

PREMIUM CHASSIS EQUIPMENT ON RESERVE FOR IMPROVED CUSTOMER SERVICE

Bottom Line

Whisk Logistics LLC, founded in 2016, provides secure, asset-based port drayage services to customers at Ports in Los Angeles and Long Beach. It handles year-round import and export port drayage services for a range of customers, including large retailers, wholesalers, and freight forwarders. As Whisk's customers respond to an ever-changing dynamic world, forecasting consumer and commercial demands can be increasingly unpredictable, which alters, in real-time, its transportation and port drayage requirements. While Whisk bases its chassis procurement on monthly forecasted schedules, unexpected demand increases are becoming standard practice. To respond to these dynamic changes, Whisk Logistics signed up to use a premium chassis pool solution. Using DLCR, Whisk can adjust its available chassis inventory in an on-demand fashion, proactively responding to customers' needs in an efficient and timely manner.

Managing a Successful, Secure, Dependable, and Efficient Port Drayage Business

Whisk Logistics provides asset-based port drayage services, including trucks, private chassis, and secure yards to ensure efficient transportation

operations. It offers a weekly capacity of over 400+ port pick-ups, and has a fleet of 45 tractors, 45 drivers, and 450 GPS-enabled chassis. Whisk's secure yard features Samsara real-time tractor GPS and AI telematics with dual-facing in-cab cameras. Its customers range from big-box retailers and wholesalers to freight forwarders.

Whisk Logistics tracks its inventory in real-time and provides proactive customer service, ensuring its customers know the status of their containers. This commitment helps customers reduce demurrage and per diem costs and effectively plan their labor requirements. Its EDI compliance enables Whisk to unify its supply chain documentation, from orders to invoices, streamlining communication between different business systems.

Even with all these proactive elements in place, Whisk's customers face additional transportation challenges, namely fluctuating and unpredictable demands for port drayage services. To meet its mandate to strengthen relationships, Whisk needed a solution to manage these ever-changing volumes to support its customers' growth needs and goals. "Importers with large volumes look for drayage companies to have the expertise to manage their ebbs and flows, and to take care of their chassis needs," remarks Ray Wisniewski, president of Whisk Logistics LLC.

Anticipating the Unexpected

Planning and forecasting play a vital role in running a successful transportation organization. That includes understanding the impact external forces might have on operations and customer service requirements. When Ray Wisniewski looked to forecast operations for 2024, he had to identify the challenges his customers might face. Three major external influences stood out: the end of COVID, the Red Sea uncertainty, and labor negotiations. It was the end of COVID, a time when “we were all trying to figure out what that meant. We had importers that brought products in early,” comments Wisniewski. This resulted in a sudden increase in port drayage requirements. Uncertainty also existed with the unrest in the Red Sea and how it would impact international trade routes. “We also did not know what was going to happen with the negotiations between the East Coast and Gulf Coast ports and the International Longshoremen's Association. In fact, if there was going to be a long-term strike on the Eastern Gulf Coast, transportation executives had to consider setting up temporary transit facilities on the West Coast, and then trucking their goods to the East Coast,” he continues. That would mean a temporary increase in West Coast port drayage demands.



“We saw customers go ahead and play it safe,” remarks Wisniewski. As a result, “we had expected increased, fluctuating volumes,” which did not match the existing operational plans.

As an example, one of Whisk’s customers might know that they are “going to have a special project, or might have a warehouse backed up with inventory, sitting on containers.

They will need to inject additional chassis for weeks or months as they gear up for traditional peak season,” observes Wisniewski.

In addition, when moving goods from the port to a warehouse, it is easy to lose track of one chassis or container. Communication between the different departments is not always clear. Typically, organizations would respond by sending someone to investigate. This is a time-consuming process and creates a backlog at the warehouses.

Whisk and DCL

A long-term customer of Direct ChassisLink, Inc. (DCL), Whisk Logistics typically negotiated long-term leases and contracts for its chassis requirements.

Key Benefits of the DCLR Premium Solution



Provides flexibility and operational efficiency without long-term contracts.



Ensures immediate availability at specific locations.



Chassis are ready to use and in excellent condition.



GPS tracking simplifies asset location



Speeds up response to unexpected customer demands.



Eliminates time wasted managing pool inventories.



Reduces bottlenecks at warehouses and terminals.

Recently, DCLI introduced its Direct ChassisLink Reserve (DCLR) premium chassis pool solution. Organizations that register for DCLR can reserve chassis as needed, without a long-term contract. Chassis are made available at DCLR locations on demand, in a ready-to-go state, with guaranteed volume and utilization levels, ensuring chassis availability.

DCLR is straightforward to use. Whisk employees log into the DCLR reservation platform and reserve what they need. When the motor carrier arrives at the DCLR start/stop, the reserved chassis is staged and waiting for the driver, ready to go. DCLR chassis are road-ready – they're seven years old or newer with radial tires, LED lights, with built-in GPS, which is immensely helpful. We can return to the same portal and track the locations of the chassis," observes Wisniewski, "thereby eliminating the warehouse staff having to manually track the container."

This forward-thinking approach to chassis procurement offered by DCLR enables Whisk to proactively serve its customers. If a customer called and said, "Our projections are off, we need more chassis. We can respond with no problem. How many do you need? And once we have that information, we can then go straight to the website and reserve the DCLR chassis that we need," said Wisniewski.

"DCLI makes the equipment available almost immediately," observes Wisniewski. "All Chasis are in great shape, so we don't have to worry about any roadability issues."

Wisniewski continues, "DCLR bridges the gap between making a term lease commitment and having to deal with the local pools. It is a great match for sudden increased customer demands."

DCLR streamlines the process of managing available pool inventories. The guaranteed availability from capacity and utilization commitments allows Whisk to promptly respond to customer requests.

Customer Service is Key

Whisk's goal is to build long-term relationships with its customers. To achieve that goal, it must be able to respond and assist with their ever-evolving operational requirements. The DCLR premium chassis pool solution from DCLI enables Whisk Logistics to fulfill its mandate of proactively serving its customers, even as their port drayage requirements fluctuate. By using DCLR, it can now manage large volumes to support its customers' growth needs. With the added ability of leveraging GPS tracking devices on every DCLR chassis, Whisk and its customers have real-time data insights to make informed decisions.

Advice for Organizations Facing Similar Challenges

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I recommend that they reach out to DCLI and learn more about Direct ChassisLink Reserve and then start using it. What we like about working with DCLI is that even though it is a large company, the employees are incredibly responsive. They form a personal relationship, and it is easy to get someone on the phone or to respond quickly to emails," advises Wisniewski. "Whatever situation you might have, DCLI wants to figure out how they can customize a solution for you."

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DCLI is the largest provider of container chassis to the U.S. intermodal industry. With several chassis in our fleet, our mission is to transform the way that chassis work within the intermodal supply chain by focusing on equipment quality, operational efficiency, and delivering a great driver experience. Our ultimate goal is to be the industry's chassis partner of choice.



Let's Talk Supply Chain

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