

Interstate Worldwide Relocation

- **Improved customer satisfaction**
- **Increased profits**
- **Contributed to winning several international contracts**
- **Demonstrated the company's quality commitment to customers and to employees**
- **Improved employee communication and job satisfaction**
- **Reduced training required for new personnel as each job is fully documented**

The Company

Interstate Worldwide Relocation is one of the leading, privately owned, moving and logistics companies in the United States.

Established in 1943, the Interstate \$60 million family of companies today comprises a worldwide group of relocation management, transportation and logistic entities that facilitate more than 20,000 relocations annually. The Interstate team presently consists of 300 employees and 1,000 service partners worldwide. Interstate received ISO-9002 certification for all entities and facilities, an accomplishment achieved by less than 1% of those within its industry. Additionally, in 2001 the company was recognised with several prestigious awards, including the 2001 National Capital Business Ethics Award and The Fairfax County Economic Development Authority's 2001 Blue Diamond Quality First Award and numerous Safety in the Workplace Award honours from the American Moving and Storage Association.

The Issue

Interstate pursued ISO 9002 registration for the following reasons:

- To formalise the company's commitment to quality.
- To improve internal operations and increase internal efficiencies.
- To establish a process for implementing and documenting new procedures.
- To provide for continuous reviews and improvements and to reduce the learning curve for employees.

BSI Case Study on the Benefits of ISO 9000 Registration

In the mid-1990s, the moving industry received some negative publicity in the United States related to poor quality. Interstate executives knew they had one of the best quality companies in the industry.

Moreover, Interstate had a quality system in place that mirrored ISO 9000. Ronald Gallier, vice president of quality control at Interstate, explains, “We wanted to build a quality culture. We wanted to demonstrate to our workforce, customers and suppliers that from the top down we’re committed to quality service. And, we thought ISO was the best way to do that.”

The Benefits - Examples

The benefits associated with registration to a quality management system are numerous. For Interstate, the specific benefits included:

- Improved communication between employees and customers.
- Increased profits with the company reporting its highest annual profit in more than 50 years in business.
- Documented procedures in-place and created a mechanism for methodically making procedural changes.
- Improved performance metrics with a comprehensive system of tracking where in the process a problem occurred.

Reduced new employee training costs as procedures for each job are thoroughly documented.

BSI’s Role

Interstate chose BSI as its registrar due to BSI’s reputation in the industry. Interstate wanted to select a registrar with an impeccable reputation so that its registration would have worldwide recognition.

Interstate’s Chief Operating Officer, Arthur E. (Bud) Morrissette, IV, stated “I am absolutely convinced that ISO registration has helped the company foster a commitment to quality throughout the organization. Since my grandfather founded this company in 1943, we’ve focused on providing top-level service. Now with our ISO 9002 registration, we have a way of demonstrating that quality commitment”.

The process helped Interstate develop and institutionalise business rules within each operating unit. BSI’s team of initial assessors provided a helpful and thorough assessment of the company.

“We wanted more than the mark. We want to continuously improve. And, BSI’s assessors helped us identify areas for improvement”, Mr. Gallier explained.

About the System

Interstate developed its quality management system to fully document the company's procedures for moving household goods and providing logistics and relocation services –worldwide. Through registration, all employees have established procedures to perform their jobs. Interstate also developed a fully documented process for making procedural changes.

The company has developed a comprehensive program for measuring customer satisfaction throughout the process. When problems occur, Interstate can use its system to track the precise location within the transaction chain where the problem occurred. With its detailed tracking system, Interstate can more easily take corrective action and determine if new procedures are warranted.