
BEST Fleets[®]

TO DRIVE FOR



2021 FINAL RESULTS

2021 BEST Fleets[®] TO DRIVE FOR

Making it work despite
the elephant(s) in the room.

Welcome to the 2021 edition of Best Fleets to Drive For[®]! The thirteenth iteration of this program saw data collected through the summer and early fall of 2020. This year's edition was one of record-setting participation, despite a once-in-a-generation global crisis, and a temporary change to the regular Best Fleets schedule.

“ Aside from being one of the most anticipated announcements in the industry, for these winners, the Best Fleets to Drive For program facilitates an image that radiates from the professional truck drivers to the leadership team at a carrier's operation. The winners feel an immense pride for this accomplishment and we're proud to honor them year after year. ”

John Lyboldt

PRESIDENT

Truckload Carriers Association





Program participation was up substantially in 2021:

- 150 nominations (most nominations in Best Fleets history)
- 75 finalists
- 6,917 driver surveys collected

However, the record setting participation did not carry over into evaluation stage - the number of fleets participating in the evaluation process was 102, roughly in line with past years. The number of fleets following through and completing all phases of the evaluation process culminating in the final scoring round also didn't match the record nominations, sitting at 75 finalists. This was up from last year but short of the previous record of 80.

Over the following pages, we'll detail our findings on how drivers and carriers adapted and thrived despite the obvious challenges.

The Evaluation

Best Fleets to Drive For is open to all for-hire fleets operating 10 tractor-trailers in the United States or Canada. For this program, a for-hire company must be purely for-hire. If a fleet hauls any of its own products, it's considered a private fleet. However, for-hire carriers wholly owned

by other companies (e.g. manufacturers) are eligible.

Each participating company must complete four steps:

- 1 Nomination** The process starts when a driver or contractor currently working with the company nominates them as a Best Fleet. Only one nomination is required, but somebody driving a truck on behalf of the company has to speak up.
- 2 Questionnaire** Nominated fleets complete an online questionnaire that collects information about company programs and policies across a variety of different categories. For the 2021 edition of the program, there were 111 questions in the default corporate questionnaire and 99 in the variation for contractor fleets.
- 3 Interview** After the questionnaire is complete, CarriersEdge representatives conduct a follow-up interview to verify and discuss the information provided in the questionnaire.
- 4 Survey** The final segment requires a target percentage of drivers/contractors to complete a survey about their experience with the company.

You're trying to **reimagine** your to-do list. There's so much to do but not enough time, and now you're in a classroom again, watching yet another **driver** struggle to focus on your **training** slides. You're both distracted by the clock. Only hours before they're back on the road, and you're off managing other tasks.



CarriersEdge.com

The schedule

The Best Fleets program normally opens for nominations on the Tuesday after Labor Day each year. The TCA Annual Convention was *originally* rescheduled to January, forcing our schedule change, before being pushed back to April then September. As a result, the nomination period closed on September 4th, providing drivers and contractors just under two months to nominate their fleets.

After nominations are verified, the next step is for participating fleets to complete their questionnaire, and for this year's edition they had until mid-October to complete their submission.

The third step in the Best Fleets process are the carrier interviews. Best Fleets team members schedule ninety-minute online interviews with one or multiple executives at each participating carrier. Interviews normally happen through November and December, however this year they were all wrapped up by the end of October. The final step is the Driver Surveys. Normally completed in November and December, this year they wrapped up before (U.S.) Thanksgiving.

Despite the change to timelines and the associated workflow, participants adapted and put their best forward. Like every other year, it's a grueling process, requiring fleets to collect information from across the entire company, get a sufficient number of drivers to complete the survey, and get it all done in a fairly short time frame. It's no wonder that nearly half of the nominated fleets don't make it through to the finals each year!

Celebrating commitment

This year's edition of Best Fleets marked the 10th consecutive year that Grand Island Express made an appearance in the winner's circle. Those ten years also included three years being named an Overall Winner. Congratulations to the GIX team!

Garner Trucking has made their 5th consecutive appearance on the list, joining an elite group of fleets with five or more years.

This year saw Jetco Delivery reach the

Best Fleets Top 20 in their rookie year, an increasingly rare feat last seen with Garner five years ago.

Best of times, worst of times

Dickens' classic line nicely captures the past year in the trucking industry. 2020 marked a year in which the trucking industry was confronted with many unknowns and pressures, along with a perfect storm of supply, demand and changes in consumer behavior. Despite the operational pressures of responding to the challenges presented by COVID-19, the vast majority of carriers reported strong results, and in some cases – record results.

This year saw the continuation of improvements observed last year across a variety of driver-related metrics. The average satisfaction score across the Top 20 was 91.82%, up from last year's 91.44%, which itself was an improvement from the previous year's 89.55%. To the casual observer, these basis point improvements may seem small, when you peel back the onion of the survey process, they are significant.

Along with those satisfaction numbers, we're also seeing a steady improvement in driver retention. We've noted before the challenges of accurately calculating what should and shouldn't be counted as turnover, and this year we continued refining that process. Taking various factors into consideration, we produce a retention score for each fleet, with higher numbers being better. In 2019, the average retention score across the Top 20 was 7.16, last year it was 9.31, and this year it hit 9.41. That's a 31% improvement in 2 years, so the Top 20 are definitely seeing positive results from their efforts in this area.

Similar improvements were seen in safety scores and compensation. Neither is that surprising in the context of the pandemic – fewer crashes when most of the population is parked at home for months, and more pay for drivers to compensate for the extra risks they're taking on – but it will be interesting to see what happens next year as the world starts returning to normal.

Beyond COVID, one of the themes that emerged in the trucking industry this year was cybersecurity, or the lack thereof. Many companies were forced to go public with disclosures of major attacks in 2020. Surprisingly only fourteen companies specifically mentioned cybersecurity training in their submissions - even though a majority of the highly publicized cyber attacks in 2020 were a result of a 'user' misstep. Because of this growing undercurrent of cyber-risk in trucking, we added a scored question on cybersecurity.

Communication takes center stage

This year required trucking companies to focus less on key performance indicators, and more on the human factors that really drive the business. One of the themes that emerged during the questionnaire and interview process was not of *what* message is communicated, but *how* that message is communicated. Multiple companies acknowledged that the frequency of communications is not nearly as important as the sentiment of the message. Although most carriers recognized they went overboard on frequency during 2020, others decided that the quality of communications was more important.

Whether COVID-19 forced the hands of carriers, multiple companies reported providing formal communication training. One carrier even refined that further and made 'elocution' training mandatory for their operations team.

Taking it one step further, two carriers noted their attempts to measure the sentiment of their communications with drivers. One carrier added an application to their phone system to score each phone conversation based on relative positivity. Another carrier attempted to do the same thing with their mobile communications. Did it work? We'll have to wait until next year. One telling sign will be if other carriers adopt these types of techniques. These efforts, despite their 'big brother' undertones, reinforce the fact that carriers acknowledge that drivers who are content don't generally leave.

Finally, one Best Fleet detailed their efforts,

in conjunction with their telematics provider, to record and recognize positive driving behaviors, instead of just tracking the negatives. Those efforts struck us as a highly positive enhancement and we'll be expecting that others will start using implementing this practice in the future.

A focus on efficiency

The pandemic forced us all to physically distance, pushing carriers to improve efficiency in areas that hadn't received significant attention prior. This was seen most clearly in the area of driver workflow. The trend towards custom driver mobile apps continued, encompassing features such as communications, load planning, payroll/settlements, and document scanning.

Halvor Lines, a nine-consecutive year Best Fleet, provides an example of this. Their development and adoption of Electronic Bill of Lading (eBOL) technology, initially to reduce the need for drivers to have physical contact, proved to be popular among drivers and effective. Other fleets reported similar innovations, with equally positive results.

Different but the same

Fleets employing independent contractors operate very differently from those using company drivers, and the evaluation process takes that into consideration. While company driver fleets use employees and have the benefits of traditional HR best practices to help them, contractor fleets are closer to a franchise model - they need their contractors to have independent business success in order to thrive. While there are many areas where both business types overlap, there are some that are distinctly different. As such, the Best Fleets program uses different questionnaires for each type, and scores their programs independently. The results tables on the following pages note the questions that apply specifically to contractor fleets, and the places where the questions are the same but the scoring criteria are different.

"I LOVE TO COMPETE ON THE BASIS OF THE WAY WE TREAT OUR PEOPLE!"

Andrew Boyle
 Co-President and CFO || Boyle Transportation
 Vice Chair || American Trucking Associations
 Best Fleets Podcast, Episode 5



Tune in and listen to Chris Henry, VP of Customer Experience & Recognition Programs at CarriersEdge chat with some of Best Fleets' finest about the program, their fleets and more.

EPISODE 1	Jane Jazrawy & Mark Murrell 	Rick Williams 
EPISODE 3	Marli Hall 	Mike Zelek & Peter Koza 
EPISODE 5	Andrew Boyle 	Brian Fielkow 
EPISODE 7	Sherri Garner Brumbaugh & Tim Chruski 	Debbie Landry & Adam Lang 

2021 BEST Fleets TO DRIVE FOR[®]

This year's Top 20 are a diverse group, with fleets of all sizes, hauling different kinds of freight, from a variety of regions across North America.

SMALL CARRIER CATEGORY	LOCATION	DRIVERS / OWNER-OPS	YEARS IN TOP 20
Boyle Transportation (Boyle)	Billerica, MA	130	7 (Consecutive)
Central Oregon Truck Company, Inc. (COTC)	Redmond, OR	283	8 (Consecutive)
Chief Carriers, Inc. (Chief)	Grand Island, NE	59	1
FTC Transportation, Inc. (FTCT)	Oklahoma City, OK	25	9 (Consecutive)
Garner Trucking, Inc. (Garner)	Findlay, OH	87	5 (Consecutive)
Grand Island Express, Inc. (GIX)	Grand Island, NE	145	10 (Consecutive)
Jetco Delivery LLC (Jetco)	Houston, TX	130	1
Thomas E. Keller Trucking Inc. (TKeller)	Defiance, OH	222	4 (Consecutive)
Transpro Freight Systems Limited (Transpro)	Milton, ON	67	8 (Consecutive)
Wellington Group of Companies (WMF)	Cambridge, ON	59	2 (Consecutive)

LARGE CARRIER CATEGORY	LOCATION	DRIVERS / OWNER-OPS	YEARS IN TOP 20
American Central Transport (ACT)	Kansas City, MO	300	4 (Consecutive)
Bison Transport Inc (Bison)	Winnipeg, MB	2050	11 (8 Consecutive)
Challenger	Cambridge, ON	1070	5 (2 Consecutive)
Erb Transport (Erb)	New Hamburg, ON	861	9
Fortigo Freight Services, Inc. (Fortigo)	Etobicoke, ON	385	2 (Consecutive)
Fremont Contract Carriers, Inc. (FCC)	Fremont, NE	453	11 (2 Consecutive)
Halvor Lines, Inc. (Halvor)	Superior, WI	580	9 (Consecutive)
Nussbaum Transportation Services, Inc. (Nussbaum)	Hudson, IL	424	7 (Consecutive)
Prime Inc. (Prime)	Springfield, MO	8500	7 (6 Consecutive)
Wilson Logistics Inc. (Wilson)	Springfield, MO	960	1

2021 Fleets to Watch[™]

In addition to the Top 20, every year we identify five fleets who caught our eye.

AirTime Express Inc.
Mississauga, ON

Boyd Bros.
Transportation, Inc.
Clayton, AL

Carbon Express, Inc.
Wharton, NJ

K & J Trucking, Inc
Sioux Falls, SD

Western Dairy
Transport LLC
Cabool, MO

Why are we watching them?

The Fleets to Watch are companies that stood out during the evaluation program for one reason or another. It may be particularly creative ideas, because they surprised us with something noteworthy that we hadn't seen before, or because we've seen the progress they're making and know they're on their way to the Top 20.

Each year, there are companies previously named as Fleets to Watch who make it onto the Top 20, so it's definitely worth paying attention to these fleets: there's greatness in their future!



SCORING RESULTS





COMPENSATION

What it tells us

What efforts the company is making to provide a stable, predictable income for drivers (and owner-operators).

Notable developments

The average annual driver compensation among this year's winners reached the elusive \$70K mark for the first time in Best Fleets history, with an average of \$70,896. Was this a red-herring or a temporary result of pandemic-fueled bonus pay? We'll know for sure next year. While there was a slight decline in the scores related to guaranteed pay options, there were more carriers considering time-based and salary pay programs for the future.

Scoring

1. Do you offer any kind of guaranteed pay for drivers?

- 1: None/detention, layover pay, hourly local
- 2: Student/orientation/only some positions, transition
- 3: Full guarantee, many requirements, \$1000 or less, >\$1000 but not all positions
- 4: Full guarantee, lower requirements

2. Is there a range in the starting pay for drivers and/or owner-ops? That is, does everyone doing the same work start at the same base rate, or are there ranges based on experience and/or skill level?

- 1: No range
- 2: Range during/after probation
- 3: Range from day one

3. (Owner-Operator fleets only) Do you offer financial incentives, such as bonuses or equipment purchase plans, in addition to base rates?

- 1: Minimal (e.g., clean inspection or safety)
- 2: Some (e.g., clean inspection + safety)
- 3: Clean inspection, discounts, reward programs
- 4: Additional bonuses

4. Do you pay drivers/owner-operators for attending orientation. If so, how much?

COMPANY DRIVER/MIXED FLEETS

- 0: Hotel/transportation/meals covered only
- 1: Less than or equal to \$100/day/bonus after time
- 2: Greater than \$100/day (or less than + extras)
- 3: Greater than \$150/day
- 4: \$200/day or greater

OWNER-OPERATOR FLEETS

- 0: No
- 2: Travel (food & hotel)
- 4: Pay/Signing bonus

5. Do you offer any profit sharing or stock options?

- 0: No
- 2: Yes

CARRIER	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5
ACT	2	3	-	4	0
Bison	2	1	-	2	0
Boyle	4	1	-	4	0
COTC	4	3	-	4	0
Challenger	1	3	-	4	0
Chief	2	3	-	4	0
Erb	1	3	-	3	2
Fortigo	-	-	3	4	0
FCC	2	3	-	3	2
FTCT	2	3	-	2	0
Garner	3	3	-	1	0
GIX	4	3	-	2	2
Halvor	2	3	-	4	0
Jetco	3	1	-	3	0
TKeller	3	3	-	2	0
Nussbaum	4	3	-	3	2
Prime	2	3	-	4	0
Transpro	-	-	4	4	0
WMF	4	3	-	4	2
Wilson	2	2	-	2	0



BENEFITS / NON-FINANCIAL COMPENSATION

What it tells us

How well the company takes care of its drivers/contractors, outside of the workplace.

Notable developments

This year, we took the necessary step of breaking out the availability of a retirement plan versus the amount of contribution that companies are willing to make. Having a 401K or RRSP available for employees has become table stakes, and apart from some administrative work, companies do not incur any direct costs until they make a matching contribution themselves. Similarly, as noted in the driver surveys, the qualification period for benefits can be a deciding factor when choosing to join a carrier. Companies need to weigh the risk of lower qualifying periods with the benefit of a potentially larger hiring pool.

Scoring

- (Owner-Operator fleets only) Are non company-sponsored health insurance programs available for contractors to participate in? (For instance, life insurance, medical/dental, downtime, tractor)**
0: No
2: Yes
- How long does it take to qualify for benefits?**
1: After 90 days
2: After 60 days
3: After 30 days
4: Immediately
- Does the company offer a pension or retirement savings plan? For Owner-Operator Fleets, has the company arranged availability of a retirement savings program for independent contractors to purchase?**
0: No
2: Yes
- If the company matches any portion of employee contribution to the retirement plan, what is the total contribution in the past year, as a percent of the total payroll?**
1: Available but no company contribution
2: Company contribution - under 1% of payroll contributed
3: Significant contribution/participation - over 1% payroll contributed
- What is the company's policy regarding vacation and other time off requests (e.g. stat holidays, medical, bereavement).**
0: No paid time off
1: Basic (e.g., 1 week after 1 year, CLC Minimums for CA)
2: Basic with accelerated ramp up (e.g., 3 after 5), higher top end
3: Exceeds basic from the beginning

CARRIER	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5
ACT	-	2	2	2	3
Bison	-	1	2	1	1
Boyle	-	2	2	2	3
COTC	-	2	2	2	2
Challenger	-	3	2	2	2
Chief	-	1	2	2	3
Erb	-	1	2	2	3
Fortigo	2	-	2	-	-
FCC	-	3	2	2	3
FTCT	-	2	2	2	3
Garner	-	3	2	-	3
GIX	-	3	2	1	2
Halvor	-	2	2	2	2
Jetco	-	3	2	2	3
TKeller	-	3	2	2	2
Nussbaum	-	2	2	1	3
Prime	-	1	2	2	2
Transpro	2	-	2	-	-
WMF	-	4	2	1	2
Wilson	-	2	2	2	3



PERFORMANCE & RECOGNITION

What it tells us

How effectively the company measures, recognizes, and manages individual performance.

Notable developments

We started assessing how carriers measure fleet manager (dispatcher) performance, given the importance of their relationship with drivers.

Scoring

1. How is driver performance evaluated?

- 0: None
- 1: Basic program, limited data / frequency
- 2: Enhanced program, more data / frequency
- 3: Monthly updates
- 4: More than monthly

2. Beyond bonus programs, is there recognition for top performers? If so, what is it and when does it happen?

- 1: Driver of Year / annual award / adhoc recognition
- 2: Driver of Month / Driver of Quarter, light recognition
- 3: Variety of rewards/metrics, peer involvement
- 4: Multiple reward types, special reward (trips, events, press), 3-5 things, peer involvement
- 5: Wide range of programs/metrics, regular/ongoing recognition (more than 5 things), peer involvement

3. Is there a benchmarking system in place for top performers. If so, is the information available to drivers?

COMPANY DRIVER/MIXED FLEETS

- 1: Nothing formal
- 3: Basic metrics, top performers
- 5: Multiple metrics, comparisons

OWNER-OPERATOR FLEETS

- 1: Few metrics, fuel/MPG
- 2: Some metrics, regular basis
- 3: Several metrics, on-demand

4. Does the company include any driver-related metrics when evaluating dispatcher (or fleet manager) performance? If so, please provide details.

- 0: None
- 1: Performance only
- 2: Performance + retention, few metrics
- 3: Multiple metrics, satisfaction
- 4: Substantial variety, depth of metrics, satisfaction

5. What happens once a driver has had a collision or infraction?

- 1: Training/discipline focused
- 2: Investigative focus, coaching/training, driver(s) involved
- 3: Coaching/training + development plan, behavior focused (done "with", rather than done "to", the driver)

CARRIER	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5
ACT	2	5	5	4	3
Bison	4	5	5	4	3
Boyle	2	1	5	2	3
COTC	4	5	5	2	3
Challenger	3	4	5	2	3
Chief	2	4	5	2	3
Erb	3	4	5	1	3
Fortigo	2	4	1	4	2
FCC	2	3	5	2	1
FTCT	2	5	5	4	3
Garner	2	5	3	2	2
GIX	4	4	5	3	3
Halvor	3	4	5	2	3
Jetco	1	3	1	3	3
TKeller	4	5	5	3	2
Nussbaum	4	4	5	3	3
Prime	4	4	5	4	3
Transpro	2	5	2	2	3
WMF	3	3	3	2	3
Wilson	1	4	3	3	3



HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY

What it tells us

How well the company builds, maintains, and brings new people into its culture.

Notable developments

Diversity improvement among winners was noted in a higher percentage of LGBTQ participation among their drivers, along with additional efforts to recruit those within this community.

We also identified unique onboarding strategies and practices, which led us to augment the scoring legend to capture these approaches. Similarly, we enhanced the legend related to the question about message consistency, as this specific topic was more important than ever in 2020.

Scoring

- 1. Do you hire entry level drivers? If yes, outline the program and number of participants in a typical year**
 - 1: No program
 - 2: Small program, partnership with driving school/ad hoc/LP coaching
 - 3: Moderate program, cover % of tuition/some results (-10% of total drivers)
 - 4: Substantial investment/cover tuition, finishing program only, results (-20%+)
 - 5: Substantial investment; CDL training, certified or multiple programs, results (-40%+, small co -20%+)
- 2. How many previously employed/contracted drivers/owner-operators returned during the past year? If you take specific actions or have a program to encourage those returns, please include those details as well.**
 - 1: No returns
 - 2: Some returns/ad hoc
 - 3: Return program, large number of returns
- 3. How does the company ensure its total work environment (i.e. compensation, benefits, professional development programs, policies, etc.) meets the needs of drivers?**
 - 1: Open door policy/industry reports/outside comparisons
 - 2: Annual survey OR committee/liaison plus informal feedback
 - 3: Multiple surveys plus committees
 - 4: Multiple surveys, meetings + 1 other initiative
 - 5: Intensive effort (multiple methods of getting feedback) with executive/senior leadership outreach
- 4. Beyond the legal requirements, how does the company encourage workforce diversity? How are those efforts reflected in your committees, management teams, and other organizational groups?**
 - 0: Equal opportunity, no effort
 - 1: Associations OR bilingual staff
 - 2: Recruiting efforts OR management representation (no results)
 - 3: Bilingual support staff and some representation management/DABs/training, results
 - 4: Strong documented inclusion programs, investment + results
 - 5: Ethnic/disability/gender inclusion + results (2 of 3)
- 5. How do you ensure that your drivers are not subjected to, or contributors to, inappropriate, hostile, or toxic work environments?**
 - 1: Basic, policy and response process, focused on shippers
 - 3: TAT, terminal based programs, only at orientation OR customer score card
 - 5: Proactive reporting (app, macro or phone number) and recurring harassment training
- 6. Do you have a pet policy? If so, what is it?**
 - 0: No
 - 1: Service animals/other exceptions
 - 2: Yes
- 7. Do you have a military recruitment program? If so, please describe how it works and how many vets you have hired as a result of the program.**
 - 1: None/limited
 - 2: Informal or recognition/support (wraps, decals)
 - 3: Formal or recognition/support
 - 4: Formal + multiple methods of recognition/support
- 8. Describe the company's onboarding program after hire.**
 - 1: Post-orientation check-ins/review only
 - 2: Check-ins/Surveys, ad hoc mentoring
 - 3: Check-ins/surveys AND expectations exchange/driver mentors/special dispatch/follow up orientation/pre-orientation welcome
 - 4: Check-ins/surveys AND expectations exchange AND one other

5: Exec involvement/pre-orientation comms, expectations exchange/mentor program, AND checkins/surveys

9. How do you ensure consistency in the messages from recruiting, safety, and operations?

1. Focused on staff knowledge/staff in orientation
2. Ad hoc meetings when issues arise/email only/hand in hand
3. Regular retention and communication meetings OR systems support
4. SOPs/KPIs/cross-training/systems to ensure consistency AND regular meetings

10. Is there a driver committee or advisory board at your company?

- 1: Nothing specific
- 2: Periodic/informal/office driven, social media

3: New program, drivers provide input, company committee participation, annual

4: Quarterly, formal, driver-led, one main committee

5: Ongoing (regular meetings) or multiple committees, driver-led, diversity

11. Does the company provide any reimbursements, subsidies, or giveaways for clothing or PPE? If so, how much and how often?

- 1: Informal, PPE primarily
- 2: Some discounts/vouchers provided, limited freebies (orientation, Driver Appreciation Week)
- 3: Company store discounts, occasional freebies, anniversary gifts and extra (under \$50)
- 4: Substantial, full uniform AND boot/clothing allowance (\$100-200)

CARRIER	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11
ACT	4	2	5	4	5	2	4	5	4	4	3
Bison	4	3	5	5	5	2	4	3	4	5	4
Boyle	2	3	5	4	5	2	3	5	3	5	4
COTC	5	3	5	4	5	1	4	5	4	5	3
Challenger	5	1	5	5	5	2	2	3	3	5	3
Chief	3	2	4	3	5	2	2	5	4	4	3
Erb	4	2	5	3	3	2	2	5	3	4	4
Fortigo	-	2	4	4	5	-	1	4	4	2	3
FCC	3	2	5	4	3	1	4	5	4	5	3
FTCT	2	2	5	3	3	2	3	5	4	5	3
Garner	5	2	5	5	3	1	3	5	3	5	3
GIX	5	2	5	5	3	2	4	5	4	4	3
Halvor	4	2	5	5	3	2	3	5	4	4	4
Jetco	2	2	3	5	3	-	1	5	2	5	4
TKeller	4	2	4	3	5	2	4	4	4	5	4
Nussbaum	5	2	5	3	5	2	4	4	3	4	4
Prime	5	3	5	5	5	2	4	5	3	5	4
Transpro	-	2	3	3	3	-	2	5	3	2	4
WMF	3	2	4	5	3	2	4	5	4	4	3
Wilson	5	2	3	5	5	2	4	4	4	3	3



OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

What it tells us

What the day-to-day working experience is like in the company; what efforts the company is making to continuously improve efficiency.

Notable developments

Since COVID is (hopefully) a once-in-a-generation event, we took the opportunity to document the efforts carriers took and are taking to keep their drivers safe, and more importantly support them mentally. In addition, we clarified the question about each carrier's process for evaluating and selecting new technology. This question tells us a lot about how companies stay on the leading edge, as opposed to the bleeding edge.

Scoring

1. (Owner-Operator fleets only) What programs does the company provide to assist independent contractors in maintaining their equipment?

- 1: Basic maintenance/parts discounts
- 3: Discount/inspections plus additional programs
- 5: Extensive programs, options

2. Do drivers have input into vehicle specs or selection?

- 0: No
- 1: Light/informal/reactive
- 2: Formal proactive process
- 3: Multiple formal processes, personalized reward, direct testing, OEM visits

3. How does the company minimize equipment-related downtime?

- 1: Basic/light processes, few hrs down
- 2: Some effort, occasional off time PM, cross-training, pay for waiting
- 3: Significant effort, most/all PM during off time, significant cross-training

4. Do you have annual targets for safety record improvement?

- 1: General/non-specific target
- 2: Some specific targets
- 3: Multiple specific targets, action plan

5. What mechanisms are in place to avoid or resolve problems with shippers (such as excess waiting time, unsafe yards or poor treatment)?

COMPANY DRIVER/MIXED FLEETS

- 1: Informal process, occasional pay, longer wait
- 2: Formal process, pay @ 2 hours
- 3: Pay @ 90 minutes; proactive program, driver feedback process/app
- 4: Pay @ 1 hr; proactive program(s), driver feedback process/app
- 5: Pay for all, special structures

OWNER-OPERATOR FLEETS

- 1: Handle case by case, drivers paid after company recoups
- 3: Formal process, drivers paid after 2 hrs
- 5: Proactive ongoing work with shippers, drivers paid after 1 hr or less

6. Does the company have a policy for handling operations during natural disasters (e.g. hurricanes, floods, forest fires)?

- 1: Informal process, driver focus
- 2: Remote work, some policies
- 3: Significant redundancy, investment, formal plans

7. What operational changes did you make to support drivers during the COVID-19 pandemic? NEW

- 1: Basic (PPE, increased cleaning)
- 2: Several supports in place (basic + 1 or 2)
- 3: Significant effort made and multiple supports in place (basic + 2 significant or 3+ supports)

8. Does the company have a policy for protecting against cyber attacks? NEW

- 0: No policy or protection OR 3rd party only
- 1: Limited/basic protection: focus on one area of protection, no training
- 2: Adequate protection: several systems, policy or processes in place, some training
- 3: Extension protection: robust systems, significant processes, multi-layered, training

9. How do you minimize problems related to parking availability for drivers on the road?

- 1: Minimal effort, rare reimbursement
- 2: Occasional reimbursement, app use, other limited effort
- 3: Paid program, multiple terminals/locations, + effort
- 4: Dedicated, fully managed, paid + training, etc.

10. When drivers do get home, how many days off do they typically get before heading back out again?

- 1: <34 hrs average
- 2: 34-48 hrs
- 3: 48+ hrs, daily or multiple per week

11. What technology is used to improve fleet safety? (e.g., driving simulators, in-cab cameras, anti-rollover devices)

- 1: Minimal tech
- 2: Some safety tech
- 3: Standard safety tech
- 4: Multiple standard tech, some advanced items
- 5: Extensive truck tech, multiple advanced items

12. What technology is provided to help drivers be more efficient? (e.g., email, mobile apps, other devices)

- 1: Limited, 3rd party apps only
- 3: Standard tools, dedicated/enhanced app
- 5: Device provision, company email, extensive app/portal, company email, moon shot

13. Beyond truck-related equipment, what is your process for evaluating and selecting new technology? (e.g., driver scorecards, HR systems, mobile apps)

- 1: Limited collaboration
- 2: Collaborative process or multi-vendor review
- 3: Multi-vendor and collaborative process

CARRIER	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13
ACT	-	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	4	3	2
Bison	-	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	4	2	5	5	3
Boyle	-	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	4	2	4	5	3
COTC	-	2	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	2	5	5	3
Challenger	-	3	3	2	3	3	2	3	2	2	4	3	3
Chief	-	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	3	2	3	5	2
Erb	-	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	5	3	3
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FCC	-	2	1	3	4	3	3	1	2	2	3	3	3
FTCT	-	1	2	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	3	3	3
Garner	-	2	3	2	3	1	3	2	3	3	4	1	2
GIX	-	2	1	3	3	2	3	3	2	2	5	5	3
Halvor	-	2	3	3	4	3	3	3	2	2	5	5	3
Jetco	-	2	2	1	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	5	2
TKeller	-	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	2	4	5	1
Nussbaum	-	3	2	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	5	5	3
Prime	-	3	2	3	3	1	3	2	3	2	4	5	2
Transpro	5	-	-	3	5	3	3	3	3	-	-	1	2
WMF	-	2	2	2	5	2	3	1	4	3	1	1	2
Wilson	-	1	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	5	5	2



DEVELOPMENT & CAREER / BUSINESS BUILDING

What it tells us

What efforts the company makes to improve driver skill levels and provide growth opportunities; how the company helps its contractors become smarter business owners.

Notable developments

We continue to observe new coaching and mentoring activities among drivers, focused on proactive training and personal development. Since 2020 was the year of the 'zoom', the adoption of virtual meeting and training technology was kicked into high gear. As expected, efforts to move more training activities online accelerated, as did the sources of data to support and reinforce the need for targeted training.

Scoring

- 1. How many training days, on average, do drivers get in their first year with the company? How many in subsequent years?**
 - 1: Orientation + short monthly online, ad hoc coaching
 - 2: Orientation, monthly online, other informal opportunities after 1st year, some regular coaching/meetings
 - 3: In-depth regular online, formal meeting/regular coaching, hands-on opportunities/growth
 - 4: Ongoing multiple opportunities, regular online, opportunities for growth (Owner-Operator fleets - ATBS/formal business program)
- 2. Are drivers compensated for attending or completing training? If yes, how and how much?**
 - 1: No direct compensation, onboarding only
 - 2: Points, company bucks, travel
 - 3: Direct pay for some, not all/bonus-based
 - 4: Compensated for all
- 3. Are there any continuing education opportunities, beyond job-related safety training, provided for drivers? (e.g., tuition reimbursement, grants or scholarships, corporate university, seminars or conferences)**
 - 1: Minimal/informal
 - 2: Pay for conferences/seminars/memberships, promote 3rd party
 - 3: CDL reimbursement
 - 4: Small or unspecified value scholarship/tuition reimbursement
 - 5: Formal programs, large investment, company developed/funded
- 4. Do you have any programs to help drivers complete supplemental industry certifications? (e.g. hazmat endorsement, FAST or TWIC)**
 - 1: No
 - 2: Yes
- 5. Beyond on-boarding and new entrant training, are there any formal coaching or mentoring programs available for drivers? If so, how do they work?**
 - 1: Driver trainers only, new hire contacts
 - 2: Formal mentor program, few details, comp. unclear
 - 3: Driver mentor program, formal, paid
- 6. What education or professional development programs are in place to continue improving the quality of your management team?**
 - 1: Minimal (task or performance focused, informal, weekly meetings)
 - 2: Occasional, association involvement, staff attends orientation/driver training
 - 3: Benchmarking groups, 2+ programs, captives
 - 4: Formal programs/certification (e.g., Dale Carnegie, CREST, ISO, NATM), regular training opportunities
 - 5: Substantial internal effort, formal development programs, driver-focused programs
- 7. How does the company encourage the sharing of best practices among drivers?**
 - 1: Company newsletter/kudos over satellite
 - 2: Some content from drivers (newsletter/podcast)
 - 3: Driver social media, meetings, mentor/training programs
- 8. How does the company structure and deliver driver meetings? (Two-way communication, not including messages or documents via satellite)**
 - 1: Infrequent/informal, unidirectional/1 on 1
 - 2: Periodic/formal, bidirectional, live only
 - 3: Multiple delivery formats OR frequent live only OR frequent, primarily 1 way
 - 3: Bidirectional, multiple delivery formats, collaborative online

9. How does the company use social media to engage with drivers?

- 1: Recruiting only
- 2: Used for some group discussion/public only
- 3: Private groups, advanced usage

10. Are drivers encouraged to join industry associations? (e.g. state or provincial associations, public image groups like Trucker Buddy or WIT)

- 1: Informal
- 2: Some involvement, 1-2 organizations specifically (WIT, OOIDA)
- 3: Broad involvement, engagement (trucking championships/Association award + 1+ organizations)
- 4: Broad involvement, engagement (trucking championships/Association award + 3+ organizations)

CARRIER	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
ACT	2	3	3	2	2	3	3	4	2	3
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Transpro	3	4	2	-	3	4	2	3	2	4
WMF	3	4	5	2	2	2	2	2	3	2
Wilson	3	4	3	2	3	4	3	2	2	3



WORK / LIFE BALANCE

What it tells us

How the company supports drivers/contractors when they're not driving.

Notable developments

An ironic, but temporary, trend among participants is that the quality of driver facilities and access to buildings has never been better, but every carrier had to make efforts to reduce access due to COVID. Despite limited physical access and connection to drivers, more carriers detailed their efforts to support driver's mental and spiritual health via EAP and formal in-house chaplains and therapy. An often-overlooked area, is the effort made by carriers to keep their drivers safe while the truck isn't moving. Beyond some limited self-defence training, many don't have a detailed response in this area.

Scoring

- 1. What facilities do you have available at your terminal(s) for drivers? (e.g. showers, laundry, kitchen, Internet access, TV, cafeteria, separate women's facilities)**
 - 1: Standard - Shower, vending machines, computer/ internet, laundry at some locations
 - 3: Expanded facilities (e.g. gym, healthcare, free food) at some locations, standard facilities at all
 - 5: Expanded facilities at multiple locations, one or more with substantially expanded
- 2. What facilities do you provide for drivers in the truck or on the road? (e.g. in-cab amenities like fridges, entertainment, high quality beds or seats; hotel or meal allowances)**
 - 1: Standard (APU, inverter, fridge)
 - 2: Minimal enhancement (sat radio, upgraded seats) (1 extra thing)
 - 3: Some enhancements
 - 4: Several enhancements, hotel options
 - 5: Multiple enhancements, substantial hotel, home daily
- 3. What types of support systems are available for drivers or their families?(e.g. EAP, daycare, concierge, emotional support)**
 - 1: Open door policy, informal support
 - 2: Some programs (EAP or equivalent)
 - 3: Formal support program (counseling, concierge) beyond EAP
- 4. Does the company provide health and wellness programs for drivers?**
 - 1: None/few services
 - 2: 3rd party offerings/discounts
 - 3: 3rd party offerings + some dedicated services/programs
 - 4: Extensive/enhanced dedicated programs
- 5. Do you offer any programs to help drivers stay safe when not driving? (e.g. self-defense training, panic buttons)**

0: Nothing
1: Limited, ad hoc, TAT
2: Orientation, C-TPAT, parking, dispatch, call number/app
3: Formal program, panic button
- 6. Do you provide programs that assist drivers with financial or legal issues? If so, does the company pay any portion of the cost?**

COMPANY DRIVER/MIXED FLEETS
1: Minimal, ad-hoc loans, referrals
2: EAP only
3: Company-sponsored services, multiple options

OWNER-OPERATOR FLEETS
1: Minimal, ad-hoc loans, referrals
2: 3rd party discounts
3: Direct support, multiple options
- 7. What kinds of social events does the company have for drivers?**
 - 1: Under 3 events, office planning only
 - 2: 4 - 5 events, driver involvement
 - 3: 6+ events, driver involvement
- 8. What percentage of drivers attend or participate in these social events?**
 - 1: Limited, don't know
 - 2: Good participation OR effort to get to everyone at least once
 - 3: Good participation in at least one event + effort
- 9. How do you support the outside interests of drivers? (e.g. sponsor sports teams, support driver causes)**
 - 1: Participation in company, some ad hoc
 - 2: Participation in company, contribution plan
 - 3: Some employee influence, company paid
 - 4: Large employee influence, company paid, active large group

10. How much involvement do independent contractors have in the company's community work and charitable contributions?

- 1: Company-directed only
- 2: Ad-hoc sponsorships, IC-funded donations
- 3: Formal process or driver-focused

11. What efforts do you make to improve the overall image of the trucking industry?

- 1: Equipment, light association or outreach (1-3 things)
- 2: Multiple programs, some investment (4-5 things)
- 3: Significant programs and substantial investment (6-8 things)

12. What efforts are you making to improve the company's environmental impact?

COMPANY DRIVER/MIXED FLEETS

- 1: Nothing specific
- 2: Smartway/encouragement
- 3: Facilities + on road emissions prevention
- 4: Facilities, on road emissions, major effort

OWNER-OPERATOR FLEETS

- 1: Nothing specific
- 2: Smartway/encouragement
- 3: Facilities + on road emissions prevention
- 4: Facilities, on road emissions, major effort

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WMF	3	4	1	3	2	2	3	3	4	-	2	3
Wilson	3	3	2	2	2	1	3	2	3	-	2	5

20 BEST Fleets TO DRIVE FOR

1 Best Overall Fleet for Large Carrier, sponsored by EpicVue

Brent Nussbaum, Nussbaum Transportation (center), with Jane Jazrawy, CarriersEdge, and Lance Platt, EpicVue

2 Best Overall Fleet for Small Carrier, sponsored by TruckRight

Andrew Boyle, Boyle Transportation (center), with Jane Jazrawy, CarriersEdge, and Dirk Kuper, TruckRight.





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