



GOODSHIP

# Transforming KeHE's Logistics

with GoodShip  
and DAT



KeHE® is a leading wholesale distributor known for helping natural, organic, specialty, and fresh-product brands get onto retail shelves and online.

## The Problem

Managing an array of smaller suppliers, a wide variety of products, and fluctuating shipping needs presented niche complications.

## The Solution

KeHE partnered with GoodShip and DAT to modernize its logistics processes, streamline procurement, and enhance operational efficiency. Over time, they moved away from old-school manual processes, implemented advanced tools, and gained a razor-sharp competitive edge.

# Setting the stage

KeHE is a leading wholesale distributor. They specialize in connecting the niche, specialty, often smaller suppliers with large grocery retailers. They're the link between the small and the large. By offering a platform to get unique products onto store shelves, KeHE supports the growth of emerging brands while delivering value to its retail partners.

Here's the catch: Connecting specialty, mom-and-pop, or niche suppliers with larger retailers comes with its own unique sets of problems. It's not as simple as  $A + B = C$ . With a clear-headed evaluation of their shipping operation, they realized it was time to get modern, lean, and agile so their business was poised for growth. This is how they did it.

## Challenges

### Manual processes

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KeHE's logistics operations relied heavily on manual methods, such as using spreadsheets for procurement events like Requests for Proposals (RFPs) and mini-bids. While functional, this approach was extremely resource-intensive and capped the team's ability to focus on larger strategic initiatives. Conducting procurement events was time-consuming, with limited access to real-time data insights.

### Complexity

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KeHE's supplier base includes many smaller brands with less predictable shipping needs, leading to a critical need for balancing full truckload (FTL) and less-than-truckload (LTL) shipments. KeHE also required a robust internal consolidation network to optimize shipping costs and delivery times for its wide variety of low-volume lanes.

### Limited data visibility

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While internal Purchase Order (PO) level data was helpful, it didn't provide shipment-level insights to pinpoint root causes of inefficiencies, such as carrier-related delays. This gap hindered effective performance analysis and decision-making.

# Solutions

**KeHE's collaboration with GoodShip and DAT introduced innovative tools to address their unique challenges:**



## **Advanced procurement tools**

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### **Advanced procurement tools**

#### **Quick RFPs and mini-bids**

GoodShip modernized KeHE's procurement approach, replacing manual workflows with automated analysis and a user-friendly platform that leverages DAT benchmarks and KeHE's own network data to optimize bid strategy. This saved time and resources while allowing KeHE to execute more frequent mini-bids to adjust to changing market conditions.



## **Carrier scorecard reporting**

### **Unified platform**

The centralized platform streamlined procurement processes, enabling KeHE to manage service level metrics, validate market rates, and make faster, more data-driven decisions.



## **Streamlined data access and analysis**

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## **Carrier scorecard reporting**

### **Customized carrier scorecards**

GoodShip equipped KeHE with self-serve carrier scorecards — powered by DAT market rates and KeHE's tender data — to track performance against KeHE's custom service thresholds. This enabled faster root cause analysis, quick identification of areas for improvement, and stronger carrier relationships. With GoodShip's carrier portal, KeHE's carriers could proactively monitor their own service in real time.

### **Real-time insights**

With GoodShip, KeHE could access shipment-level data alongside PO-level insights, making it easier to determine whether carriers fulfilled their responsibilities or if delays stemmed from external factors.

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## **Streamlined data access and analysis**

### **Centralized data tools**

GoodShip's platform eliminated the need for multiple tools, combining KeHE's internal data with verified, unbiased third-party data from DAT. This integration delivered a holistic view of KeHE's operations, empowering fast, confident decision making grounded in data.

### **Market rate analysis**

Real-time market rates from DAT ensured KeHE had visibility into how their costs compared to current market conditions, giving them a competitive advantage in securing optimal rates.

# Results

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## Efficiency gains

The automated RFP process significantly sped up procurement cycles, reducing reliance on manual spreadsheets. KeHE's team was able to conduct mini-bids more frequently, riding pricing trends while maintaining service levels.

Resource allocation improved, allowing the logistics team to focus on strategic activities rather than time-consuming administrative tasks.

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## Improved carrier relationships

GoodShip's carrier scorecards enabled KeHE to engage with carriers as true partners — offering transparency into performance while surfacing network insights, strengths, and opportunities for growth. With access to lane-level data and historical trends, carriers could also bid more accurately and confidently, strengthening collaboration and long-term contract reliability.

By awarding strategic lanes to carriers, KeHE fostered mutual benefits, ensuring competitive prices, consistent service, and long-term collaboration.

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## Data-driven decision making

With transparent, centralized data, negotiations with carriers became smoother and more effective. KeHE could validate carrier rates against market benchmarks and secure agreements that aligned with their goals.

Access to deeper operational insights improved forecasting and resource planning, reducing budget volatility.

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## Operational excellence

KeHE's tiering structure for high- and low-volume lanes ensured efficient management of diverse freight needs. Tier 3, covering low-density lanes, used a network of trusted brokers and intermodal providers to enhance flexibility and cost savings.

With GoodShip's tools, KeHE reduced inefficiencies in tier management, mitigating the potential volatility of low-volume lanes while maintaining high service levels.

# Takeaways

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Reliable data and integrated analytics can unlock significant efficiency gains and free up resources for strategic initiatives.

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Treating carriers as partners rather than vendors creates mutual value and ensures better service quality.

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The right logistics platform can transform cumbersome, reactive operations into streamlined, proactive workflows.

**By adopting GoodShip's and DAT's solutions, KeHE modernized its logistics and moved from a reactive to a proactive strategy. Leveraging real-time data allowed KeHE to align decisions with market conditions and strategic objectives, setting the stage for long-term growth and scalability.**



**Freight & Analytics**

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