

VOICE OF THE CUSTOMER

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**Joe Wade, President,
SDJ Trucking Inc.**



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Shelba D. Johnson (SDJ) Trucking Inc., based in Thomasville, N.C., specializes in the timely and precise delivery of furniture throughout 23 states, including the entire East Coast. The company serves more than 400 furniture shippers and 4,000 retail locations as well as decorators and designers from its two terminals in North Carolina.

SITUATION.

During a recent busy holiday season, SDJ Trucking had to lease 100 additional trailers to cover the spike in business. Convinced that his company was “overleasing” trailers, president Joe Wade decided to instead buy 70 trailers. “After that year, we said we wouldn’t lease trailers any more,” said Wade, a CPA with a cost accounting background. “By not leasing, our company can be more profitable.”

In order to avoid leasing in the future, Wade realized that his company would have to increase the visibility to every trailer in the fleet. That visibility would prove to be particularly critical for trailers while they are staged for loading at customer locations. “We can have up to 125 trailers staged at any one time, so it’s imperative to know where each of them is and how many are at each location,” said Wade.

SOLUTION.

To provide the needed visibility – and to increase asset utilization, SDJ Trucking invested in a mobile asset management solution from SkyBitz for its entire fleet. The company installed SkyBitz tracking units in more than 450 trailers in just a few months. “SkyBitz provides us with the information and service we need without a big expense and it gives us an attractive return on investment,” remarked Wade.

SDJ Trucking now uses the SkyBitz solution to confirm when and where a trailer has been dropped. The carrier’s Customer Service team also has the capability to ping a trailer using the SkyBitz InSight Web service to provide customers with location information in real time.

RESULTS.

In the first year after implementing the SkyBitz solution, SDJ Trucking realized a noticeable increase in asset utilization and a better trailer-to-tractor ratio. The company also believes that having the ability to instantly locate trailers has helped to maintain its superior customer satisfaction rating.

As for leasing trailers, Wade believes SkyBitz will help him keep his promise to himself to avoid that practice. Further, he expects that the visibility provided by the SkyBitz asset management service may also eliminate the need to purchase more trailers to handle future increases in business. “If having SkyBitz prevents us from having to buy 20 trailers at more than \$20,000 each, that’s a huge savings,” concluded Wade. “We’ve added tractors instead so that we’ll be better equipped to take advantage of growth opportunities when the economy bounces back.”