

CASE STUDY:

Purolator's Elite Solution Uses "Off-Network" Assets for Fast International Delivery of Highly Sensitive Lab Specimens

Sometimes a shipment is so time sensitive, or fragile, that only a highly customized, non-traditional logistics solution can ensure its on-time delivery. This is especially true when the shipment has to cross an international border.

But that is exactly the situation one global biomedical company faced when it needed a solution to transport shipments of alligator blood from south Florida to medical labs and hospitals located across Canada.

Alligator blood? In fact, researchers have determined that alligator blood has [strong potential](#) for use in humans as an antibiotic. Researchers have found that alligator blood can successfully destroy several strains of bacteria, including some known to be resistant to antibiotics. To date, alligator blood has [destroyed](#) E. coli, salmonella, strep, staph infections, and a strain of HIV. Research is underway in multiple facilities to understand more about this apparent "super blood" and to explore its use in human health.

And not surprisingly, the swamps of southern Florida are an excellent source for finding alligator blood donors. The biomedical company maintains a facility nearby and, from there, distributes blood samples to additional facilities, including dozens located across Canada.

However, transporting blood samples is no ordinary task. Shipments require extremely expedited transit, temperature control, and quality packaging, among other considerations. For one thing, samples have a short 72-hour shelf life after which deterioration begins, making the samples unusable. And, shipments fall within the scope of [CITES](#) – the Convention on International

Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora – international agreement, which regulates international trade of wild animals and plants. In this instance, shipments require a special permit from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the U.S. agency charged with implementing the CITES agreement. CITES compliance is in addition to Canadian import requirements and U.S. export mandates that need to be satisfied. Shippers require their samples to be delivered both on time AND in the proper condition.

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The biomedical company realized its logistics strategy would be the key to success. Samples would need to move from south Florida, across the border to Canada, and then be distributed to medical facilities across that country within hours.

Could it be done? Well, lab managers came across several logistics providers that claimed to have the necessary experience and capabilities. But when the time came to put those plans down on paper, the actual strategies fell far short.

Fortunately, managers also called on Purolator International and were pleasantly surprised not just by the speed with which lab shipments would arrive in Canada but by the company's highly innovative approach and strong commitment to personalized service.

Purolator's Elite Service – Focus on Speed with High Levels of Specialized Services

As a non-asset based logistics provider, Purolator has the flexibility to build a solution from the ground up to meet each customer's exact needs. Rather than force a customer to adapt to a carrier's rigid schedule, Purolator's Elite service takes a "big-picture" look at available options and determines the optimal solution. In a way, Purolator acts similar to an orchestra conductor, putting all the necessary parts in place and then ensuring the pieces come together at exactly the right time to deliver precision-like accuracy and efficiency.

In addition, as the U.S. subsidiary of Purolator Inc., Canada's largest integrated freight and parcel carrier, and an iconic Canadian company, Purolator International has access to the largest distribution network in that country, which ensures seamless delivery to all provinces and territories.

In this instance, Purolator developed a three-legged solution:

1. Shipments are picked up from the biotech company's Miami location twice a week, on Monday and Wednesday mornings, and travel directly to Miami International Airport.
2. Shipments are immediately loaded onto an Air Canada flight with direct service to Toronto.
3. Upon arrival in Toronto, shipments are transported immediately to a local Purolator facility. Shipments arrive by 9 PM, and are broken down and loaded for final delivery to hospitals, labs, and health centres throughout Canada.

And integral to the Elite service, a messenger meets the shipment at every leg of the route, just in case.

- A representative is on hand in Miami to ensure shipments are properly loaded and that all customs paperwork is in order.

- Next, an agent meets the shipment in Toronto and ensures its seamless pickup and transit to Purolator's processing facility.

At each stage, Purolator's agent is on-site for proactive monitoring and immediate communication should a shipment be delayed, customs documentation be missing, or any other unexpected situation arise

And because of the fragility of the blood specimens being transported, Purolator's widely acclaimed "Puro-Touch" special handling ensures great care is exercised, including accurate temperature control and a minimal number of touches.

Not Just "Next Flight Out," but "Best Flight Out"

"Purolator's Elite service is really in a league of its own when it comes to speed, efficiency, and quality," says Expedited Services Manager, Joe Shaheen. "Think about it, we're moving shipments from southern Florida and have them out for delivery in Canada that night. No one else has that capability."

Shaheen also noted that when it comes to developing the best solution, the answer is not always to go with the fastest option.

"While we absolutely prioritize speed, sometimes that doesn't mean just going with the 'next flight out,'" he explained. "Instead, we look for the 'best flight out,' the option that will not only move the shipment on time but will allow us to seamlessly coordinate with other legs of the logistics solution."

This flexibility is integral to the Elite service. Because Purolator is non-asset based, its service team can go "off-network" in building the perfect solution for each customer without being restricted by company-owned routes and schedules that might not be as efficient. In this instance, for example, Purolator takes advantage of a mid-morning Air Canada flight with service direct to Toronto, which is the ideal solution for same-day transport of the blood samples.

Customer Very Satisfied

Purolator first offered this solution more than six years ago, and the customer has been very satisfied. The biomedical company has full confidence its shipments will arrive in Canada on time, as promised. In addition, company managers appreciate the unusually high levels of customer service Purolator offers. This includes the “on-the-ground” agents who monitor each leg of the shipping strategy, high levels of communication throughout the process, and ongoing account check-ins, just to make sure there are no issues of concern.

Purolator’s Elite Service Available Worldwide

While this example illustrates Purolator Elite’s effectiveness as a solution for shipments traveling between the United States and Canada, the service is available globally. Purolator maintains an extensive network of international assets that can be leveraged for international expedited service.

Logistics play a starring role when it comes to transporting highly fragile, time-sensitive shipments. Purolator Elite fills the bill and allows business managers the peace of mind of knowing their shipments will arrive on time, every time.