



# F&W TRANSPORTATION

The roots of F & W Transportation can be traced to the early 1930's, with the founding of a small carrier company called Willis Trucking. From its location in Augusta, Georgia, the company emerged as a successful transporter of household goods throughout the Southeast. It was soon renamed Willis & Son Trucking as the owner's son came onboard, and then Willis & Sons Trucking for much of the rest of the century. In the 1990's it assumed its current name of F & W Transportation.

The company has vastly grown since its beginnings, now employing a workforce of approximately 100 and a fleet of 80 power units, 150 dry vans, and 65 specialized trailers for rolling stock. F & W's rolling stock division primarily delivers golf cars to golf courses and dealers, and its freight division hauls general commodities to various customers throughout the 48 contiguous states and Canada. Although the company still operates out of its sole location in Augusta, Georgia, it has begun basing equipment at strategic points across the country to improve efficiency and response time.

The daily operations of the F & W office were previously managed using several disconnected spreadsheets and applications. "We didn't have any type of system that was business-integrated," said Adam Willis, Vice President of F & W and great grandson of the original founder. "All of the programs and spreadsheets acted individually. We had a billing program, a maintenance program, a drug and alcohol program, a fuel tax program, and so on, but none of them talked to each other. It was extremely difficult to keep track of everything, and a lot of wasteful double entry was required."

In 2006, Willis began an eight-month search for a software system to handle his growing business, considering several desktop- and web-based solutions. After an in-depth demonstration of the Prophesy DispatchSeries trucking software with Prophesy National Sales Manager Kevin Pasternack, Willis decided that Prophesy software had the balance of functionality and cost that he needed. "It came down to the ease of use and the amount of features I would get for the cost," said Willis. "I was impressed with

how easy Prophesy was to learn and use, but even more importantly, it would allow me to eliminate all of our spreadsheets and would make our dispatching and accounting operations much easier to manage."

Willis invested in Prophesy Dispatch with QuickBooks® integration, which would handle all of the company's dispatching needs as well as share important data directly with his existing QuickBooks Pro accounting software. He added optional modules for fuel card importing, fleet maintenance, fuel tax reporting, EDI, driver management, Internet load posting, and brokerage functions. A ten-user license allowed his office teams to communicate freely and seamlessly share data with each other.

Willis and Safety Director Scott Rodgers attended a two-day instructional course at the University of Prophesy in Bloomfield, Connecticut, becoming proficient with the software. The two then returned to the office and trained the rest of the staff, and additional training sessions were done as needed for the optional modules via phone and Internet. Willis implemented the Prophesy software on his office server and workstations with no assistance from outside technical consultants, and the software was ready to go live in minimal time.

Since implementing Prophesy software, F & W Transportation has seen marked improvements across the board. Dispatching operations are running more smoothly and important accounting data is easily shared between Dispatch and QuickBooks. The Prophesy EDI module is used extensively to transmit load orders, statuses, invoices, and other documentation to and from its customer base with little or no interaction. "The billing process is where we've seen the most improvement," said Willis. "With Prophesy having automated so many of our daily tasks, we have reduced the number of people required for billing from three to one." Furthermore, the ease of tracking and reporting allowed by the QuickBooks integration as improved the accounts receivable average age from approximately 75 days to 35 days.

Prophesy software has also allowed the company to grow its fleet considerably, says Willis. "In 2004 we had 35-40 trucks, and as of 2010

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we have 80. This is directly attributable to the efficiencies we've gained using Prophecy. It has helped us streamline all of our processes, which lets us take on a lot more business without making daily operations more complicated to manage. Overall, Prophecy has met and far exceeded our expectations."

Recently Willis upgraded the Microsoft Access-based Prophecy database to the SQL version for added stability and speed. Additionally, he is looking into integrating his existing vehicle tracking capabilities with the Prophecy software and has imminent plans to add five more power units to the company fleet.

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