



**Navegate™**

**Assets + Ingenuity  
Solve Various  
Logistics Challenges**

Case Study: Twin City Fan



**Navigate™**

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### **Case Study: Twin City Fan**

**Navigate, an Inbound Logistics Top 100 IT Provider, is a full-service logistics company that's been delivering industry leading software solutions for clients worldwide since 2003.**

#### **Background:**

Twin City Fan Companies, Ltd. is a Minneapolis-based manufacturer of industrial fans. The company makes everything from custom fans for factories to a wide variety of supply and exhaust fans for commercial HVAC systems.

Twin City Fan does the majority of its manufacturing at five plants in South Dakota, and also imports materials and parts from various overseas locations.

#### **Challenge:**

Twin City Fan ships finished products from its South Dakota factories to locations nationwide. Timeliness is critical since most products are shipped to job sites where either major new construction or renovation projects are underway. Procuring trucks for these deliveries has grown increasingly difficult for Twin City Fan given the declining supply of trucking capacity in the US. Capacity concerns are even more problematic in a state like South Dakota, where the volume and tonnage of shipments coming into the state is far less than volume going out of the state.

Separately, Twin City Fan's manufacturing process requires its five plants in South Dakota to regularly ship products and parts between facilities. This process was being handled by each of the plants individually, leading to inefficiencies. "Each plant was arranging and coordinating their own trucks in a siloed environment," says Jack Prentice, logistics manager at Twin City Fan. "We'd have one plant send half a truckload to one plant. And another plant would send a half a truckload to another."

Twin City Fan also imports unfinished parts and other materials from overseas. Again, the time pressures of the manufacturing process made it difficult to efficiently and cost-effectively manage these international deliveries. Often, goods would ship to one plant where deliveries would need to be off-loaded, sorted and portions would be immediately re-loaded and routed to another plant. And if any damages were found, the international shipper and truckers would dispute responsibility – leading to delays and extra costs.

**Solution:**

Twin City Fan decided to explore working with an asset-based company like Navigate, which owns its own fleet of trucks as well as warehouses in Sioux Falls, SD, and St. Paul, MN, through its T-Brothers Trucking division. Working with Navigate for its outbound domestic shipping – moving finished products from plants to job sites – provided Twin Cities Fan more certainty in procuring trucks at market rates.

After delivering in this area, the Navigate team worked closely with Twin City Fan to address the company’s issues with inter-company shipments.

The teams evaluated past performance and volumes, and decided to create a dedicated “daily truck” that would make stops every day to all five South Dakota plants. This created more predictability and eliminated many last-minute, costly requests for trucks.

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Jack Prentice, Twin City Fan Logistics Manager

Prentice said Twin City Fan also moved to a “quarterback approach,” where all five of the South Dakota plants would funnel all their shipment requests to Navigate’s team.

“They’ve become sort of an invisible extension of my operations arm – almost like my staff for inter-company freight,” says Twin City Fan’s Prentice.

Navigate also helped tackle international shipments for Twin City Fan. With products coming in to St. Paul, MN, by rail from overseas, Navigate utilized its drayage truck division to transport Twin City Fan’s international containers to a Navigate warehouse located just outside the Burlington Northern ramp. There, Navigate warehouse personnel unload the containers and sort the imported product onto over-the-road trailers.

Navigate uses its own assets to help Twin City Fan access trucking capacity for outbound shipments. Navigate also helped analyze inter-company shipments and created a dedicated “daily truck” that now runs at 85% capacity. Navigate has also leveraged its drayage and warehouse operations located near a key rail facility to create more efficient imports.

## Results:

Over several years, Twin City Fan has benefited in three primary ways from Navigate’s assets-based solutions with its Trucking division:

1. Twin City Fan now has additional access to trucks for its outbound domestic shipments. Not only does this help Twin City Fan obtain competitive rates, it also helps the company when it’s in need of a one-off, last-minute shipment request. “The real value-add of having a local carrier is when you need to call someone the day after Thanksgiving in desperate need of a truck,” says Prentice. “Navigate will call the driver that just went home to help out. You’re never going to get that from a broker.”
2. For inter-company shipments, the dedicated “daily truck” has been running at more than 85% capacity and has been such a success that a second “daily truck” was added.
3. Overseas shipments now move from rail to Twin City Fan’s manufacturing facilities more quickly and at lower costs thanks to Navigate’s assets – including over-the-road trucks, warehouses and drayage equipment.

Twin City Fan has recently deepened its relationship with Navigate by utilizing the company’s proprietary cloud-based, customizable supply-chain-visibility software. “Navigate now provides visibility over our entire import supply chain, which then allows us to act in a proactive environment vs. a reactive one,” says Prentice.

## For More Information:

To learn more about Navigate and how a trucking division that’s backed by supply-chain visibility software can benefit your company, please contact us via email at [contact@navigate.com](mailto:contact@navigate.com), by phone (U.S.) at [1-800-944-2471](tel:1-800-944-2471), or visit our website: [www.navigate.com](http://www.navigate.com).



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