

## Technology in Transportation

*By Adi Shaked*

This year we've finally decided that we must get the right technology for the busy summer because doing everything manually is something we could no longer afford.

We wanted to get a system that would address multiple tasks and computerize all our activities from the first stage of the contact with the customer and to the very ending of each moving process. We felt it was necessary to integrate on-site equipment such as electronic in-residence surveys and on-site printing of shipment labels and inventories.

The idea was to have the data captured on-site and then feed it into the office software and produce all standard documents. Preparing documents such as survey reports, quotations, contracts, insurance forms, packing inventories, agent manifests, bingo sheets, dock receipts, etc., occupies precious office hours that can easily be reduced by employing a computerized system.

We decided to purchase a system called MightyForwarder by Voxme. It took some time to adjust to it and adapt it to our needs (and that is why we bought it during the off session). However, after using it for five months, I am more satisfied with it than I could have ever imagined.

What we came to realize is that once the data is recorded, there's no manual paperwork or typing that needs to be redone—again and again and again! We press the button and out comes the document that once could take hours to produce. Now all shipment information is organized and easily accessible. We no longer need to search for a piece of paper with a survey from two months ago or look for an e-mail from an agent with a delivery day.

Sound pretty ambitious? Well, we purchased this system from Richmond Hill (Toronto)-based Voxme. Aggressive as we sound, it was comforting to have the technology provider just 10 minutes up the street.

So what did we learn after four months? Probably the most important lesson is that it pays to spend the little extra time that it may take to capture the data electronically. What's interesting is that the customers actually like to see our staff use the handheld units for survey and packing inventories. Sure, it projects the right image of our company, but more important, people have come to trust "the computers" more than a sheet of paper.

The bottom line: Technological investment has allowed us to be more efficient, make fewer mistakes, and project the right company image—and it freed up a lot of time and resources we can use to grow our business.

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