

Laufer Bolsters Third-Party Logistics Service With Memphis Office

By Michael Waddell

Laufer Group International Ltd. has continued its Southeast expansion by making an entry into the Memphis logistics market with a Downtown office.

The third-party logistics (3PL) provider is focused on providing highly sophisticated value-added solutions to importers at competitive prices, and establishing a presence a key distribution hub like Memphis made sense.

“Our push into the Southeast has been very much a priority for us, and Memphis was a logical next choice,” president Mark Laufer said from the company’s headquarters in New York. “Memphis is a major hub for corporate decision-makers for furniture and various other consumer products industries, and there is a lot of attractive business there.”



The fully integrated freight forwarder for outbound and inbound air and ocean transit began operations in Memphis in early June. The company now has offices in 10 cities across the country, with more than 150 overall employees.

Laufer said he believes the company’s proprietary supply-chain management technology sets it apart from the competition.

“We think we can bring a lot of value to importers and exporters in the Memphis region,” said Laufer, whose third-generation company was established in 1948.

Laufer’s PeerPlus platform allows customers a secure login and immediate access to their data in real time, enabling them to manage their shipments from a user-friendly linear menu. The company is one the earliest integrators of automated manifest system (AMS) and importer security filing (ISF) within its platform and boasts a 97 percent accuracy rating with U.S. Customs and Border Protection, which is significant considering stricter scrutiny with ISF compliance announced by customs on July 9.

As an NVOCC (non-vessel operating common carrier), the company buys space with a steam ship line, and by virtue of its buying power can extend favorable rates for its clients that they would not be able to get on their own.

“We focus on containerized freight and are currently moving an average of 100 containers per week,” said [Russell Grant](#), international sales manager leading the new Memphis office. “Our proprietary platform offers total visibility in real time through a very linear portal with easily accessible data. Our customers have been blown away by its ease of use.”

Although its client list is confidential, Laufer moves a variety of products, including automotive, giftware, textiles, pharmaceuticals, electronics and furniture.

“We have a strong interest in furniture, and we have very competitive rates specifically for furniture into the Memphis market,” said Grant, who just returned from the annual furniture expo in Las Vegas. “We are able to negotiate some very strong rates with the carriers because we have a high volume in that arena.”

Transporting freight is often time-critical, and Laufer gives its clients multiple options through a variety of carrier contracts that offer different lengths of transit time.

Laufer also publishes weekly newsletters to ensure its customers are kept up to date about news impacting the logistics industry.

The company maintains offices overseas through its 25-year relationship with its Pacific Rim agency, THI Group, to help facilitate the supply-chain process. A typical shipment moves by ocean from China to Long Beach, Calif., then by rail to Memphis, where it is offloaded and immediately ready to ship to its final destination.

“We do also have a growing number of customers that are importing from India, and we have a strong foothold moving goods from Mumbai, Delhi or any other major port in India,” Grant said.

For its new Memphis station, Grant and Laufer chose a Downtown location just around the corner from Beale Street to further set itself apart from its competition.

“I like Downtown because I am able to entertain clients, and I just like to support Downtown,” Grant said.

The new Memphis branch and its initial staff of three work in conjunction with the company’s Kansas City location and its 50 employees. Grant hopes to possibly add more employees by the end of the year.

“We already have a good amount of significant business in Tennessee, Arkansas and Mississippi,” he said, “and we are about to land a couple of new accounts that will help to grow our business even more.”