Refining LTL API Consumption for Optimal Efficiency and Enhanced Services

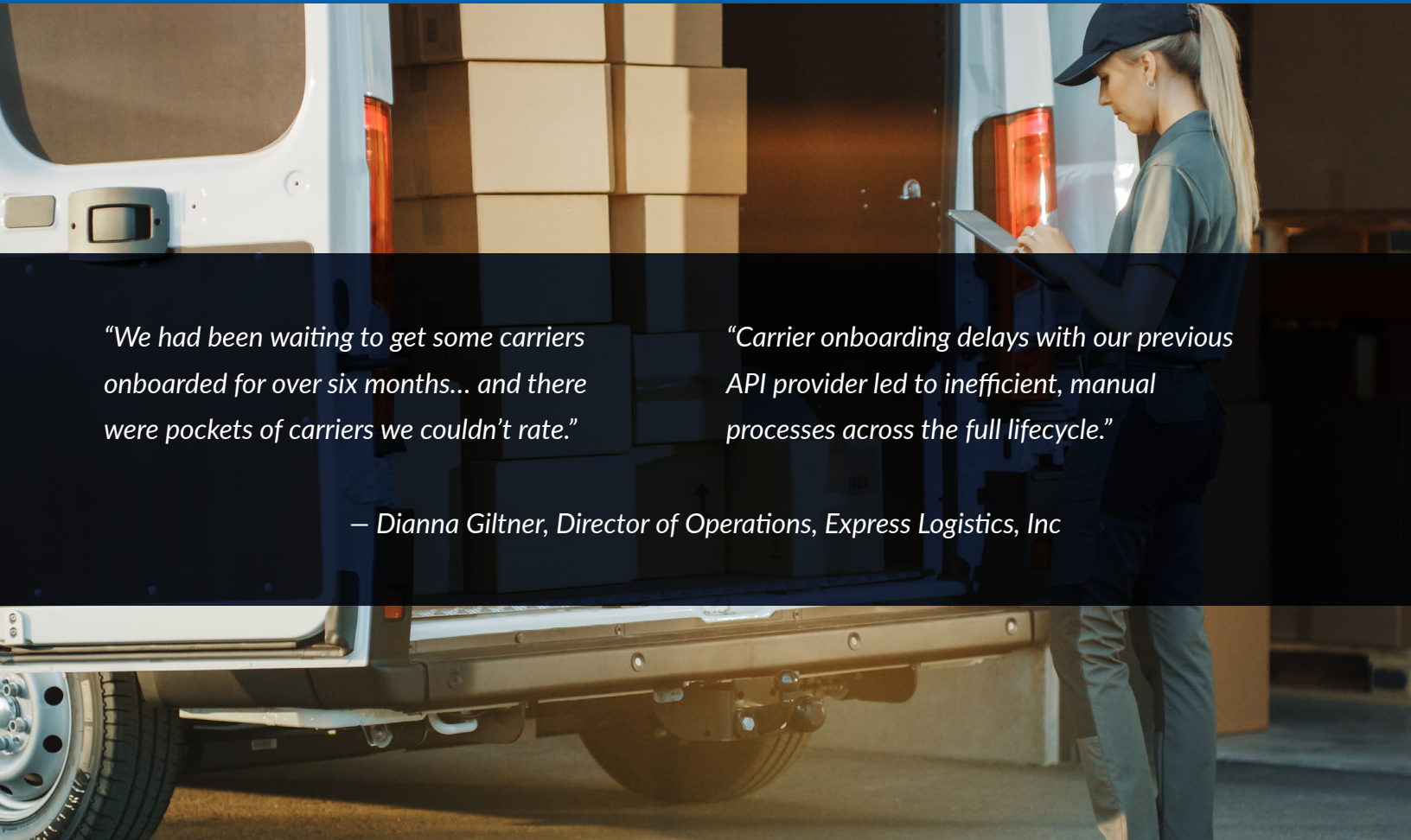## Clearing Business Hurdles, Achieving Efficiencies and Elevating Customer Service with SMC³'s LTL APIs

September 2023

SMC³ | **EXPRESS LOGISTICS**

The Situation: The Need for Maximized LTL API Impact; Putting an End to Manual Processes

Express Logistics, Inc. an, award-winning, third-party logistics provider specializing in less than truckload (LTL), truckload and intermodal brokerage services, headquartered in Urbandale, Iowa, had begun utilizing application program interfaces (LTL APIs) in its quest to achieve optimal efficiency and enhanced customer service for LTL planning, execution and visibility. Although, there were some positive impacts, Express Logistics, who was using another provider's (APIs) hadn't been able to realize the full functionality and optimization they'd expected from LTL APIs due to ongoing issues. One such issue centered around carrier onboarding delays. This meant reverting back to handling some carrier ratings and specific processes manually, performing workarounds; or being unable to rate at all, which fell short of their goal and decreased overall efficiency.

"We had been waiting to get some carriers onboarded for over six months... and there were pockets of carriers we couldn't rate."

"Carrier onboarding delays with our previous API provider led to inefficient, manual processes across the full lifecycle."

— Dianna Giltner, Director of Operations, Express Logistics, Inc

The Pivot: Facing Challenges and Finding Optimal Solutions

Integrating technology with existing systems means investing precious time, finances and personnel to complete the project. Although Express Logistics had made significant investments, they were left with some untenable process exceptions with their chosen LTL API solution. Daily rating challenges, delayed information flow, manually trying to keep accurate pace with specific accessorial costs and the resulting negative business impacts sent Express looking for another LTL API solution.

The Resolution: Complete Supply Chain Visibility with SMC³'s High-Performing, Reliable LTL APIs

Express Logistics knew SMC³ from industry conferences, the CzarLite base rate and its staying power in LTL, with 87+ years of leadership. After some initial thought, multiple conversations and careful evaluation, Express Logistics ultimately decided to make the leap, choosing to partner with SMC³ and SMC³'s LTL APIs with the goal of clearing their current business hurdles. Despite the possible risks of starting over, Express and SMC³ embarked on an aggressive, 60-day conversion timeline to be up and running and onboard 25 carriers.

"The SMC³ team gave us confidence to move forward with the 'heavy lift' ahead. The team's transparency, responsiveness and communication helped keep our business running smoothly during the transition. With any change, there are challenges and SMC³ had the proven expertise to collaborate with us as a true partner."

— Dianna Giltner, Director of Operations, Express Logistics, Inc

To support the tight timeline and level of effort required to meet the deadline, SMC³ was with Express Logistics every step of the way, to bring the transition to fruition. When issues arose, SMC³ jumped in to proactively communicate and creatively rectify the situation. In the end, SMC³ and Express Logistics were able to meet the ambitious implementation timeline.

SMC³'s LTL APIs empowered the 3PL to digitize the LTL shipment lifecycle from quote to delivery. Today, the fully automated shipment lifecycle management process supports and manages multiple pricing models — contract, volume or dynamic, and offers tendering, status and documents creating an elevated experience for all stakeholders.

"When we moved to SMC³, we saw immediate positive business and customer impact. [...] One positive was the ability to get a backlog of carriers onboarded that were holdovers from our previous API provider. What a difference this made in time and efficiency!"

— Dianna Giltner, Director of Operations, Express Logistics, Inc

The Result: 100% Rating, Exceeded Expectations and a True Partner - SMC³

It's a vastly different world for Express Logistics now that it is relying on LTL APIs from SMC³ for fast, end-to-end shipment lifecycle management. Business operations are far more productive and the company uses its time and resources more efficiently offering improved service and options to its customers. Internally, the team was able to realize these improvements with zero headcount increases and internal resources now shifted to other high-value tasks.
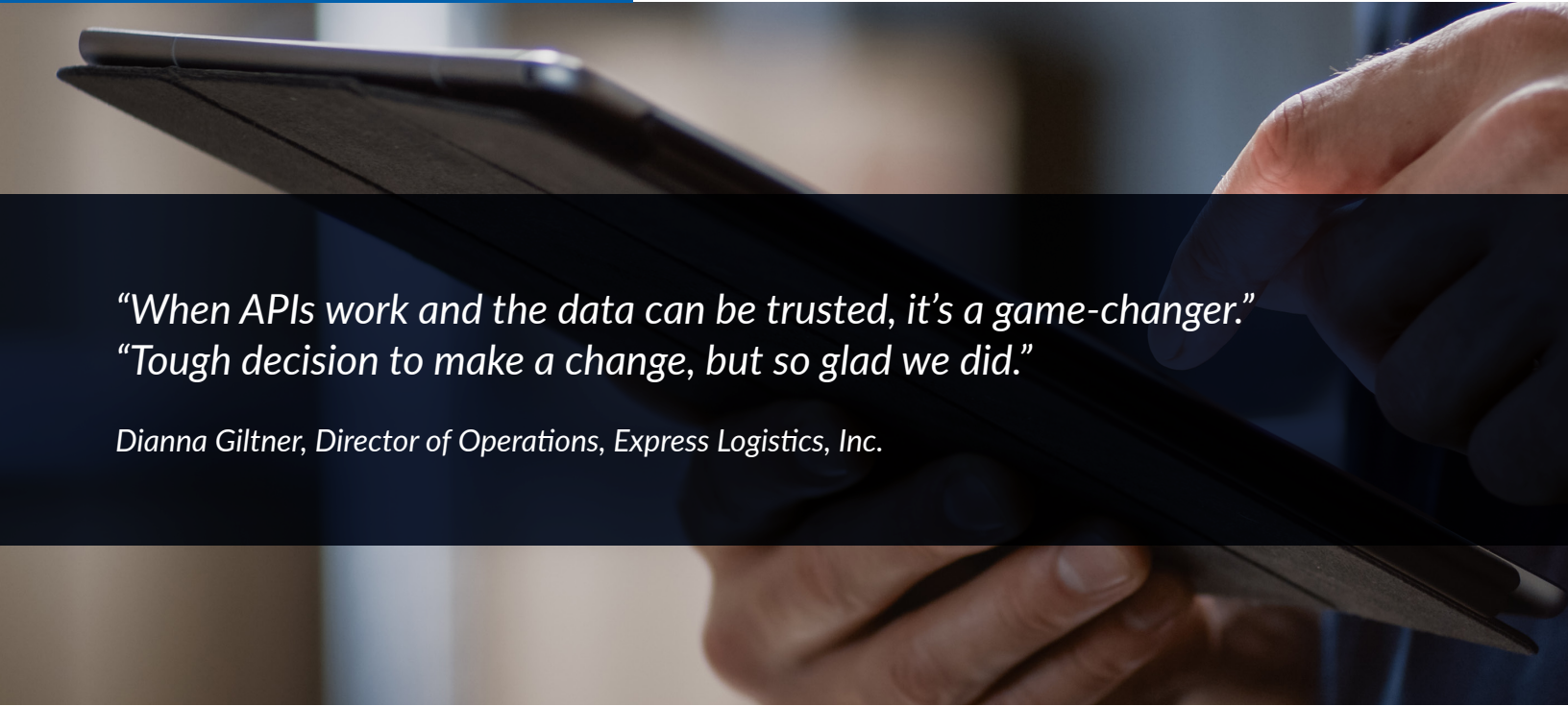
Express Logistics now has 100% rating ability—no more manual rating—and streamlined shipment lifecycle management. With SMC³ we can automate pricing, tendering, status and documents for a better experience for all stakeholders. Whether it is adding new features, onboarding new carriers or giving a sense of urgency and follow through to technical issues it's all much faster since the move to SMC³.

"Before moving to SMC³, when issues arose, it took an average of four to five days for resolution. Now, it's hours or minutes with SMC³. The true partnership, unrivaled support, and commitment to helping us meet business needs and service our customers have been tremendous."

— Dianna Giltner,
Director of Operations,
Express Logistics, Inc

As for assessorial charges, specifically overlength charges which caused havoc in the past, the company gets more accurate quotes upfront, which means better service for its customers, fewer invoice surprises, more accurate invoicing, and improved planning and budgeting. Express Logistics' customers benefit by receiving accurate access to pricing, service options, and timely communication for an optimal transportation experience.

"When APIs work and the data can be trusted, it's a game-changer."
"Tough decision to make a change, but so glad we did."

Dianna Giltner, Director of Operations, Express Logistics, Inc.

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