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Sherman Trucking managing high demand as it plans for growth

By

John Groh

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Rio Rico, AZ — Strike up a conversation with any produce shipper or broker in the Nogales area, and inevitably the topic of freight rates will arise. It's hard to ignore when a load to the Northeast costs nearly twice as much as it had two years ago.

That might bode well for a transportation provider like Sherman Trucking, here, but the heavy demand for services brings challenges of its own.



Ozzy Inzunza, director of

operations and sales at Sherman Trucking in Rio Rico, AZ, with Rebecca Clark, the company's first female driver.

"Right now, everyone needs transportation," said Ozzy Inzunza, director of operations and sales for Sherman Trucking. "Ever since COVID, demand has been incredible."

That high demand means it is imperative for Sherman to maintain a reliable fleet of trucks and team of drivers to keep up with its booming business. Luckily, Sherman had the benefit of some fortuitous timing with a recent truck order.

"Currently, our fleet is 40 strong and we had ordered 60 more trucks for next season, which we expect to receive early next year," Inzunza said in early November. "We were lucky to get our order in, because now there is a long backorder for new trucks. We ordered the new trucks last December because of our expected growth, but we didn't realize that freight would be in such demand."

Maintaining a good team of drivers is also high on Inzunza's list of priorities, and to do that Sherman goes the extra mile, so to speak.

"We treat our drivers very well," said Inzunza, "and that includes providing top-quality equipment, good facilities, performance incentives and good communication."

For example, Inzunza said drivers can earn a \$1,000 bonus when they reach 50,000 miles without accidents or traffic citations, and if they keep within a specified miles-per-gallon range. He also said Sherman tries to accommodate drivers' requests for preferred routes when possible.

“In addition to paying a very competitive per-mile rate, we listen to them and try to work with them to meet their needs,” said Inzunza.

“We also recognize their achievements on our social media channels, and that makes them feel good about working here,” he added. “And it might sound small, but we provide them with hats and shirts, so they feel like part of the team, and they really appreciate that. Drivers are often the unsung heroes, and they appreciate when we recognize their good work. And it is paying off for us. Normally, drivers are hard to come by, but we actually have a waiting list of drivers wanting to join us.”

With Sherman’s fleet of trucks about to more than double in size, the company is planning to open a new warehouse within the next year that will centralize all aspects of the operation.

Inzunza said the new warehouse will include a shop where mechanics can work on the vehicles, a diesel pump and a truck wash, in addition to offices for sales and operations.

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