

Full of Freight

[123Loadboard.com](http://www.123loadboard.com/) (<http://www.123loadboard.com/>) uses innovative Internet tools and fresh ideas to keep trucks filled and rolling

BY **ASHLEY T. KJOS** ([HTTP://ADVANTAGEMAGAZINE.CA/ARTICLE_AUTHOR/ASHLEY-T-KJOS/](http://advantagemagazine.ca/article_author/ashley-t-kjos/))



Cofounder and president Greg Adourian (left) and cofounder and vice president Loarn Metzen.

Ideas and inspiration can come in myriad forms. In the case of 123Loadboard.com, a leading freight-matching website, inspiration came from observation. In 2004, Loarn Metzen pulled into a truck stop on his way to Toronto and overheard a number of truck drivers complaining about the current state of affairs within their industry—frustrations over logistics and waiting around for brokers to call and let them know where to pick up their next load. Around this time, the capabilities and implications of the Internet were growing quickly, and Metzen knew there must be a better way.

“I thought, ‘Instead of waiting for loads, members of the trucking industry should be able to locate available shipments using the Internet and automated systems that allow them to be proactive,’” says Metzen, vice president and cofounder of the company.

After partnering with IT expert Greg Adourian and looking at the

current market place for such a product, the duo saw that there were competitors, but they knew they could deliver something better. Since that time, 123Loadboard has grown in size and capability to become one of the leading websites of its kind in North America, with a focus on usability, customer service, and the continued development of new, state-of-the-art tools, all while keeping their costs lower than the competition.

A truck rolling without a load has been an ongoing and wasteful issue for the trucking industry since its beginning, and brokers and freight-matching services have made attempts to mitigate the problem over the years. With the advent of new technologies like the Internet and, more recently, smartphones and tablets, 123Loadboard is on the leading edge of a revolution in freight matching that is helping the industry overcome the challenge of empty trucks and unnecessarily adding to the industry's carbon footprint, also improving productivity and profitability.

For 123Loadboard, 2008 was a turning point. "We didn't feel the effects when the economy began to fall off; we saw growth," Metzen says. "A lot of people who lost their jobs sought out the trucking industry for employment, and it forced us to offer a multitude of new tools, free of cost. We launched our website with a revamped brand. Since that point, our major competitors have followed us as opposed to us following them. It's something we're very proud of."

Another source of pride, and also marketability, is the low costs and member fees at 123Loadboard. "The key to keeping prices down is to have a very lean infrastructure, in regards to both staff and technology," says Adourian, president and cofounder of the company. "We work very hard to keep our IT structure solid while at the same time very simple to maintain." The result is a service with lower prices than that of any similar site you can find on the Internet.

At the core of the business is customer service and innovation. 123Loadboard.com allows members of the trucking industry to set up their own search parameters, and the website's load alerting tool will send out an e-mail notification to members when there's a direct match. These alerts can be received without having to sign in. The site's sophisticated tools take into account factors such as credit, compliance issues, routing, and trailer type.

Usability and service have always been a hallmark of the company as well. “In the early roots of the load-board industry, professional truck drivers weren’t accustomed to using freight-matching websites,” says AJ Sansoye, operations manager at 123Loadboard. “We developed help tutorials, videos, and live online chats to improve and quicken the learning curve.”

123Loadboard is a young company, and it puts effort into maintaining a youthful mind-set and an energetic personality. This mentality can be seen by the company’s savvy use of search engines, like Google, and social-media sites, such as Facebook and Twitter. “We are able to get many additional leads that require minimal effort on our part to approach, and no marketing dollars,” Metzen says.

Another instance of the company’s lively and spirited mentality is its focus on physical fitness. The company organizes physical activities for the employees every hour, including push-ups, sit-ups, and cardio, when possible. Employees are also training for the Tough Mudder Competition in August, an intense run and obstacle-course event popular among members of the Armed Forces.

Looking forward, the company wants to grow and maintain its leadership role in a business that focuses on a vital industry and helps to improve the lives of the people who make that industry run. “It’s not easy being a trucker: it’s hard enough to make a living, there are a lot of expenses, and it’s a demanding job that can take a toll on their families,” Adourian explains. “With all that, any kind of efficiency that is introduced to their business and their lives is a great help to them, and that’s where we come in.”

123Loadboard.com By the Numbers

175,000

Total registered companies on 123Loadboard.com since 2004

50 mil.

Total number of truckloads posted in 2011

100,000

Loads posted daily

5 mil.

Page results on Google

10 mil.

Total number of truckloads posted in 2008

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