

CaseStack C&M FOODS CASE STUDY

The process of marinating meat to enhance its flavor and texture has been around for thousands of years, but it was only thirty years ago that a small steakhouse in Jasper, Alabama introduced its original hickory flavor marinade. Today, C&M Foods makes it easy for meat lovers to enjoy its special recipe far beyond the Alabama town through its Moore's Marinade sauces. With CaseStack's help, the now Birmingham-headquartered company is able to deliver a taste of the South to consumers across the United States.

The popular demand of the original marinade prompted a promising growth opportunity, so C&M Foods decided to include teriyaki and buffalo wing sauces to its product line. With this expansion came the need to efficiently manage logistics. David Bell, President of C&M Foods, recalls, "Prior to working with CaseStack, we used to have one person call up three freight companies to see who had the best price for each order that came in." Since David and his team joined CaseStack in June of 2004, they have had more time to devote to growing the business.

During the time C&M Foods was considering a change in its logistics strategy, the nation's largest retailer was going through an assembly program. While C&M spent a lot of time trying to get shipments out and delivered on time, the nation's largest retailer was turning to consolidation. This turn toward consolidation made scheduling for delivery appointments more complicated for unconsolidated loads. During the holidays, it became especially difficult to have its LTL deliveries received because the retailer was trying to minimize the number of trucks at the dock in order to accommodate the increase in deliveries. The larger deliveries received priority, but C&M foods did not have the capacity to ship more than less-than-truckload.

The CaseStack Solution

In search of a way to simplify freight arrangements and maximize distributing and receiving capacity, David Bell turned to CaseStack. C&M knew that it needed a logistics provider that offered intricate and reliable consolidation options to key retailers. CaseStack provided the solution with its retailer-driven consolidation program. The program "mass transits" products, which promotes truckload consolidation using a master purchase order created by the retailer. It is a win-win situation for both the retailer and C&M in that it reduces dock congestion and allows companies like C&M to receive preferred status on deliveries.

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C&M moved into CaseStack's warehousing and consolidation program in 2004. The company is currently distributing its products from CaseStack's Texas, Georgia, Chicago, and Pennsylvania locations creating a much stronger impact than it would've been able to make on its own in Birmingham. This extended reach puts Moore's Marinades on the shelves of retailers nation-wide.

From C&M's perspective as a growing business, consolidation freed up employees for managing freight and inventory instead of having to hassle with tedious details.

Inventory Replenishment

Manager David Murib realizes many benefits from the simplicity that real-time reporting allows. CaseStack's Fortune 500 caliber web-based technology allows David to log in every few days to check inventory levels. He attests to the web-based technology's convenience, especially for reconciling end of the month numbers.

CaseStack's Warehouse Account Manager for C&M, Catalina Munoz, says, "The C&M team (David & Tamra) know how to take advantage of the resources that we have provided them. If David has a question on inventory, I know he is looking at our website and I can quickly respond to him; with access to the same information, issues can be quickly addressed. Our website is definitely one of our best tools to help out our customers with inventory management."

While consolidation initially attracted C&M to partner with CaseStack, the web-based technology has continued to provide smooth day-to-day operations. CaseStack's ability to understand and meet the needs of small businesses helps keep the relationship strong. "With Mike (C&M's CaseStack contact), I know I will be taken care of," says David Bell.

Results

C&M no longer experiences the shipping limitations or delays that characterized the time prior to CaseStack. C&M is able to monitor freight and has the peace of mind of knowing that the product is delivered and received. As a result, they have more time to focus on other aspects of its business like the introduction of new products.

"Why wouldn't you [look at CaseStack]?" Bell challenges companies considering working with a logistics provider. He sees CaseStack as a natural fit for smaller companies because it allows the resources needed to compete with larger companies. Bell recommends that companies should analyze their output volumes and do a cost-benefit analysis to see who can do it more efficiently, them or CaseStack.

