



Handy time-savers from UPS customers

Gain back a few hours with these ideas.

Every minute you shave from the time it takes to complete a business task is valuable. You can use the extra minutes to grow your business – or get home at a reasonable hour. Here, five UPS customers across industries and of various sizes share their most prized time-savers. Can you put these tips to work at your company?

Focus on growth, not boxes

Fun and Function (<http://funandfunction.com>) provides therapeutic toys for children with special needs. Husband-and-wife team Haskel and Aviva Weiss launched the company in Merion Station, Pa., in 2005. Yearly growth is 25 to 30 percent, and it now employs 25 people. Tips:

- **Focus on what you do best.** Haskel Weiss says that, from the start, the couple knew they wanted to focus on growing their business, not on packing boxes, so they partnered with a fulfillment center that takes care of packaging and shipping.
- **UPS time-saver: Connect everything.** The company's orders come from parents and from schools, through the company's website or catalog, or from other online shopping sites. Shipments go out from the company's warehouse or directly from vendors. To save time on processing shipments and to allow customers to track their packages, all these separate systems are linked to the UPS shipping system (/UPS-EXT-Integrate-UPS-WorldShip/).

No wasted trips

Four-person Lawn Chair USA (<http://www.lawnchairusa.com>), based in Walthourville, Ga., was launched in 2010 after its partner (a lawn-chair manufacturer) went out of business – and the remaining lawn-chair-webbing company saw the opportunity to expand its business. Tips:

- **Be open to e-mail.** Allowing customers to e-mail questions or change orders through the website saves time, compared with answering phone calls. Plus, it gives customers the flexibility to send in their questions anytime, day or night.
- **UPS time-saver: Consider various shipping options.** UPS Mail Innovations (/UPS-Ext-mail-innovations/)[®] saves employees a trip to the post office, a big plus in their building, which doesn't have mail service, says office manager Kelly Evans. UPS Mail Innovations processes the mail and delivers it close to where the U.S. Postal Service will do the final delivery.

Dedicated time slot

San Antonio-based cowhide wholesaler Hides and Skins (<http://www.hidesandskinsinc.com>) was started in 1996 by Lucas Montecel. The company has six employees. Tips:

- **Stick to a schedule.** Scheduling regular times for packaging shipments means that staff can plan and prepare shipments in an organized, dedicated way, instead of haphazardly throughout the day.
- **UPS time-saver: Try something new.** Despite a long-standing habit of handwriting shipping labels, employees gave [shipping on ups.com \(/EXT-UPS-create-a-shipment/\)](http://www.ups.com/EXT-UPS-create-a-shipment/) a shot. Results: It's faster to complete the labels, and they save employees' time answering customers' questions about where orders are, rather than digging through a paper-based system.

Online bidding and payment

[CI Actuation \(http://www.ciactuation.com\)](http://www.ciactuation.com) distributes actuators and valves for the oil and gas industry and for municipalities. Founded in 1989, the company employs 120 people in Houston and has branches in Louisiana, Georgia, Texas, Oklahoma, California and Utah. Tips:

- **Get answers online.** The company's homegrown business system allows staffers to ask for quotes from vendors through the company's own website. Vendors can reply within minutes, saving a week or more instead of sending those requests out and waiting for replies.
- **UPS time-saver: Hasten billing.** With [UPS electronic billing \(/UPS-Ext-billing/\)](http://www.ups.com/UPS-Ext-billing/), the company can see its shipping charges within 24 hours, speeding up the invoicing process so it gets paid sooner, says Matthew Quick, procurement manager.

Trust factor

B&R Enterprises of Hueytown, Ala., sells tobacco accessories, bartending tools, and wholesale shirts, caps, lighters and pens to retail stores. The five-employee, family-owned company has been in business for more than 20 years. Tips:

- **Partner with people you trust.** Staff members work only with vendors they know support the company's goals. For instance, employees leave a key to their front office with their local UPS driver, so once they prepare shipments for the day, they can leave without waiting for pickup.
- **UPS time-saver: Ask experts for help with new ventures.** Owner Ron DeWitt says that when the company started [shipping hazardous materials \(/UPS-EXT-Shipping-Hazardous-Materials/\)](http://www.ups.com/UPS-EXT-Shipping-Hazardous-Materials/), it turned to UPS to quickly learn the ins and outs of shipping hazmats.