

Finding creative ways to be a profitable and flexible leader

23 Oct, 2014 Joe McAdory



Ford Orton didn't believe in a top-heavy corporate environment where executives are heavily compensated for less production. So he co-founded his own company under the principal of always giving the customer more than they expect. Since its inception in 2011, Atlanta-headquartered Anker International continues to find creative ways to become a profitable leader in the global freight industry.

"We are a transportation company that has very strong partnership agreements with extensive agency networks in Asia, Latin America, and Europe," said Orton, a 1999 **Harbert College** graduate with a degree in **finance**, whose company helps ship products for customers who source from overseas markets.

“Our goal was to create an efficient organization that is not controlled by Wall Street analysts and burdened with fat Executive compensation programs. We feel that we know what a reasonable profit margin is and that affords us the ability to pass along cost savings to our customers.”

Orton, who worked for Suntrust Corporate and Investment Banking division then later as a project manager for IBM, carefully crafted an idea with tenured colleagues from the industry when working for Expeditors International of WA as a Sr. Sales Executive.

“Supply chain is far more than moving freight from point to point,” he said. “Customers rely on information to plan every aspect of their business from budget and planning, sales, to purchasing. We have found success in utilizing a cloud hosted software which is virtually maintenance free that gives the customer real time visibility via our traffic IT system. It has been a great proprietary tool.

“As the economy has changed and importers move closer to JIT inventory strategy, shipment information is not only critical but also the expectation. We took a risk and jumped into it and here we are today. Through very hard work and determination, we have grown exponentially over the past three years to a multimillion dollar revenue corporation.

“Auburn University’s Harbert College of Business gave me the core fundamental tools to excel when working for large corporations and ultimately myself.”

Orton said much of the products that Anker International ships range from retail, industrial equipment, to tires, “anything that can be manufactured and imported into the U.S.” including ocean and air transportation, customs house brokerage, domestic shipping, and warehousing & distribution.”

“We have learned to adapt as the economy declined,” he noted. “No longer do we occasionally review pricing, we have to revisit our price points on a monthly basis. With all these principles we have been successful in growing from a start-up logistics provider, to becoming debt free and continue to be a profitable corporation today.”