



## case study

# Crown Premiums

## Consumer Goods/ Manufacturing

### GEOGRAPHIC AREA SERVED

North America

### CHALLENGE

- Streamline supply chain to get goods to market faster
- Reduce administrative requirements
- Improve service levels

### SOLUTION

- Implement UPS Trade Direct<sup>SM</sup> Ocean as a one-stop supply chain solution
- Integrate UPS Trade Direct<sup>SM</sup> Cross Border for uninterrupted flow-through to Canadian destinations

### RESULTS

- Delivery times reduced as much as three weeks
- Increased administrative efficiency and accuracy
- Improved customer satisfaction due to reduced product damage

## Keeping the Good Times Rolling at Crown Premiums

Crown Premiums is one of North America's leading purveyors of high-quality miniatures and collectibles. Since its humble beginnings in 1981, the Illinois-based company has assembled a loyal following among collectors and premium buyers for its popular line of die-cast muscle cars and custom orders ranging from scale motorcycles to miniature tool chests.

Supplying clients such as ConocoPhillips, Snap-On Tools and Lennox Industries, Crown Premiums has earned a reputation for quality. So when the company's executives considered UPS for a comprehensive international shipping solution, they knew they needed a credible carrier on par with the level of service their customers demand.

### Client Challenge

Although most of its customers are based in North America, Crown Premiums relies on suppliers in China for manufacturing. This places significant emphasis on finding a solution for ocean freight and package shipments that is dependable and efficient. They also wanted to consolidate its supply chain process and eliminate using multiple providers.

Noreen Gedmin, vice president of operations for Crown Premiums, says, "We had previously used another company for our LTL [less-than-truckload], and that aspect of our shipping process alone took a long time — up to an entire month. Things would get dropped along the way, and there was a lot of added paperwork."

Frustrated with the administrative hassles and lengthy transit times, Crown Premiums let UPS help them find a better way.

## The UPS Solution

With its door-to-door, one-to-many model, UPS Trade Direct<sup>SM</sup> Ocean alleviated the company's concerns about its administrative load while providing complete end-to-end visibility. Since brokerage services are integrated directly into Trade Direct's architecture, customs clearance headaches were eliminated, along with most of the associated paperwork. And Crown Premiums uses UPS Trade Direct<sup>SM</sup> Cross Border to continue its seamless package and LTL deliveries to customers in Canada. All this gives the company freedom to track milestones and focus on other aspects of their business.

"We palletize our Canada-bound LTL product and ship it out all at once. UPS clears it through Customs, and the individual deliveries go directly into the UPS system in Canada. I only have to create one commercial invoice as opposed to, say, 70 for each shipment, so we can now handle bigger shipments with fewer personnel. Tracking our LTL shipments with our previous carriers was much harder and took a lot longer. With UPS, I can use Flex<sup>®</sup> Global View to track all of this information on the Web," explained Gedmin.

Today, accounting at Crown Premiums is automated and more efficient.

"Because we don't have to re-key everything manually, our accuracy is 99%," confirmed Gedmin. "With UPS Trade Direct, all the data we need to update inventory is easily populated into our system."

But what's the biggest advantage for a vice president of operations? Trade Direct's impact on the bottom line. "We figure that using Trade Direct saves us about three weeks of transit time," Gedmin said. "That means we can invoice our customers sooner. That's a very good thing."

## The Results

Along with streamlining its supply chain and reducing shipping cycles, Crown Premiums enjoys a final benefit from UPS Trade Direct — improved customer satisfaction.

"Customers buy our products as collector items, so even the boxes they come in add to their value. They want everything in pristine condition," said Gedmin. Because the fragile goods are managed by UPS from origin to end, with fewer hand-offs, Crown Premiums is able to meet client expectations with ease.

"My phone number is on every shipment, and I can tell you that we haven't had customers complaining about damaged product since using UPS," Gedmin added.

Which makes for a very happy day at the toy factory.

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— Noreen Gedmin  
Vice President of Operations  
Crown Premiums

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