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Customer Survey Reveals Transloading Challenges

At the beginning of this year, Ventura Transfer Company, the Long Beach, California-headquartered bulk transfer specialists and tank container depot operator, launched a new branding initiative, aimed at projecting the company's key messages of premium service and productivity to its customers.

Formerly known as Ventura-Lesbro, the new branding was designed to reflect the market's changing requirements. "Our aim was to project a modern image," says Brian Oken, VTC's President and CEO, "and to show that we are staying in tune with our customers."

VTC is the oldest bulk handling and transportation company in California. It owns and operates nine railcar transfer terminals in California and Arizona that deliver bulk commodities throughout the United States. In addition, it owns two warehouse locations in the Los Angeles area, and operates the only full-service ISO container depot on the West Coast.

To follow up with the rebranding initiative, VTC sent a survey to each of its customers. This survey was designed to measure competitiveness, satisfaction, loyalty and customers' challenges in the transportation and/or



*Brian Oken,
CEO of Ventura Transfer Company*

transloading industry. The survey received a respectable 7.2 percent response rate.

Unanimously, respondents cited their five most urgent transloading and/or transportation challenges as: container depot availability, location of rail yards, cost, service, and proper temperature control for specialty chemicals.

"This survey revealed valuable insight, enabling us to understand our customers' most pressing needs. We are analyzing the results and are using information the survey provided us to broaden our industry leading breadth of services to even greater levels," says Oken.

VTC has a small fleet of its own tank containers for specific projects

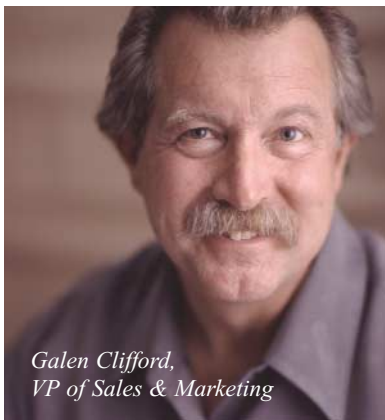




Many international tank container operators use VTC as their West Coast depot

“In addition, we gained knowledge of future market trends, enabling us to communicate specific solutions available now (and in development) to the hazardous and non-hazardous material markets.”

“We also asked our customers to grade our performance so that we could constructively enhance our processes,” explained Galen Clifford, VP of Marketing and Sales, Ventura Transfer Company. “With the launch of our new



*Galen Clifford,
VP of Sales & Marketing*

corporate identity, and strategic direction focused on operational excellence, we are taking serious steps to improving in every way possible.”

Oken has noticed a number of changes in the market’s requirements in recent years. “The market is no longer shipper-dominated, but much more consignee-driven,” he says. “Demand for chemical storage is reduced, as customers want to see their cargoes reach their destination as soon as possible. Tank container numbers continue to grow—especially eastbound—while we are seeing a substantial increase in the use of flexitanks for non-hazardous products.”

(www.venturatransfer.com)