

How Interstates Forecasts Every Job — and Gives Cross-Country Movers Three Weeks' Notice Instead of Three Hours.



"It's the difference between getting three weeks' notice on a move and three hours. That ties in with our 'family' core value — having that insight and communicating early is a huge benefit."

— Andrew Aker, Workforce Manager, Interstates

THE CHALLENGE

For a 1,700-person, 100% employee-owned electrical and automation contractor running 11+ regional offices plus a 350-person traveling group that flexes to 550 — across the lower 48, often inside the strictest data center compliance regimes — the cost of a forecasting miss isn't just operational. It's human. Send ten travelers to a job that's not ready, and the math shows up two ways: \$65–80,000 in lost productivity inside the first week, and an employee-experience hit that's harder to quantify — workers moved with three hours' notice instead of three weeks, families uprooted on short notice, and the wrong tone set for the rest of the project. Interstates was running its workforce on a mix of decent manual planning and what Workforce Manager Andrew Baker calls **"Friday afternoon fire drills."**

OUR SOLUTION

Interstates forecasts every current and prospective job in RIVET — without exception. **"I couldn't sleep at night if I didn't,"** Andrew Baker says. The discipline cascades: the forecast drives hiring targets, recruiting capacity, training, and apprenticeship-program intake twelve months out. It also drives the human side — travelers get three to four weeks' notice on cross-country moves instead of three hours, which Andrew ties directly to Interstates' **"family"** core value. The team is intentionally small: Andrew plus two workforce planners (one focused entirely on data center compliance), plus one coordinator — managing 350–550 travelers while 11+ regional offices run their own local pools through the same platform. **"We're not a company that hires up on a job and lays everybody off at the end,"** Andrew says. **"Our goal is utilization across the board."**

ROADBLOCKS

Interstates is candid that the discipline isn't perfect. **"I think we're still at probably a 75,"** Andrew estimates — graded against an absolute scale he doesn't believe is reachable. **"Perfect isn't achievable, so there's always room to get better."** Senior Technologist Jeremy Oliver, in Interstates' innovation group, frames the work as continuous: **"It's a journey. There's probably no end to it either, because the industry keeps moving."**

RESULTS SNAPSHOT

Every job

current + prospective, forecasted without exception

3-4 weeks notice

to traveling workers on cross-country moves

\$65-80K saved

per averted forecast miss on a single job

12 months out

forecast drives hiring, training, apprenticeships

60% → 75%

self-rated workforce planning maturity

COMPANY OVERVIEW



INDUSTRY

Electrical · Automation · Engineering · Fab (100% employee-owned)

HEADQUARTERS

Sioux Center, Iowa — nationwide (lower 48)

FIELD WORKERS

1,700+ total; 350 travelers (flexes to 550); 11+ regional offices

INTEGRATIONS

ERP integration

Watch the full interview ▼

