Winning Over Alliance Shippers, Inc.
VIP, Relationships and Warranty Coverage Play Key Roles in Competitive Win

Alliance Shippers, Inc., the largest intermodal trailer on flat car (TOFC) application customer in North America, had not purchased Thermo King units since the 1980s. Earning the trust – and the business of this major customer has been the ultimate team effort between Thermo King dealer Illinois Auto Central (IAC) and Thermo King rail management, field representatives, corporate leadership, SVC/Warranty personnel, and more.

“We’ve been trying to build a relationship with Alliance Shippers for many years and the opportunity presented itself last year when a new director of maintenance came into the company. His previous Thermo King experience helped us secure a VIP visit to Minneapolis,” explained Bob Stearns, general manager of IAC. “This gave us the chance to talk about telematics, OptiSet and the general value propositions of our Precedent S-700RR unit.

“The customer was impressed with what they saw, as well as the key corporate folks who participated – from top leaders to engineers and product specialists. The experience helped us earn an order for 50 Precedent S-700RR units in January.”

According to Doug Moore, business development manager for Thermo King’s Refrigerated Rail Applications, the customer’s objective is to do a comprehensive competitive operational reefer comparison test to determine future reefer unit orders planned for 2019 and beyond. “The Thermo King product evaluation includes our full TracKing connected solutions system, which provides ongoing downloads for effective data mining and comparisons,” said Doug.

The new Precedent S-700RR units are being installed on Alliance Shippers’ 2003 model trailers, and the units’ performance data will be compared to 50 competitive units in the customer’s fleet. “A large portion of their 2200 unit fleet will have to be updated by the end of 2019 due to Evergreen regulations. Our Precedent unit will offer Alliance Shippers the long-term compliance solution they need,” said Bob.

The new units are being placed into service now, with installations being performed by IAC in Chicago. In addition, Bob and Thermo King’s rail support staff are coordinating training at Alliance’s various sites nationwide.

Service and Parts Opportunity
“We are excited about our newest rail customer and want the entire dealer network to be aware of the service and parts opportunity that accompanies the order,” said Patrick O’Meara, Thermo King SVC and Warranty. “This unit order came with a 7 year major components warranty, which gives Alliance Shippers peace of mind coverage and confidence to operate and service their Thermo King equipment anywhere in North America. This provides our dealers with a recurring revenue stream on parts and labor for years to come.”

Alliance Shippers has been in business since 1977. Corporate offices are located in Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey; Chicago, Illinois; and Salinas, California, with maintenance facilities in both Rialto, California, and Chicago. Learn more at allianceshippers.com.

(Left) the first Precedent S-700RR unit was installed in Chicago in early January.
The Alliance Shippers’ Maintenance Team pose in Rialto, California following training on the new Precedent S-700RR units.

(Above) Alliance Shippers’ Chicago maintenance team pictured with Bob Stearns and John Henry of Illinois Auto Central.