Every once in

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awhile, I'll place an ad, but most—as far as good ones—usually come from my drivers, which is good because they get a feel for how good that person would be.”

DEFINE WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR

What should you look for in the drivers that you hire?

Here's what Corfman looks for: “Hopefully, they have some transportation background, whether it's driving a truck or something along those lines. It's not necessary for both of them on the team, but at least one of them should have some transportation background, especially from a maintenance and safety standpoint. You want somebody who can identify if there are any safety issues and know what they're looking at.”

Corfman also considers whether the team's family dynamics might impact their ability to stay out on the road for long stretches at a time. “Somebody who has kids under 18 years old—that's usually a non-starter. They may tell you that they really want a job, but that's a situation that usually doesn't work in this business.”


What about attitude? “In terms of attitude, the only thing I would say is that if somebody comes in and doesn't know anything about expediting, but they're combative and telling you how things should be, that would be a concern,” says Corfman.

KEEP THEM BUSY

Once you bring drivers on board, how do you keep them?

“The biggest thing is to keep the truck moving and make sure they're making money,” says Corfman. “It's that simple. It really is that simple.” **EN**

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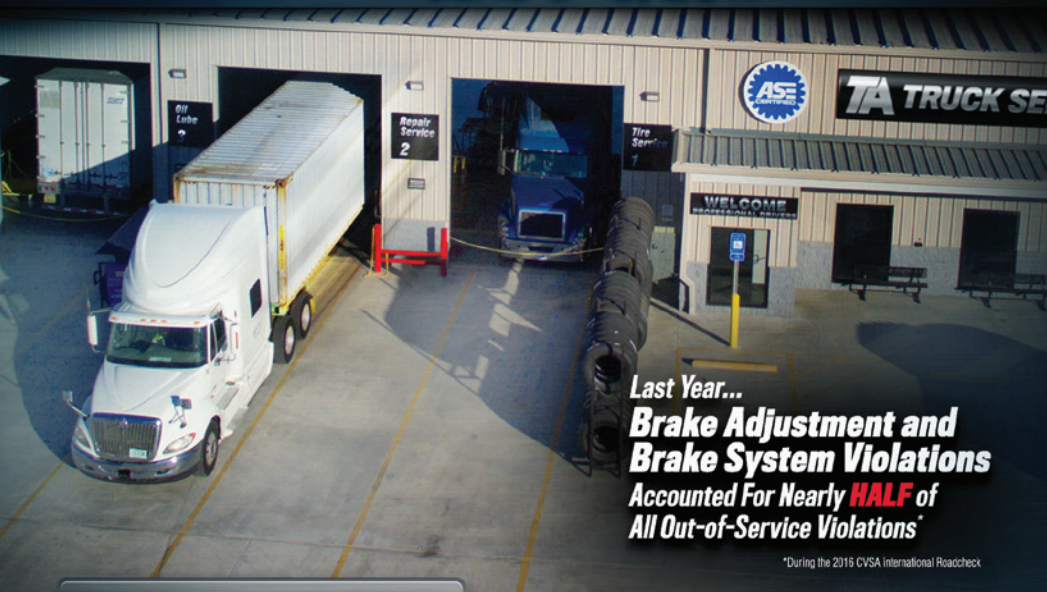


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8 Point Checklist



FOR DESIGNING YOUR CUSTOM SLEEPER FOR COMFORT-AND YOUR BOTTOM LINE

By Sean M. Lyden, Staff Writer

EXPEDITE
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BUSINESS

If you're going to be living in an expediter straight truck for several weeks at a time, you might as well make the sleeper as much like home as possible, right?

Yes...and no. As an owner-operator, you're also a business owner. And that means you need to also think about the financial impact of your sleeper selection.

So, the key is to strike the right balance between comfort considerations (sleeper size and amenities) and practicality (cargo capacity and sleeper cost). But with numerous options to sift through, how do you determine which ones will help you balance your comfort and business goals?

Use this checklist as a guide.

INTEGRATED VS. BOLT-ON SLEEPER

What's the difference between these two types of custom sleepers?

Think of an integrated sleeper as a

seamless extension of the cab, where you can stand up from the front seat and walk all the way to back of the sleeper. A bolt-on sleeper, on the other hand, is a separate self-contained compartment that "bolts" onto the chassis, with a boot that connects the cab and the sleeper.

The integrated sleeper offers more overall space than a comparable bolt-on sleeper, while also providing better aerodynamics because there is no gap between the cab and the sleeper, which helps with fuel economy.

The bolt-on sleeper offers a lower price-point than the integrated unit—and a lower life cycle cost because it can be moved from one truck to the next.

SLEEPER LENGTH VS. BOX LENGTH

On a straight truck, you must make a tradeoff to ensure the overall length stays within 40 feet. So, for every inch you add to the sleeper to make it bigger and more

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32
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comfortable, you're also taking away an inch from the box length, which detracts from your cargo capacity and potentially limits the types of loads you can accept.

Brian Callan, president of Bolt Custom Trucks (www.boltcustom.com), says that the sweetspot sleeper length most for most expedite straight trucks is about 100 inches. He says that, on occasion, his company has customers order a 120-inch or even a 130-inch sleeper, but those owner-operators know upfront that they're giving up cargo space in exchange for the extra sleeper length.

FLOOR PLAN

Callan says that, with Bolt's integrated sleeper, there are about four different floor plans, depending on bed configuration and whether or not a shower/toilet is included.

In terms of which bed configuration is best for your sleeper, that depends on the type of team that will be running the truck.

"Is it a husband-wife team? If so, they are probably going to want to share the same bed. So, you'll be looking at a single bunk configuration," says Callan. "Is it two unfamiliar males inside the truck? Well, you're probably going to want two bunks. But in this case, does one of them want to be climbing into an upper bunk? If you have someone who's 60 years old with a bad leg, climbing to an upper bunk might be an issue. So, in this case, you would probably consider a side-by-side bunk so that nobody has to get stuck in the upper bunk."

Whatever you decide, make sure you're paying for only what you need, advises Toby Hayward, sales representative at ARI Legacy Sleepers (www.legacysleepers.com).

com). "Some guys like our beds that can fold up, and you can have a table in there and use it as a dinette. But that's about a \$2,000 option. So, if you're never going to use that table, if you never fold up your bed, then don't spend that extra two grand to have a dinette if you're not going to use it."

FLOORING

"Your flooring options in a sleeper are virtually limitless, just like if you were putting flooring in your house," says Callan.

Callan says that at Bolt Custom Trucks the trend has been toward more and more laminate flooring because it offers a balance between aesthetics, cost, and durability.

COUNTERTOPS

There are also a wide range of choices for countertops in sleepers.

"What we do most commonly is a laminate countertop," says Callan. "It's the most economical and generally the lightest weight. We have also installed corian, quartz, and other composite materials. We've also started using materials from a plastic derivative that offer an upscale look but seem to be more economical and lighter weight."

APPLIANCES

In terms of refrigerators, there are usually a couple options to consider—a top-and-bottom model or side-by-side.

Then there's the microwave oven—convection or conventional?

"A conventional microwave is a little bit

CONTINUED ON PAGE 34

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cheaper, but most people choose to go with convection because, theoretically, you can then bake with the microwave oven,” says Callan.

Other considerations: “Do you want a single-burner or a dual-burner cooktop? Also, what about the coffeemaker? We’ve hung coffeemakers from the bottom of shelves for people,” says Callan.

INSULATION

This can be especially important if you typically operate your truck in harsh climates. “If you run in colder climates, let us know that, because we have an upgraded insulation option,” says Hayward at ARI Legacy Sleepers. “We add spray foam insulation, and it really helps seal that unit up from the cold and the heat. And we can upgrade windows to double pane to help with that, as well.”

POWER OUTLETS

How many power outlets do you think you would need? Where would you like them placed?

“We’ll get requests from customers, ‘I’ve got to have an outlet in this particular place.’ We can do that. Or, ‘I want to make sure that I have three outlets above the kitchen countertop.’ There is a lot of flexibility when it comes to outlets,” says Callan.

THE BOTTOM LINE

As an owner-operator, your goal is to build a truck that strikes the right balance between cost and comfort. So, before you buy your next truck, use this checklist to help you ensure that the sleeper you select is the best fit for your lifestyle—and business. **EN**

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Driver wanted to join an existing driver out of New York state or northeast to team drive a straight truck leased to Panther.

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John 888-556-4089

2014 Freightliner Cascadia ThermoKing Elevation APU, Factory Warranty, UltraShift, 72" Double bunk Condo Sleeper

Jason 877-349-9303

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Jason 888-258-7795

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Heath 800-899-8696

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