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5/10/2011 Expert Defines Keys to Growth in Trucking Industry at Conference

Satish Jindel, president of SJ Consulting Group, defined the keys to growth in the trucking industry at the Carrier Logistics' recent Group Conference in White Plains, N.Y.

According to Jindel, transportation companies must do three things to achieve success in this market: align their business with customer needs, make full use of available technology, and, if applicable, embrace the corporate cultures of acquired companies.

Jindel rejects the notion that there are different kinds of transportation businesses today, such as less than truckload, parcel and truckload. Shippers need transportation, period, he says, and transportation companies must be ready to move any shipment their customers offer. He showed how leading freight carriers had grown by managing change and diversifying to meet customer needs, while others had failed to accomplish these things.

UPS and FedEx have now become complete transportation, logistics and warehousing companies, Jindel said. Diversification is key - companies must enter business segments that will complement their footprint, facilitating expansion either through acquisition or organic growth. Jindel also said technology investments are a main factor distinguishing the winners from the also-rans, a statement echoed by Ken Weinberg, CLI vice president and conference host.

"As we emerge from tough economic times, it is important transportation companies use all of their computer system's capabilities," Weinberg said.

Among other presenters was Marv Stone, systems engineer with Progress Software, who explained how Business Process Management is a step forward in helping carriers resolve customer issues using their IT systems. For example if a shipper learns that a shipment is late and cannot locate their regular contact, BPM will automatically escalate the request to an up-the-ladder supervisor who is available to immediately resolve it. BPM is now available to small and mid-size carriers, said Stone, and is no longer the sole province of the FedExes and UPSs of the world.

Also discussed in depth at the conference were rating, electronic data interchange, mapping, web capabilities, social media, operations issues, and financial reports. Hands-on training on actual computer workstations was provided, and conference-goers viewed a supplier showcase of the latest in IT advancements.