



case study

Radial Magnets Manufacturing

GEOGRAPHIC AREA SERVED

North America

CHALLENGE

Shorten timelines for ocean shipments of specialty magnets manufactured in China, streamlining the overall organization supply chain.

SOLUTION

Trade Direct enables expedited deliveries direct to customers. A California port of entry now bypasses the Florida-based distribution center.

RESULTS

- Order-to-delivery cycle reduced by up to one week
- Improved customer service
- Reduced administration time

Radial Magnets Attracts Customers with Streamlined Overseas Shipping

Radial Magnets is a Web-based marketing company headquartered in Boca Raton, Florida. As a North American leader in specialty magnet supply, Radial's client list reads like a FORTUNE 500 Who's Who list. The company ships product to a diverse roster of customers who rely on Radial's technology in their assembly processes or as components in their end products. In turn, Radial sources from manufacturers located in China and requires an efficient way to manage its Trans-Pacific shipping.

Client Challenge

Radial competes in a highly specialized field. Shoptalk at the company references the "high magneto-crystalline shape anisotropy of ferrite particles." It's a business that demands advanced technical expertise and state-of-the-art manufacturing standards. In addition, Radial's customers demand fast turnaround on their orders.

With manufacturers located half a world away in China, Radial identified supply chain improvements as a critical priority. However, the search for a smoother route presented a few bumps along the way.

"We tried another carrier," said Radial President and Chief Engineer Harold Dobson. "It was like dealing with two competing companies, air and ground. The problem became apparent right at our door. They really didn't talk to each other."

Radial needed a supply chain company who could offer a seamless solution and see the big picture.

Enter UPS.

While Radial is based on the East Coast, they have product arriving regularly on the West Coast — much of it with final destinations in California or the Midwest. To inventory and then ship to customers from Boca Raton, Florida just didn't make sense.

UPS Solution

Dobson invited UPS to help his team undertake what he calls “a complete rethink of our shipping operations.” Customs paperwork, stop-and-go transport and inefficient U.S. distribution were all slowing down delivery to customers. Using the fully integrated services of UPS Trade DirectSM Ocean, UPS was able to eliminate time-draining practices that hampered the efficiency of Radial’s supply chain. With UPS customs brokerage services, for example, the company benefited from a seamless flow-through from ship to customs to customer.

“I never have to see the original bill of lading anymore,” said Dobson. “It gets forwarded to California directly from China. Our magnets are then cleared through customs and delivered directly to our customer.”

While Trade Direct represents administrative savings for Radial, the real impact is in the shortened delivery times it offers clients.

“It’s a customer service arrangement” Dobson explains. “The customer wants magnets for a competitive price and delivered as quickly as possible. It’s of benefit to us to be able to offer UPS Trade DirectSM. If we’re shipping by sea, Trade Direct can beat standard methods by about five business days. If I’m looking at seven weeks from time of order to time of shipment, that one week can be critical — the difference between getting the order or not.”

Rethinking Supply Chain with UPS

Radial utilizes UPS’s overseas resources to help its manufacturers in China see beyond their traditional view of the supply chain model.

“Up to now Chinese companies have manufactured to order. We’re now setting agreements for them to carry our standard products in inventory. That lets me order and ship with no manufacturing time. For customers, that time is money,” Dobson explains. UPS Trade Direct enables Radial to confidently make these process changes.

In fact, Radial is also using UPS Trade DirectSM Air for some China imports. Shipments landing in California from overseas are deconsolidated and flown directly to customers who want expedited delivery.

Says Dobson, “I guess you’d say we’re absolutely tickled pink with UPS, and again it’s the function of the people working for them.”

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— Harold Dobson
President and Chief Engineer
Radial Magnets Inc.

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