

The shipping cost review checklist

A quick framework for identifying where transportation costs tend to move within a shipping program.

Network structure

- ☐ Has the geographic shipping profile changed over time?
- ☐ Are shipments moving through the network differently than expected?
- ☐ Has distribution center placement altered service mix or transit patterns?

Dimensional weight & packaging

- ☐ How frequently are shipments billed at dimensional weight?
- ☐ Are packaging standards aligned with product characteristics?
- ☐ Could packaging decisions be influencing billable weight?

Minimum charges

- ☐ What portion of shipments appears influenced by minimum charge thresholds?
- ☐ Are minimum charges affecting the value of negotiated discounts?
- ☐ Are shipment profiles aligned with service pricing structures?

Accessorial charges

- ☐ Are accessorial charges representing a growing share of transportation spend?
- ☐ Have delivery patterns increased exposure to surcharge categories?
- ☐ Are additional handling or special service fees appearing more frequently?

Contract application

- ☐ Are negotiated terms being applied consistently across shipments?
- ☐ Are service levels billed in line with operational expectations?
- ☐ Have carrier enforcement patterns changed over time?

Invoice accuracy

- ☐ Are invoices consistently aligning with contractual terms?
- ☐ Are billing calculations appearing consistent across shipments?
- ☐ Are discrepancies or unexpected charges appearing?

Final review

- ☐ Do structural factors explain recent cost movement?
- ☐ Have shipping patterns evolved since the contract was signed?
- ☐ Could operational or policy changes be influencing cost behavior?

Many logistics teams periodically review their transportation programs using a framework like this.

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