

A decorative graphic on the left side of the slide. It features a large white circle at the top containing the number '5'. Below the circle is a thin white vertical line that connects to a thick white vertical bar. To the right of this bar is a thick red vertical bar. Further to the right, there are three more vertical bars: a thin white one, a thick red one, and another thin white one. Each of these three bars has a small circle at its base, connected by a thin line. The circles are white, red, and white from left to right respectively. The background is a solid red color with a faint grid pattern.

5

Create and
maintain a healthy
pool of carriers on
the spot market

Despite volatility, failing to plan still equals planning to fail. It makes sense to devote a significant proportion of your procured lanes to your contracted carriers.

Nurture your contractual relationships – long-lasting relationships with carriers have never been more important and will continue to offer both parties plenty of security in uncertain times. However, don't only turn to the spot market when outbound shipment volume exceeds your dedicated carrier capacity. Use it strategically and, as explained before, make sure you don't procure ghost lanes which are unlikely to materialise, and instead, put them into your spot planning.

Shippers have diverse shipment profiles and needs. For one-off job site deliveries, sourcing carriers and securing better costs in the spot market can be more advantageous than relying solely on core carrier capacity. Inconsistent shipping profiles, with unknown destinations until the order is placed, benefit from utilising the backhaul spot market instead of fixed contract rates. **Carriers strategically incorporate backhaul freight to optimise their cost structure and truck relocation, making it beneficial for shippers to tap into spot market demand for lower prices.** Expedited carriers in the spot market can be sourced to meet urgent delivery expectations.

Ensure you regularly check spot price predictions and compare them with contracted back-up rates. We recommend maintaining flexibility allowing you to buy at spot rates if they're better. As carrier rejection rates remain high, the spot market cements itself as an essential source of required capacity. Make sure you stay informed about current market developments. Today's new normal includes managing exceptions, new lanes and business (where no contracted agreements exist) or managing exotic lanes more often than ever before – all of which demand the efficient use of the spot market. Use Market Intelligence and

data-driven tools, to turn spot into more of a strategic and plannable option that can help ensure efficiency and competitive rates when things get hectic.

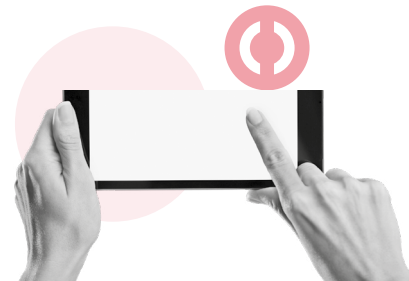
To create and maintain a healthy pool of carriers, make sure you offer spot transports that are attractive to your partners:

- **Offer lanes on the spot market that are appealing to your carriers,** not only lanes with low volume or remote destinations. Also consider seasonal fluctuation, remember that some carriers will prefer certain distances and geographies.
- **Be timely:** try not to request a load at 5pm in the afternoon for a pickup the next morning.
- **Add more flexibility and better matchmaking:** give your carriers the ability to find suitable return loads to avoid empty runs. Intelligent tools like ours let them find matching transports in real time.
- **Communication is key:** Ensure early involvement of your carriers when transitioning to a more dynamic assignment strategy. Present the idea of spot assignments positively, as an opportunity rather than a challenge. The world is dynamic and volatile, right? Instead of simply cutting contracted volume from carriers, give them access to consistent volume also on the spot market, enabling them to fill gaps in their planning. If you communicate with them in the right way, you will get them on board and more aligned with your strategy.
- **Analyse your carriers' performance** in terms of load acceptance, being on-time, order accuracy and transportation utilisation. Reward carriers who honour contracts and work closely with them to tap into the spot market for optimal flow and reduce empty miles by increasing utilisation and leveraging backhaul. Take the learnings and apply them to your work with other carriers in the spot market.

When spot is done and planned the right way, you will benefit as a shipper, and your carriers will do likewise. Both shippers and carriers face similar challenges these days. Shippers need to find more agile ways to secure the capacity they need and to minimise transport costs, while carriers need more dynamic and flexible ways of working, to secure sufficient business volume and reduce empty runs.

No matter what the market conditions are, it's essential to have a vital pool of carriers with a smart mix of contract and spot – including attractive lanes! This will help you to react smarter, no matter what the market conditions are, as it will enable you to secure capacities in tight markets more efficiently and achieve cost savings when markets are softening.

Assign attractive lanes and nurture a healthy pool of carriers on the spot market using Best Carrier.



[LEARN MORE](#)

Key takeaways

It makes sense to devote a significant proportion of your procured lanes to your contracted carriers. However, not all shipments are fit for contracts. Therefore, having a healthy pool of carriers on the spot market is crucial for finding capacity at competitive prices, whatever the market dynamics. Maintain a healthy carrier pool by securing contracts for lanes that align with your carrier network, while honoring your contractual commitments. Use the spot market strategically to challenge contracted rates from time to time, offer attractive spot transports, prioritise timely requests and facilitate flexible matchmaking. Performance analysis and effective communication to understand which lanes fit your major carriers' network, lead to costs and overall market efficiency.