

Plan Express draws on a FedEx Certified Solution to streamline architectural blueprint distribution.

In retail construction, it's essential that the right architectural drawings end up in the right hands at the right time. Plan Express knows that. This six-year-old firm has built a thriving business archiving, reproducing, and shipping blueprint copies. And that's making Plan Express clients very happy.

"At any given time, a large retailer may have several stores under construction throughout the U.S.," explains Woodie Rush, Vice President of Operations for Plan Express. "They count on us to be a repository for thousands of blueprints. And their contractors count on a way to easily view and order copies of selected blueprints for express delivery."

Pivotal to Plan Express' success is its reputation for reliability, accuracy, and speed.

Early on, the Memphis-based company capitalized on its close proximity to the FedEx hub – and late-night cutoffs for next-day deliveries. But different client specs required different carriers. And with business averaging 250 orders daily, Plan Express reached a point where employee productivity and accuracy were being hindered by manual processes – including separate terminals and shipping protocol for three different carriers. Plan Express needed its own plan for a more efficient, streamlined shipping system.

A FedEx Certified Solution was the efficiency-building, cost-controlling answer.

Rush recalls, "Tom Lee, our FedEx Senior Solutions Manager, suggested that we consolidate our three different shipping computers into one integrated system. I was intrigued



that FedEx would propose a third-party solution that would make it easier for us to ship with FedEx but could also accommodate other carriers."

But, Tom Lee had seen impressive results with other systems offering a FedEx Certified Solution, explaining, "Third-party automation systems often transform a business' productivity. That correlates to happier, more profitable customers and often a heightened need for FedEx transportation services. And, only companies who have completed testing with FedEx can offer a FedEx Certified Solution.

Almost instantly, Plan Express saw increased efficiency and increased capacity.

"Our efficiency and shipments skyrocketed soon after the system was installed," reports Rush. "Now we're averaging 500 or more shipments per day – double our previous orders."

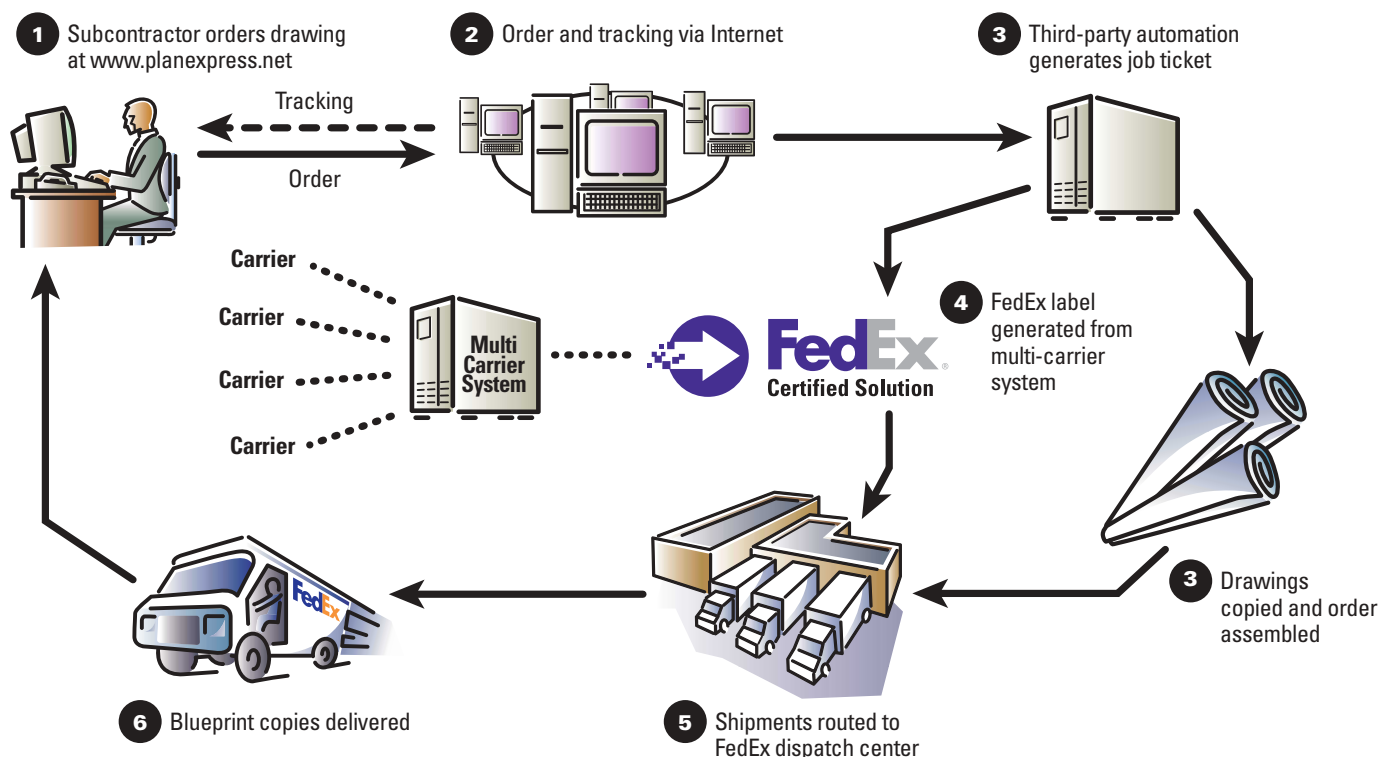
Despite their increase in business, the once frenetic atmosphere is now orchestrated and organized. "By simplifying our shipping process, we reduced the man hours by 30% to put a set of plans out. We even added a sixth printing machine and more staff because volume has increased so much," says Rush. "But our ratio of staff to shipments is much lower."

Increased efficiency also coincides with more satisfied customers. Plan Express' near 100% shipping accuracy instills client

confidence. "Plus, now we can fulfill orders several hours later in the day. That's valuable to our West Coast clients who are two hours behind Memphis," explains Rush.

Incorrect drawings can result in incorrect construction. Thousands, sometimes millions, of dollars are riding on Plan Express' ability to control and verify accuracy of drawings shipped. A FedEx Certified Solution allows customers to track every iteration of that drawing – from its origination point to the contractor's hands. That's been pivotal in Plan Express' acquisition of some major clients.

"I have only good things to tell you," reports Rush. "We went from having several processes to a single shipping solution. It's allowed us to be more flexible in staffing, more organized, more accurate, more customer-friendly – and more profitable."



Plan Express Order Process Utilizing a FedEx Certified Solution

1. Using their client's provided password, subcontractors view and order up-to-date architectural blueprints at www.planexpress.net.
2. Order is routed via Internet to third-party server. Subcontractor can track record of shipment at all times via fedex.com.
3. Third-party automation system generates job ticket that submits shipping specs to on-site, multi-carrier shipping terminal. Simultaneously, blueprints are copied and order is assembled.
4. Multi-carrier system generates FedEx label.
5. Close proximity to FedEx dispatch center enables Plan Express to process orders and route to FedEx dispatch center as late as midnight.
6. Drawings are delivered next day.