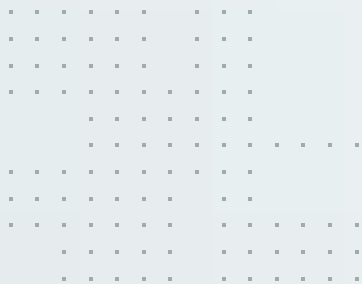




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Supply chain leader's guide to cross-border freight solutions



In the current environment of disruptive trade policies, U.S. companies are reimagining and revamping their supply chains to capitalize on nearshoring opportunities.

Particularly in the manufacturing, food & beverage and retail sectors. Reliable, safe and compliant multi-modal transport options, including nearshoring, are critical to ensure new supply chain configurations meet expectations. These companies require experienced transportation and logistics providers to help navigate the complexities of this environment, including the unique regulatory compliance requirements associated with moving their products across borders.

More than half (53%) of operations executives in a recent survey from Werner® and Supply Chain Dive's studioID identified a carrier's performance in cross-border logistics as extremely important.¹

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CROSS-BORDER FREIGHT GROWTH

7.9% Mexico
(increase)

8.6% Canada
(increase)

January 2025 vs. January 2024²



CROSS-BORDER SHIPPING MODES

Through-Trailer (or Door-to-Door):

The freight remains in the same trailer from origin to final destination, often with only a tractor swap at the border. This minimizes handling, reduces risk exposure and is ideal for high-value or time-sensitive freight such as automotive or temperature-controlled products.

Transload:

The freight is transferred from a Mexican carrier's trailer to a U.S.-based carrier's trailer at a border facility (or vice versa). While this introduces more touchpoints, it can offer cost efficiencies and trailer optimization, especially when combined with the right cross-dock infrastructure and oversight. For Mexico-bound cargo, drivers can take the load to the border even if they aren't hauling a trailer authorized for transport into Mexico. Conversely, transloading helps to optimize truck and trailer capacity for Mexican carrier partners.

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While the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) and tariffs are ongoing factors, there are many reasons to shift production to Mexico. Shorter supply chains translate into real advantages for shippers, including same-day communication, easy travel for site visits, shorter lead times, quicker response times to disruptions, better cargo security and improved cargo visibility, all resulting in a more nimble operation.

“As Mexico cements itself as a prime destination for nearshoring and offshore manufacturing, businesses face mounting challenges in cross-border logistics.”

Lance Dixon, SVP of Mexico, Canada, and TCU Divisions at Werner

This playbook highlights how companies can optimize their cross-border logistics plans by partnering with transportation and logistics providers that have decades of experience, an emphasis on cargo security, compliance and multi-modal transport, as well as strategic infrastructure.

CROSS-BORDER LOGISTICS CHALLENGES IN THE CURRENT ENVIRONMENT

As recent events have demonstrated, long-standing trade routes can be disrupted without warning, leaving shippers scrambling to find alternatives to ensure their supply chains remain uninterrupted.

Mexico has consistently ranked among the top U.S. trading partners. In 2024, over 80% of Mexico's total goods exports flowed north, and more than 40% of its total goods imports came from the U.S.³

That trend is likely to continue as geopolitical uncertainties persist, influencing trade patterns and potentially leading to increased imports from Mexico and Canada, particularly as a means to circumvent tariffs on other nations, such as China.

Nearshoring to Mexico has proved to be a successful strategy for manufacturers in various industries, including automotive aerospace and electronics. However, it's important to note that this shift can increase costs and disrupt supply chains, as well as hinder economic growth if not implemented correctly. Companies moving manufacturing to Mexico for the first time or expanding their presence will benefit from having a trusted, experienced logistics provider leading the way.

Customs requirements on both sides of the border, as well as the need for local contacts and expertise, represent some of the potential pitfalls that could result in delays and additional costs due to customs violations.

MEXICO'S ADVANTAGES AS A NEARSHORE MANUFACTURING PLATFORM

2,000

mile border
with the U.S.

48

road
crossings

5

rail
crossings

1-2

days from any
point in the U.S.

POTENTIAL CROSS-BORDER PITFALLS

Given the complex customs regulations, traffic congestion, cargo security risks, cultural barriers and capacity constraints, mastering the cross-border environment requires expertise, innovation and localized strategies.

Strict customs compliance is the foundation for a successful cross-border strategy, as even minor errors in paperwork can lead to lengthy delays and costly fines. Logistics providers certified in both Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT) and Authorized Economic Operator (AEO), Mexico's equivalent, can help expedite border crossings due to fewer cargo inspections. Experience with Mexican customs compliance documentation, such as the Complemento Carta Porte system, helps avoid shipment holds or fines.

As Mexico has become the destination of choice for U.S. manufacturers, rising traffic and shipment volumes are putting pressure on the infrastructure. Highways, customs processing and warehouse capacity have been pushed to the limits. Changes in immigration policies may result in more detailed inspections for drivers and cargo, potentially leading to more congestion and even longer wait times.

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Rising freight volumes present attractive targets for cargo theft and tampering. Security breaches, such as cargo theft during dwell time at border facilities or during transload, are a top concern. One of the factors contributing to security risks is the lack of visibility when freight is in Mexico, particularly with partners that operate without integrated tracking systems.

Cultural and communication barriers can be an obstacle to establishing an effective cross-border program. Having bilingual people on the ground can make every step more efficient. Within Mexico, it's crucial to acknowledge regional differences and establish relationships accordingly.

Shortfalls in these areas may point to a lack of depth and breadth in the logistics provider's experience.

“Werner mitigates these risks with real-time tracking, secure C-TPAT-certified terminals, bilingual support teams and direct oversight from our four offices in Mexico.”

Lance Dixon, SVP of Mexico, Canada, and TCU Divisions at Werner

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO CROSS-BORDER SHIPPING

No matter which border you're crossing, cross-border shipping involves significantly more complexity than domestic moves. Here's a quick guide to the typical process for moving cargo north and south of the U.S. border.

STEP 01

Pre-clearance

- Customs paperwork
- Bill of lading
- Commercial invoice
- Packing list
- Required trade documentation

STEP 01

Carrier coordination

Werner or our Mexican partners coordinate border handoffs for through-trailer or transload shipments.

STEP 01

Customs processing

U.S. and Mexican customs agencies review shipments.

- C-TPAT certification helps expedite this step

STEP 03

Final-mile delivery

After clearance, the shipment reaches its final destination via Werner's fleet or a trusted carrier partner.

Werner's in-house cross-border compliance experts proactively manage this process, ensuring documents are accurate and timelines are protected. With more than 25 years of regulatory experience, Werner significantly reduces the risk of clearance delays or entry denials.

BEST PRACTICES IN CROSS-BORDER LOGISTICS SOLUTIONS

Due to the rapid growth in nearshoring demand, transportation and logistics providers may try to position themselves as Mexico experts without having the requisite experience and infrastructure. That means loads could end up impounded for lengthy customs clearance or go missing altogether due to cargo theft.

If you're looking for a way to separate the marketing hype from a truly experienced provider, understand that cross-border logistics expertise goes beyond simply offering service in Mexico.

Whether a shipper requires a comprehensive package that includes transportation, cross-docking, inland ports, warehousing, customs documentation and assistance in a specific area, Werner has the bases covered.

“Werner offers all of these — plus decades of proven results — making us a true power partner for companies navigating the evolving Mexico nearshoring landscape.”

Lance Dixon, SVP of Mexico, Canada, and TCU Divisions at Werner

TO BE GENUINELY EFFECTIVE IN CROSS-BORDER LOGISTICS, A PROVIDER NEEDS:

- ☑ **Regulatory expertise and documentation management** to ensure seamless customs compliance
- ☑ **Flexible multi-modal offerings**, including dry van, refrigerated, logistics and intermodal solutions
- ☑ **Technology-driven visibility and security**, such as real-time GPS and load monitoring
- ☑ **Strategic terminal locations** at key crossing points (e.g., Laredo and El Paso)
- ☑ **Infrastructure investment**, such as cross-docks and C-TPAT-certified facilities
- ☑ **Bilingual, binational operations teams** to provide full life cycle support
- ☑ **Customer-focused service**, including 24/7 account management and customizable options

ENSURING CARGO SECURITY

As trade volumes increase, managing security becomes a high priority to ensure cargo integrity for every shipment. Enhanced security measures should be part of every transaction. Transportation and logistics providers with long-term experience understand the need to manage risks proactively and will make the necessary investments in technology and processes to secure loads effectively. Relationships with local partners are critical in generating their support for the safety and security of the supply chain.

Logistics providers can lead the way in risk prevention by approving secure rest stops, mapping high-risk zones and utilizing real-time visibility tools to monitor freight at every stop. Additionally, the need for cargo insurance is an unfortunate reality, as organized theft rings operate with alarming efficiency.

Numerous handoffs along the way – from drayage and line-haul operators to brokers and freight forwarders – increase security risks, making it critical to have insight into every step.

The solution is to develop end-to-end visibility with all participants in the supply chain, from loader to receiver. Without this, information will be in silos, meaning it can't be shared quickly enough to make informed decisions.

LEADING CROSS-BORDER CARRIERS LIKE WERNER APPLY A MULTI-LAYERED SECURITY STRATEGY, INCLUDING:

- **Real-time GPS tracking** of tractors and trailers
- **Seal integrity protocols** with verification at every handoff
- **C-TPAT-certified terminals and cross-dock facilities** with 24/7 surveillance, fencing and lighting
- **Trained cross-border teams** educated in security protocol and risk mitigation
- **Limited exposure windows**, reducing dwell time and opportunity for theft
- **Strict vetting of Mexican carrier partners** to ensure standards are maintained

Werner also applies strict access controls and redundant communication with drivers and terminals, which are especially critical for high-value, time-sensitive and temperature-sensitive freight.

NAVIGATING TO CROSS-BORDER SUCCESS

Some shippers require a comprehensive suite of services that cover every aspect of international moves, while others may require expertise in a specific area, such as customs management. As such, it's essential to seek transportation and logistics providers with the capability and resources to tailor their services to your specific needs.

Werner offers a range of logistics services tailored to support freight movements across borders, including support of through-trailer service and transload modes for a wide range of industry sectors and high-value cargoes. Our multi-temperature cross-dock in Laredo, combined with vetted Mexican carrier partnerships, enables seamless and secure transfers. Our through-trailer capabilities support uninterrupted movement for sensitive shipments.

AS YOU CONSIDER A CROSS-BORDER STRATEGY, LOOK FOR THESE LOGISTICS BEST PRACTICES:

Local presence and infrastructure

- Bilingual teams coordinating daily operations
- Secure cross-dock facilities in Laredo and El Paso
- Dedicated cross-dock and terminal operations
- Real-time tracking and bilingual support

Regulatory expertise

- Manage shifting trade and customs requirements without service interruptions
- Demonstrated C-TPAT certification and compliance expertise

Proven record

- Numerous success metrics that demonstrate reliability, efficiency and safety
- Long-standing presence in both countries with offices and on-the-ground staff

“With over 25 years of Mexico experience, Werner backs its claims with dedicated infrastructure, regulatory expertise and a strong cross-border customer base,” Dixon said.

“We don’t just say we’re experts — we’ve proven it across decades of successful operations.”

Lance Dixon, SVP of Mexico, Canada, and TCU Divisions at Werner

While organizations may view nearshoring as a temporary reaction to supply chain disruptions, the benefits are strategic rather than tactical.

The most successful organizations embrace nearshoring as a foundational strategy for a supply chain redesign that delivers resilience, redundancy and lower landed costs of goods.

Companies pursuing a nearshoring strategy to overcome the challenges of ongoing trade issues and disruptions must understand the complexities of cross-border supply chains. They should partner with a logistics provider that has the experience, infrastructure and technology to ensure freight moves safely and efficiently across the border and to its final destination.

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**LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW
WERNER DELIVERS CUSTOMIZED
SUPPORT AND UNMATCHED
CROSS-BORDER SOLUTIONS**

CONTACT US TODAY

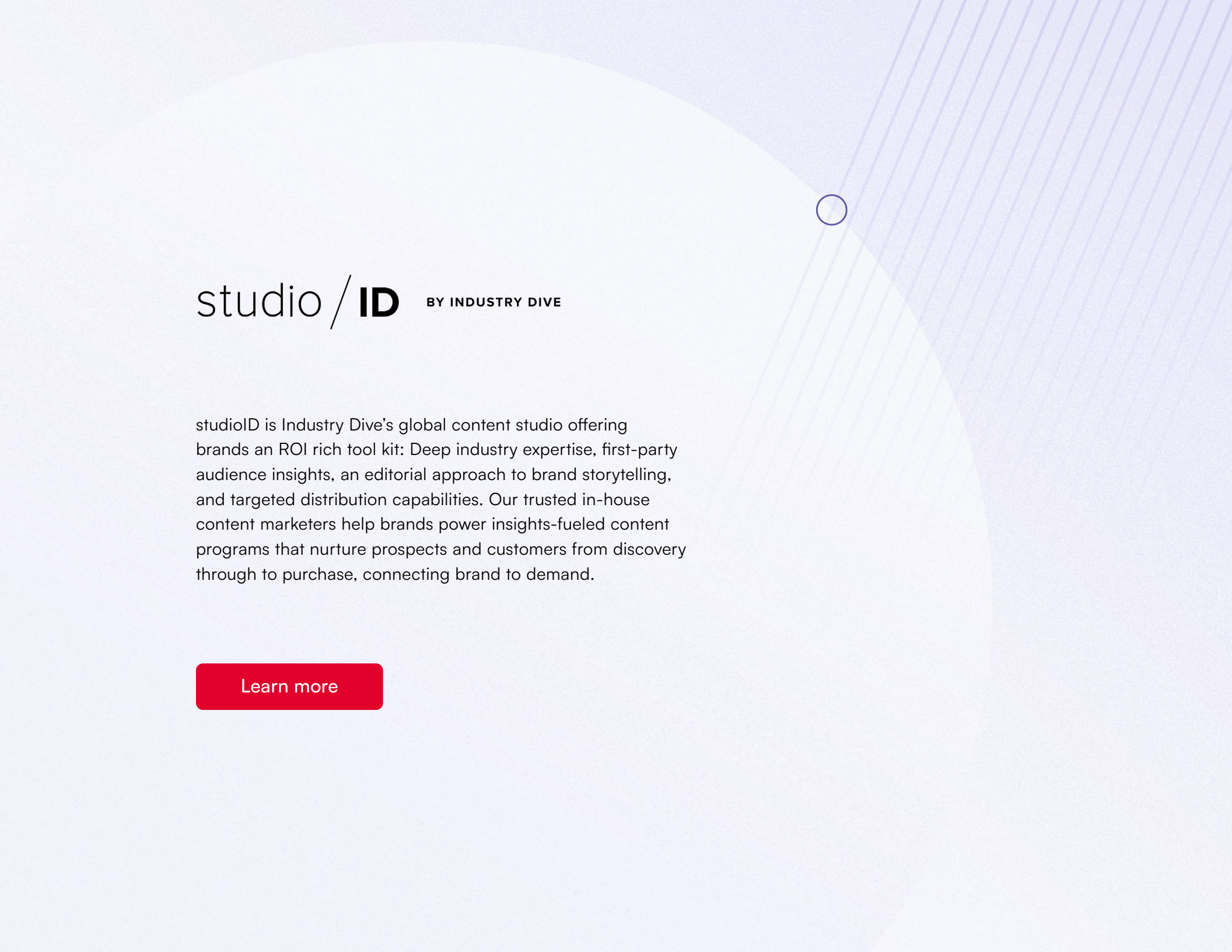
RESOURCES

1. ["Bridging the Gap: What Companies Expect from High-Value Transportation Services," Werner+studiolD, June 2025.](#)
2. ["North American Transborder Freight rose 8.2% in January 2025 from January 2024," Bureau of Transportation Statistics, March 27, 2025.](#)
3. ["Mexico," Office of the United States Trade Representative, 2024.](#)



Nearly 70 years ago, Werner started with just one truck and a vision. Today, we are one of North America's top transportation and logistics providers, delivering innovative asset-based and non-asset solutions with a relentless commitment to safety, service and sustainability. As the 6th largest dedicated carrier in the U.S., we continue to drive the industry forward and deliver beyond expectations for our customers. Our comprehensive, multi-modal solutions include Dedicated, One-Way Truckload, Intermodal, Final Mile, Temperature-Controlled and more. Werner's strength in transportation and logistics enhances the businesses of our customers, ensuring their supply chains operate smoothly and efficiently.

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