

Parcel and Less Than Truckload (LTL) Freight Shipping in One Complete Solution



Invented in a garage in 2012, the easy-to-use ZUP tow and paddleboards received tremendous exposure and an increase in business after being featured on ABC's Shark Tank in 2018. As a seasonal business, ZUP's busiest time is in the spring and summer months. It is crucial that the company can quickly handle increases in omnichannel order volumes. In peak season, daily consumer orders can exceed 100 individual units, and larger retailer orders can consume several truckloads each day. As a complete multi-carrier shipping solution, including built-in LTL freight support, Descartes ShipRush™ meets all of ZUP's fulfillment needs in one solution. By driving greater order fulfillment efficiencies across all channels, ZUP has enhanced the customer experience for both consumers and distributors.

“As a multichannel business, ZUP’s shipping needs are complex. We process both individual marketplace orders and large palletized orders for our network of dealers. The ability to do everything in one shipping platform, including processing incoming orders and rate shopping the best price and delivery options for parcel and LTL, save us both time and money.”

Nick Kierpiec, Director of Operations, ZUP

Company Profile

ZUP

Water Sports Equipment

Descartes Solutions

Descartes ShipRush™

About the Client

Inspired by the desire to see everyone find success while learning how to ride tow boards, the mission of Williamsburg, VA-based ZUP is to make water sports equipment to empower those of all skill levels to participate. Quality, safety and functionality are what drives ZUP to design products that work well for all ages and abilities. The company ships to customers and dealers throughout the U.S., Canada, U.K., Australia and Dubai.

Quick Overview

Challenge

Shipping Individual Online Orders and Supplying a Dealer Network

Solution

Descartes ShipRush Speeds
Multichannel Success

Results

- Added Shipping Flexibility
- Best Shipping Option Selection
- Streamlined Peak Season Processing
- Knowledgeable Customer Support

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Challenge: Shipping Individual Online Orders and Supplying a Dealer Network

For years, ZUP grew its business in small incremental steps. The company downloaded individual orders from its online marketplaces, hand pasted them into Excel, and then individually input the orders into its shipping solution. A similar process was also used to manage bulk orders for ZUP's many sports equipment dealers. Investing in an automated shipping solution was not an initial priority. After appearing on Shark Tank, however, the company experienced a period of rapid growth, with sales suddenly surging—by 4,000 percent! It became clear that a manual shipping solution was insufficient.

Solution: Descartes ShipRush Speeds Multichannel Success

Today, ZUP successfully sells its water sports equipment to individuals online and via over 180 dealers. With Descartes ShipRush, ZUP has a single, cloud-based shipping solution that meets the business need to process both parcel shipments from Shopify and Amazon marketplaces and palletized shipments for its dealer network via LTL freight. Working with Descartes ShipRush customer support specialists, ZUP easily tackles more complex shipping needs: "The customer service is fantastic, especially the Live Chat feature. Representatives always know the answer to my question and then I can quickly get back to work," explains Sarah Reavis, ZUP's Logistics Manager.

Individual customer orders originating from online marketplaces and the company's website are downloaded into Descartes ShipRush. Employees log on in the morning and see what customer orders need to be processed. The status screen makes it easy to identify any special requirements, including whether it is an Amazon Prime order.

According to Reavis, the solution dramatically increases processing speed by decreasing order input time by 50 percent. Descartes ShipRush automatically pulls all the order information from the company's selling platforms, including the SKUs. With no manual input, the process is almost error-free. Missing orders are eliminated because every order is electronically downloaded and remains on the "to-do list" until processed. The increase in processing speed makes it even easier to meet Amazon Prime requirements of getting every package out before 2 p.m.

The solution's LTL functionality includes over 80 ecommerce marketplace, ERP, and accounting connections, and allows ZUP to input the dimensions and requirements of all palletized shipments, review delivery options and carrier requirements, and schedule shipments. The company's seasonal rush is April through August, a popular time to purchase water sports equipment in anticipation of warmer weather. During this time, dealer orders increase from 10-15 pallets per month (roughly 12 boards fit on each pallet) to as much as 40-50 pallets per month, which Descartes ShipRush easily supports.

ZUP uses a third-party logistics provider (3PL) for fulfillment and generally uses the 3PL's discounted rates with FedEx. These rates are entered into Descartes ShipRush so ZUP can compare its own FedEx rates with options requested by customers (e.g., UPS, LTL carriers) using side-by-side rate shopping capabilities to verify the best price and delivery options. Because the boards are approximately 16-19 lbs with only a few variations in dimensions, ZUP can use the automation rules in Descartes ShipRush to process repetitive orders using standard SKU weights.

Results:



Added Shipping Flexibility

As a multichannel business with a dealer network and online consumer sales, ZUP now has a single shipping platform with comprehensive functionality to manage both parcel and palletized shipments. Descartes ShipRush has significantly streamlined order fulfillment across all of ZUP's sales channels.



Best Shipping Option Selection

ZUP either uses its own negotiated rates for both parcel and LTL freight or uses Descartes ShipRush to rate shop all carriers side-by-side, depending on customer requirements. Automation rules can be set to ship orders with predictable weights using the most cost-effective carrier with the best delivery option, every time.



Streamlined Peak Season Processing

Using Descartes ShipRush, ZUP estimates it has decreased order entry and processing time by at least 50 percent. The time savings have been especially critical during seasonal peaks, allowing ZUP to keep pace with sales spikes that would have otherwise been unmanageable.



Knowledgeable Customer Support

According to ZUP, the Descartes ShipRush customer support team is top notch and always ready and available to help. The chat feature has been especially beneficial when the company encounters more complex shipping questions from customers.