



RORO Across the Ocean

| Shipping a High Volume of Vehicles around the World

What started as a way to connect with his home country has grown into a large network of offices around the U.S. and the world. Mr. Kastytis Latvys created Atlantic Express in Chicago and ships vehicles to the Baltic region and many other places by using the Magaya Cargo System.

We are looking for the best option for our customers, both cost-wise and transit time.

Kastytis Latvys, President



At a Glance

Atlantic Express
www.atlanticexpresscorp.com

Industry
NVOCC and Freight Forwarder

Solution
Magaya Cargo System

Atlantic Express is an NVOCC located in Bridgeview, Illinois, in the greater Chicago area. They have 20 employees in the Chicago area and a 50,000 square-foot warehouse. The majority of their business is ocean shipments of vehicles. Other services and divisions in the company provide small package service, air freight, and brokerage services.

Challenges

Atlantic Express was created by Mr. Kastytis Latvys in 1997. Mr. Latvys is Lithuanian, and he moved to the Chicago area from Lithuania in 1989. The area is home to many Lithuanians; in fact it is the largest community of Lithuanians outside of Lithuania. Mr. Latvys saw there was a need for people in this community to send packages to family and friends back in Lithuania. He started his business “to connect Lithuanians here in the US with Lithuanians in the old country,” he said.

Now his company has grown and offers more than small package shipping. They are a large exporter of automobiles from the US to the Baltic. Shipping autos requires specific procedures and documentation. Mr. Latvys looked for software that could handle their operations. They have been using the Magaya Cargo System since 2005. “Using Magaya has been a good investment,” he said. “It saves us hours of work because we don’t have to re-enter documents manually. It helps us reduce our costs.”

Shipping Vehicles

In their ocean shipment division, 95% of the business is exporting vehicles. The majority of their customers are large wholesalers.

Atlantic Express frequently ships autos to Lithuania, which is a transshipment hub. The vehicles are then transferred via rail or road to nearby countries such as Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan, where they have offices or destination agents. “Using Magaya is helpful with the time difference between the U.S. and Europe because information can be checked 24 hours a day,” Mr. Latvys said.

Another country that offers transshipment capabilities is Germany. From there, autos are distributed to countries in Western Europe. Other parts of the world that Atlantic Express ships to include Western and Northern Africa; South America; and countries such as United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Jordan.

Shipments of vehicles that are sent to Lithuania often arrive at the ocean port of Klaipeda. While many ports this far north in the Baltic Sea can be frozen in winter causing delays as ships wait for ice breakers,

Klaipeda is often open. From the seaport, vehicles and freight are transferred to railcars for distribution into Russia or other countries. The railcars are especially designed to handle vehicles, and Lithuania has upgraded its trains with modern locomotives. Some of the challenges of shipping in the Baltic region include old transportation networks and a variety of documentation requirements. Each country requires Customs documents in their language. There are also constant changes in Customs duties and laws. They also have to stay informed of changes in currency rates.

While the rail network is very important to transporting freight within Lithuania and the region, the communications network in some nearby countries is not always as advanced.



“Not much has changed from the old Soviet Union. Old methods are still being used, not many computers. Often we have to send telegrams to different rail stations along the way,” Mr. Latvys said.

The staff in the Klaipeda office of Atlantic Express sends the telegrams to stations, and then they send the shipment status back to Mr. Latvys and his staff in Chicago.

Managing the shipments is done in their Magaya Cargo System. The staff members at Atlantic Express often start a vehicle shipment with an ocean consolidation transaction created in the Magaya Cargo

System in the Chicago office or other US office. They arrange the door-to-door journey from the U.S. to the final destination, including the ocean, rail, and truck.

They use the Automated Export System (AES) that is built into Magaya software; it converts all the data from the shipment into the EEI (formerly called the SED) and sends it to the AESDirect website. Magaya software connects to the AESDirect website and transfers all the data so it does not have to be entered twice.

The Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) is recorded and used to track the vehicles during their journey. Customers can track the VIN on the Atlantic Express website.

Worldwide Locations

The main office of Atlantic Express is in Bridgeview, south of Chicago, Illinois. They have close access to Highway 294 and Chicago Midway Airport. The nearby container yards and rail yards are convenient to move their car shipments from Chicago to coastal U.S. ports.

The company also has locations in many cities in the US, including Elizabeth, NJ; Chesapeake, VA; Miami, FL; Pasadena, TX; Wilmington, CA; Savannah, GA; and Tacoma, WA.

The advantage of having many locations in major ports gives the staff at Atlantic Express the opportunity to choose the best shipping options for the customer, saving them money and finding the best route to the destination. "We are looking for the best option for our customers, both cost-wise and transit time," he said. "We decide which port would be best, depending where the vehicle is located. If the shipment is a consolidation, we look at what we have shipping out of our different facilities. We don't like to hold the vehicles; recently



Port of Klaipeda

we had a high volume of shipments, so we ran two shifts to load the vehicles quickly. Working fast and giving customers the estimated transit times for each option so they can choose what is best for them – this is what differentiates us from our competitors."



Trucks at Loading Bays

At many of their locations, they offer additional services such as trucking domestic freight, and "reefer" refrigerated trucks to transport foods, and car carriers. They offer brokerage services.

Atlantic Express uses the Magaya Cargo System to create invoices with all the charges for shipments. When cars arrive at their location, they create a Warehouse Receipt and photograph the vehicles. They use many reporting features to see volume of shipments per destination and which ports are handling the most containers. "The reports are helpful to see how we are doing," Mr. Latvys said. "Magaya helps us save time with our documentation and organizes everything in one spot."

Many of their customers and employees have been with them for many years. The experience of the employees at Atlantic Express helps the company provide quality customer service.

"We get customers from word of mouth and referrals from our existing customers, especially the wholesalers."