

Systems

Solutions

CASE STUDY

Trucking Company Consolidates Operations

If you were a landlord, how would you react when a good tenant of 13 years indicates a need to vacate all five buildings that it was renting from you?

Ordinarily, this would be a problem; however, this was not the case for the Stenstrom Companies, Ltd., in Rockford, Ill. The reason was the tenant, Landstar Inway, Inc., was about to provide a unique challenge and opportunity for another of the Stenstrom companies, Robert R. Stenstrom Construction.

Having served as landlord for the growing trucking company since its first lease in 1982 of a 2,500-sq. ft. space, Bob Stenstrom knew well how rapidly Inway had grown. From that first small space, Inway had expanded to another building, then to two others, and finally, five of his rental properties in the Rockford area. Along the way, Inway had also become a vital part of Landstar System, Inc., seeing revenue increases from \$25 million annually in 1982 to over \$300 million in 1997.

Major North American carrier

Landstar System, Inc., is the nation's third largest truckload carrier, transporting a variety of freight including iron and steel, automotive products, paper, lumber, foodstuffs and other commodities, throughout the continental United States, Canada and Mexico. With annual revenues in excess of a billion dollars, Landstar's unique success comes from delivering transportation services through a network of independent sales agents and business capacity owners (individuals who own and operate one or more trucks).

In addition to capacity, Landstar is committed to delivering information as well as freight, combining high touch with high technology. Knowing the location of a load and being able to match it with the right equipment at the right time provides a crucial competitive edge to a successful truckload business.

As a now vital part of the overall system, Landstar Inway in Rockford was quickly expanding the business and just as quickly running out of space, according to Larry



From five buildings to one "dream" space



Zimmer, Vice-President of Finance for Landstar Inway. "We had to find a place to grow peacefully. It was chaotic before - we even had an employee who spent the entire day going from building to building just to keep the inter-office mail circulating promptly. Additionally, we had no space for visitor truck parking or for many of the other activities that we wished to become involved in with our business capacity owners, agents and customers."

Early on, Zimmer had started to plan his "dream building." He is the first to admit that this didn't come easily. In fact it took nearly five and a half years, and the "dream" underwent many changes and revisions. The need for flexibility and expandability had to be tempered by cost considerations.

In order to build a new home, Landstar Inway first needed to find a suitable site. This came about when the city of Rockford, looking for further economic growth, began to develop an enterprise zone on the near empty southwest side of the city. The area developed is on the Interstate 90 - Highway 20 by-pass from Belvidere to Freeport, Ill., a good location for Landstar whose visitors and guests were often arriving in 18-wheel vehicles. The company seized the opportunity, ending up with an 18-acre parcel.

Attractive, practical space

With the site selected, the actual building process became more focused. Zimmer's vision called for "no marble, no gold," but instead he wanted very attractive, practical space from which to service the Landstar Inway business capacity owners, agents and customers. Also, with business growing rapidly and technology requirements constantly changing, the proposed size of the building was now the big question. Options from 40,000 to 80,000 sq. ft. were considered, with 60,000 sq. ft. chosen as a happy medium.

Working closely with the Rockford architectural firm of David L. Jenkins and Associates, as well as with Stenstrom Construction, Larry Zimmer saw the project begin to emerge as reality in late 1995.

"Economics dictated that we get the most building for the money," Zimmer says, "so we decided to use a metal building system integrated with brick and glass for aesthetics."

Stenstrom Construction, having been involved in metal systems construction since the late seventies, was able to contribute much in the way of ideas.

Taking the plans for the facility to the metal building systems manufacturer, they sat down as a group to discuss the many complexities of the project. All in all, ten independent metal building framing systems would



interconnect to provide the finished project with one central two-story area surrounded by wings of varying sizes and eave heights.

The final design provided for three separate beam and column framing systems that interconnect to form the two-story, 52,500-sq. ft. center of the building. The front of the facility consists of another beam and column type metal framing system flanked by two adjacent lean-to systems, thus providing an impressive entry area and an additional 3,750 square feet of space. Four smaller framing systems then fit into the corner niches of the main building to add another 2,500 square feet of floor space. To accommodate future growth, the rear of the structure was designed to be 100% expandable.

From the point of entering the order for the metal building systems, the construction schedule was on a fast track. "By this time, we were in desperate need of consolidated space," says Larry

Zimmer. "Our customer service desks were almost sitting on top of each other, and we had conduits from floor to ceiling every few feet for the necessary communications equipment."

While the metal building systems were in the design and fabrication process, Stenstrom Construction completed the site excavation and installation of the Flexicore floor slabs that would serve as the basement portion of the main building. The metal building systems were delivered to the jobsite in June and erection of the primary framing systems began immediately.

When this portion of the project was completed, the roof configurations of the structure were the next challenge for Stenstrom Construction. The two

story main portion consists of secondary structural members (purlins) covered by a 1-1/2-inch, 22 gauge metal deck. R-14 rigid board insulation was then installed, followed by a fully adhering rubber membrane roofing system. This portion of the roof drains at a 1/4:12 slope to a system of interior roof drains. After installation of the covering, 45 tons of HVAC equipment were lifted by helicopter for placement on this portion of the building.

Ten independent framing systems interconnect

Standing seam roof panels

A vertical facade/mansard combination was added to completely surround the building, enhancing its appearance as well as screening the HVAC equipment from view. This facade features a 24 gauge, vertical rib standing seam roof panel in a fluoropolymer paint system for color longevity.

The entry elevation of the building features a 4:12 roof slope with a standing seam roof system installed over roof purlins. The system is the same as the one utilized in the facade on the two-story portion of the facility. The four smaller, single story corner areas feature insulation and a membrane covering over pre-cast concrete roof planks.

The exterior walls were then completed utilizing glass panels for the exposed ends of the two-story portion, and a brick veneer over metal stud walls on the front and wings of the building.

For the interior of the building, the Landstar emphasis on information and communication had a lot to do with dictating interior design and construction. Each of the many customer service



personnel has their own "office" complete with one or, in some cases, two separate computer systems as well as telecommunication links. In order to accommodate lines for the equipment, the floor system was designed with special troughs beneath portions of certain aisles. These areas can accommodate two sets of cables and wiring for every 25 feet of floor space. Moveable and replaceable carpet squares allow access for new or relocated workstation connections.

The special computer rooms at the end of each floor were designed for both security and proper temperature control; over forty thermostats were placed throughout the facility to allow for comfort in the areas of various use and occupancy.

In March, some ten months after construction began, the Landstar Inway team proudly took possession of their new home.

There are 320-plus employees in the facility, each with their own functional workspaces, featuring the latest in communications equipment. Operations are housed on the first floor and administration on the second. There are spacious training facilities for the many business capacity owners safety training programs. A state-of-the-art-conference area allows for videoconferences between the Rockford personnel and other Landstar companies throughout the country.

The site features special parking areas for semi trucks. Landstar's business capacity owners are always encouraged to visit, and when they do, they have their own spacious lounge area for rest, refreshments and communication.

"There is room for everything and everyone," states Larry Zimmer, "but no wasted space. Our overall productivity has immeasurably increased and we are really proud of this facility. By utilizing the metal building system, and working closely with the contractor and architect, we were able to fulfill our dream of creating a new home for Landstar Inway."



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