



FOUNDED 1969

PDS Professional Development Seminar

Shipping Large Scale Work

Basic Factors:

If you are determined to create large-scale work consider these basic shipping factors:

- 1) Think ahead in terms of scale and budget.
 - a. Consider building work in sections for ease of shipment and to accommodate other physical restrictions. I admit to making a large piece for a gallery, shipped it there at considerable expense only to find that it did not fit through the doorway!
 - b. Create a framework (budget) within which you can consider both the expense of making the work and the expense of showing it. A disclaimer here – I am entrepreneurially challenged, and don't think about salability or shipping expenses when making something – but scale will impact what you can physically do with your work for the better and the worse.
- 2) Give yourself time to look for options for shipping.
 - a. 8 to 12 weeks before the work needs to be at a site begin researching a range of shipping companies. You may find a company that is close to where you are or where your work needs to be that is willing to work with you.
- 3) Get lots of bids, and ask for a discount!
- 4) Ask everyone you know for help, you might be surprised at what a network of friends can do.

Thinking Outside the Box:

Aside from fine art shippers like Artex or U.S. Art with full service, white-glove delivery, there are a range of companies that provide shipping services, sometimes with great customer service and art-appropriate handling, some with a lot of DIY elbow grease, but all at more reasonable prices than fine art shippers.

Blanket Wrap Handler:

Used for individual pieces or less than truckload shipment (LTL), blanket wrapping is common for furniture, trade shows, millwork or fixtures, as well as specialized equipment that is not crated.

Pros: Door to door delivery

Generally trucks come with lift gates and two handlers

Pad wrapping

Inside delivery

Cons: More expensive but still less than an “fine art shipper”

Little control over how items are packed and handled

Example: Plycon Transportation Group (www.plycongroup.com)

Personal 2009 shipment:

2 cartons: 30 x 30 x 30" & 36 x 36 x 50", 110#

Madison, WI to Glassboro, NJ

\$380 one-way



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Less Than Truckload Specialized Handler:

Like blanket wrap shippers, specialized handlers can offer a range of LTL services including shipping art, furniture, machinery and anything else that is fragile, large, awkward, or valuable. They also provide a larger range of services including crating, and unlike a lot of freight shippers like BAX Global or FedEx LTL, these folks have no problem picking up “unique” work from a residence.

Pros: Full service pickup and delivery
Packaging including crating if needed
Insurance options

Cons: More expensive but still less than “fine art shipper”

Example: Navis (www.gonavis.com)
Personal 2008 shipment:
1 pallet: 36 x 36 x 66” H, 200#
Madison, WI to Scottsdale, AZ
\$500 one-way



Another recommended specialized handler for heavy/awkward items from a trusted registrar:
Craters & Freighters (www.cratersandfreighters.com)

More Unusual Options:

When issues of cost outweigh your concerns about insurance and tracking and you are shipping more durable, heavy, and unusually shaped objects you may consider less conventional options.

Please note, ship at your own risk!

Greyhound Package Xpress (www.shipgreyhound.com)

Ships oversized, heavy weight, same day and overnight freight at incredibly low rates.

Pros: Cheap!
Maximum weight 100#
Maximum measurement: 30 x 47 x 82”
Can ship soft-packed objects and unusual shapes

Cons: Cannot insure for full value
Hard to track
Must deliver and pick up from Greyhound station

Example: A 2012 60-pound 3-box shipment to Arizona from Michigan with FedEx 3-Day Super Saver cost me \$450, it would have cost \$147 with GPX 2-day service.

Amtrak Express Shipping (www.amtrak.com or 1-800-377-6914)

Amtrak offer small package and less-than-truckload shipping services between more than 100 cities.

Pros: Cheap
Maximum weight 50# for packages up to 36 x 36 x 36 or non-palletized items
Maximum weight 500# for palletized items
Can ship soft-packed objects and unusual shapes

Cons: Cannot insure for full value
Must deliver and pick up from Amtrak station
Limited city service

Note: I have used this service for household goods (books, clothes, etc), and for very durable, well-blanket packed steel objects – but it can be rough!