

Real-time Freight Visibility Key to Customer Satisfaction

Steelcase

A leading supplier of architecture, furniture and technology products and services, Steelcase implemented Descartes MacroPoint™ to enhance shipment visibility across its U.S. distribution network. Fully integrated with SAP Transportation Management (TM), Descartes MacroPoint increased critical tracking efficiency, heightened productivity, and strengthened customer service with real-time updates and faster response times.

“Descartes MacroPoint has been a massive time saver for us. Prior to implementing the solution, we spent in the neighborhood of four to five hours per day tracking and receiving updates on loads. Now that most of the information is pushed from Descartes MacroPoint, we’re down to the two-hour mark for tracking loads—and we can always stay steps ahead of any shipment issue.”

Keegan McCready, Sr. Project Manager, Steelcase Inc.

Company Profile

Steelcase Inc.
Supplier of Architecture, Furniture
and Technology Products

Descartes Solutions

Descartes MacroPoint™

About the Client

With a comprehensive portfolio of architecture, furniture and technology products and services, Steelcase Inc. has helped create great experiences for the world's leading organizations for more than 105 years. Steelcase is globally accessible through a network of channels, including over 800 Steelcase dealer locations.

Quick Overview

Challenge

Customer Care Impeded by
Transportation Disruptions

Solution

Freight Visibility Boosts Customer Service

Results

- Critical Tracking Efficiency
- Increased Customer Satisfaction
- Reduced Costs
- Enterprise-wide Visibility

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Challenge: Customer Care Impeded by Transportation Disruptions

With a complex distribution and logistics network across the U.S. and Mexico, Steelcase was experiencing issues with transportation disruptions with its logistics network. The company's homegrown manual processes and reliance on carriers for status updates were leading to inefficiencies, late shipments, costly chargebacks and compromised customer service. Driven by the goal of accelerating response time to improve the customer experience, Steelcase sought a real-time freight visibility solution to increase the efficiency, speed and ease of communications between the multiple participants in its logistics network.

Solution: Freight Visibility Boosts Customer Service

With five manufacturing facilities, five factory distribution centers (FDCs) and six regional distribution centers (RDCs) across the U.S. and Mexico—plus dedicated fleet capacity and more than 60 specialized common carrier partners managed in-house via SAP TM—Steelcase has a complex distribution network.

The company has a number of logistics analysts on its Transportation Execution team, working directly with carriers for coverage of loads across RDCs, FDCs and dealers to avoid disruption throughout the delivery process. Seamlessly integrated with SAP TM, Descartes MacroPoint allows Steelcase to track loads in real-time to improve on-time deliveries, hasten response times and strengthen customer service by keeping customers up-to-date on any changes in shipment status.

"RDCs are responsible for the execution of loading and shipping all shipments to the final customer and dealer. With Descartes MacroPoint, RDCs have better and earlier visibility into which shipments they are expecting, and which ones are on-time or potentially late—and that information is used in escalation to the Execution Team for feedback," said Keegan McCready, Sr. Project Manager at Steelcase.

McCready added, "Jobsites are notoriously the most important deliveries for Steelcase, as they typically hinge on installation teams, contractors, etc. waiting on the delivery. With early notification of shipment status via Descartes MacroPoint, we have the ability to alter delivery schedules based on truck locations and ETAs. If one delivery is running late and another is ahead of schedule, we have the option to swap delivery times and keep the jobsite running smoothly, without any disruptions to the customer."

Results:



Critical Tracking Efficiency

By replacing manual driver check calls and cumbersome tracking tools with real-time freight visibility and automated updates, Steelcase increased communication speed and agility across the network, reducing time spent tracking fleet status by 50%.



Increased Customer Satisfaction

With real-time load status data, Steelcase can provide faster response times to any transportation issues (e.g., delays due to weather or traffic congestion). The Descartes MacroPoint solution helps minimize disruptions to customers and improve service performance.



Reduced Costs

With the goal of reducing internal track-and-trace costs, Steelcase leveraged Descartes MacroPoint to cut time spent tracking load updates by more than half. With up-to-the-minute visibility into shipments, Steelcase can avoid customer penalties and chargebacks.



Enterprise-wide Visibility

Descartes MacroPoint extends real-time visibility across all inbound and outbound shipment types. With the aim of enterprise-wide visibility, Steelcase also rolled out the solution to its distribution centers to optimize labor and capacity planning.