

8 Specs

Fleet Profile

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Smart choices

Improving
productivity and
customer service
at E.J. Stutzman

For Jeff Stutzman, the drive to provide a unique brand of customer service is the primary motivator behind the decisions he makes for the E.J. Stutzman fleet. "It takes the right equipment to provide dedicated cus-

tomers service," says the president and chief executive officer of the flatbed services provider. "Dependability is the main influence on our purchasing and specification decisions."

Sugarcreek, Ohio-based E.J. Stutzman fields 30 Freightliner Cascadia and Columbia tractors and 34 East Manufacturing 48- and 53-ft. by 102-in. flatbed trailers. Included are six Conestoga models for multi-stop use, along with another half dozen drop deck units. Designed for varying load operations, the fleet hauls throughout the U.S. and in Ontario. Loads include steel rod, plastic conduit and drainage pipe, lumber goods and components used by the energy market such as wind turbines and solar panels.

"We have reliable equipment so our customers can count on us to successfully handle their cargo," Stutzman says. "All of our trailers and tractors are purchased for a long

Jeff Stutzman
President and
Chief Executive Officer





E.J. Stutzman Tractor Specifications

Models: Freightliner Cascadia, Columbia
Wheelbase: 230-235 in.
Engine: Detroit
Transmission: Eaton Fuller 10-speed
Driveshafts: Meritor
Front Axle & Suspension: Hendrickson, air ride
Power Steering: TRW
Rear Axle: Detroit
Rear Suspension: Freightliner Airliner
Wheel Seals: Stemco
Brakes: Meritor
ABS: Meritor WABCO
Automatic Slack Adjusters: Meritor
Wheels: Alcoa
Tires: Michelin; 275/80R22.5 XZA-3 steer, 445/50R22.5 X One XDN2 drive
5th Wheel: Fontaine, HOLLAND
Air Compressor: Bendix
Air Dryer: Meritor WABCO
Air Cleaners: Donaldson
Fan Clutch: Kysor
Starter: Delco
Alternator: Delco
Fuel Heater: Davco
Lighting: Truck-Lite
Seats: Bostrom
Paint: Dupont Imron

service life and to give us a weight advantage for carrying heavy cargo, including loads up to 50,000 lbs.

"We are big fans of aluminum," Stutzman continues. "We purchased our first aluminum trailer in 1986, and 20 years ago, we began buying trailers exclusively from East Manufacturing. Those models are engineered so well that our oldest East flatbed is still in operation."

The durability of the East spread-axle flatbed and drop deck trailers in the E.J. Stutzman fleet, Stutzman notes, is in the dual-T main beam and tubular crossmember design. "That balances load stresses more evenly," he explains, "and the T-shaped extrusions are welded not bolted, which also minimizes stress. Additionally, added strength comes from the full-length continuous welds that join the floor boards to the main beams on the East units."

Right specs

While dependable and versatile equipment provides E.J. Stutzman with heavy haul and flexible load carrying options, Jeff Stutzman says that another key part of providing highly reliable service is the fleet's invest-



ment in the right tractors. "We generally buy used trucks that are two or three years old because we can get more for our money," he relates. "At the same time, we only buy when the specs are right for our operation."

"We've found that Cascadia tractors have the right attributes," Stutzman adds. "They have the power and durability we need, are lighter in weight and are driver friendly. Back that up with a dedicated in-house maintenance operation with one part-time and three full-time technicians and it's a winning combination."

Stutzman is also constantly on the lookout for the latest equipment and technologies to incorporate in the fleet and willingly works with suppliers to evaluate new systems

E.J. Stutzman Trailer Specifications

Model: East Manufacturing, flatbed
Length: 48-ft., 53-ft. by 102-in.
Landing Gear: Jost, HOLLAND
Axles & Suspension: Hendrickson INTRAAX
Oil Seals: Stemco
Brakes: Meritor
ABS: Meritor
Tires: Michelin 275/80R22.5 XTE
Wheels: Alcoa
Lighting & Electrical: Truck-Lite

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and components. "We're using a prototype trailer from East and providing the manufacturer with feedback," he relates. "Also, Freightliner brought us a Cascadia tractor with the Detroit DT12 automated manual transmission to test for a few weeks, and we're also looking at new automatic gearboxes from Allison Transmission to see how they might fit in our operation."

A driver-focused choice made recently by E.J. Stutzman was to equip the fleet's tractors with Rand McNally TPC 7600 communications, tracking and electronic log systems. The on-board technology is integrated with the carrier's Prophecy Transportation dispatch software.

"With these solutions we're investing in ways to better manage our business," Stutzman says. "The technologies on our trucks and in our operations offices make us more



efficient, and by speeding up communication with drivers, we're saving time and improving productivity."

Timeliness

E.J. Stutzman is also using the latest information management technology to meet customer needs. "We have the ability to monitor and track shipments and we've implemented rapid-response scheduling," Stutzman relates. "We learned a long time ago that timeliness is important to our customers. Even though the tools we use to meet that goal have changed, our dedica-

tion to our customers hasn't wavered."

The original E.J. Stutzman, an auto repair and heavy towing service, was established in 1960 by Jeff Stutzman's father Eli. In 1980, the father and son started the E.J. Stutzman trucking business with six trucks, used primarily for local operations to haul lumber. Less than 20 years later, E.J. Stutzman filed for common carrier operating authority and began using 10 power units in over-the-road service. Today, the 30-truck family-owned business also includes LinCo Logistics Ltd., a full-service brokerage formed in 2006.

"We've gone through quite a transformation over the past 45 years," Stutzman states, "but even though our business has changed, we are still focused on providing customers with the quality freight service they need to get their cargo to its destination in a safe and timely manner.

"Dependable equipment and advanced technologies are the keys to creating long-term customer loyalty," Stutzman adds. "You've probably heard many companies say they are 'dedicated to customer service' but for us, it's a one-of-a-kind service that keeps customers coming back." 