

CHAPTER 1 SHIPPING OPTIONS

There are many ways in which your product may be shipped to the customer. It is your choice whether to use:

- Canada Post
- A courier
- A freight Carrier, or
- A freight Forwarder

The mode you choose will affect both the packaging & packing of your product.

DECIDING ON MODE AND CARRIER*

The first decisions to be made are the selection of the mode of transportation and the choice of individual carrier. Cost and transit time are often the key elements in the selection of a mode and are also important when choosing amongst carriers within a mode. The quoted shipment cost for the small to medium sized exporter can vary tremendously. For this reason it is essential to undertake your own survey of different carriers and modes to determine which company offers the highest quality, most knowledgeable, and cost effective service.

Do not assume that the person at the end of the phone line knows as much as they should about the carrier they represent, or the full range of services provided by the company. It can also be useful to speak to different people within the same carrier company, especially if they have more than one office within your area. One nationwide air freight forwarder recently quoted four different rates to ship the same product door to door overseas on the same day. At a major parcel carrier, telephone agents were unaware of packaging test services provided by the company. Do not be reluctant to ask questions and seek a knowledgeable representative.

Finding the most effective blend of speed of transit, carrier quality and cost will be very important to establishing and then keeping export sales.

Keep in mind however that the actual choice of carrier and mode will depend on several factors, the most important of which are:

- Your location & the consignee's location
- Volumes involved
- Product characteristics (eg fragile, special handling needs)
- Total transit time
- Cost of service
- Quality of service
- Customer requirements (eg contract delivery date)

* "Carrier" is used in this booklet as a generic term for the company or organization that handles the movement of your product from Canada to the export marketplace.