Enabling Growth Through Automation

After BirdDog Solutions acquired Foley Carrier Services, Nicole LaFollette knew they had outgrown their current software platform. It didn’t provide the tracking they needed, the manual processes were too labor intensive, and without robust near-real-time debtor and carrier monitoring, it was difficult to manage risk. She recently shared her experiences with us.

“FactorSoft enables us to manage risk without having to manually monitor everything, which enables us to grow and extend more credit in places we wouldn’t have before because we didn’t have the capacity or staff to be able to monitor everything.”

– Nicole LaFollette, Manager, Foley Carrier Services LLC

Challenge: A Labor-Intensive System that Hindered Growth

In order for Foley Carrier Services to continue to grow and take on more customers, LaFollette needed to free her staff from administrative tasks. She wanted a software solution that could handle all aspects of transportation factoring, as well as manage their portfolio. In an industry that is notoriously big on documentation, LaFollette was also looking for transportation-specific features that would reduce the paperwork burden. And while Foley’s IT department considered building their own software, they didn’t have the knowledge base or time to outsource. “A lot of the other factors I knew used FactorSoft and liked the capabilities and flexibility it offered. It was basically the only software we looked at purchasing,” LaFollette explained.

FOLEY CARRIER SERVICES

Provides transportation factoring to help carriers improve cash flow. They also offer a range of transportation services such as documentation and insurance to help motor carriers run their business.

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

The company outgrew their previous software platform and were seeking better tracking, improved risk management, and reduced manual processes.

SOLUTION

Foley Carrier Services turned to the FactorSoft portfolio management system from ProfitStars®, also utilizing the complementary modules ClientWeb, Invoice Delivery, Load Processor, Credit Monitoring Interface, and SaferWatch Interface.

BENEFITS

With the addition of FactorSoft and its supporting modules, Foley Carrier Services gained a solution that freed staff from administrative tasks and efficiently handled all aspects of their transportation factoring business. The solution helps them manage risk with debtors, monitor credit lines and limits, and more. By relying on FactorSoft, Foley Carrier Services has been able to save time and increase productivity while also reducing their need for staff.
Solution: FactorSoft® for Transportation
Thanks to a long history of working with transportation factors, the experts at ProfitStars® developed the platform to be well-suited for the industry, with specific functions and add-on modules that meet their unique requirements. It’s an innovative and comprehensive software solution for portfolio management from ProfitStars that allows Foley to manage every aspect of factoring from a single platform. FactorSoft helps them improve workflow speed and efficiency, and adds better risk management. Tracking debtor information, saving data and images, and setting red flags are all new-to-them features Foley appreciates.

“FactorSoft really allows us to manage our risk with the debtors. We’re able to set credit lines and limits, and it lets us know when those lines will expire so we can go back and monitor our debtors to reduce our risk. We can set red flag queues and if something triggers one, such as a change in credit score, FactorSoft lets us know so we can deal with it.”

Automated and Paperless
With a large volume of transactions and stacks of supporting paperwork, transportation factoring is labor intensive. The many touchpoints and levels of verification between receiving an invoice and funding money causes some loads to have hundreds of pieces of paper that go with them. FactorSoft streamlines every step of the process for Foley.

“A lot of debtors require document originals, so we had to keep a paper copy of everything. Now we don’t need to because FactorSoft stores images directly in the system. We’ve reduced the cost of storing all that paper, as well as reduced the cost of postage and shipping. Getting to be as paperless as possible was one of our goals in purchasing FactorSoft, and their team has really helped us out with that,” LaFollette said.

“It has absolutely helped us save time and increase productivity. We used to have a team of seven in data entry. We’re now down to three – and we’ve added more tasks as well as more customers. It’s really cut down on admin costs. It is fair to say we would not have been able to grow as quickly without FactorSoft. We would probably have double the staff without it,” LaFollette reported.

Faster Carrier Payments
FactorSoft’s ability to export NACHA files to bank systems instead of manually processing payments not only saves staff time, it enables Foley to pay carriers faster.

“We process a ton of ACH’s on a daily basis. Before, it took two and half to three hours to pull a report, see how much we owed each carrier, manually add up all the ACH payments on a daily basis, and upload all the information. With FactorSoft it takes two minutes. It also enables us to automatically send carrier payment directly to fuel cards, which is a quick 30 second upload. Before it was all manual.”
Robust System Preferences
FactorSoft is unique in the industry because of its high level of customization through system preferences; users can add some unique flavor to almost every function in the system.

“That flexibility to change preferences has been fantastic. There’s a lot of them, but once you understand how they’re set up you’re able to make changes in seconds. If we realize we don’t like the way something is, or if we need to lock down a certain department’s ability to see information, we can. Those preferences were one of the key factors in our choosing FactorSoft. We have the ability to make the system work the way we need it to work instead of having the software saying, ‘Here, this is what you can do.’ You can’t find a lot of software like that.”

FactorSoft System Benefits
- Is administratively friendly for account managers, operations personnel, and customers
- Is not one-size-fits-all – ability to configure the behavior of an app and screen views
- Offers a logical workflow
- Makes a lot of information viewable in a small amount of real estate
- Offers red flags and alerts
- Enables better customer service, quick answers and faster funding
- Can be delivered as a cloud-based service with zero administration from any location
Solution: ClientWeb Module

ClientWeb enables factors to provide personalized, up-to-date account information electronically. Clients can view their latest account information, upload invoices, add new debtors, submit credit requests, run reports, and more, 24/7.

“ClientWeb has helped us tremendously. Before it would take an hour or two for a client to get a credit response to see if a debtor is a creditworthy payor. Now the client portal allows our clients to submit a credit request online. We get it instantly in our queue, and they get a response within two or three minutes. The system also allows us to send those responses via email, so if a carrier submits a request and then starts doing something else, they can see the answer right on their phone without having to log back into ClientWeb. Another great feature is that they can see how their debtors are paying online without having to constantly reach out to their account rep. It’s fantastic.”

ClientWeb Benefits

For Foley:

- Connect to clients securely, anywhere
- Improve lender/client communication
- Share select information without compromising confidential information

For Foley’s Clients:

- Access account information in near-real-time
- Upload electronic invoice batches
- Upload images/copies of invoices in PDF format
- Add new debtors and check credit
- Self-serve reports
Solution: Invoice Delivery Module
Invoice Delivery provides the functionality to customize the electronic delivery of invoices to the way factors do business. This add-on module was actually developed in conjunction with Foley Carrier Services.

“When we were initially looking into the possibilities, we saw the potential for emailing invoices directly from FactorSoft to debtors as soon as we had purchased them. The ProfitStars team was really interested in going down that path with us. They did a great job working with us, and we helped them understand how the transportation industry wants invoices – it’s a lot different than some other businesses. These debtors require one invoice for one load. Now the module offers a lot of options; we can attach all their paperwork, and we have the ability to attach the Notice of Assignment, which is really important for making sure we get paid as the factor. Before Invoice Delivery, we were only sending 5% of our invoices electronically. Now we send 87% electronically. It’s a huge reason why we chose FactorSoft.”

Invoice Delivery Benefits
- Greatly speeds invoice delivery and accuracy
- Saves postage and shipping
- Delivery can be scheduled
- Invoices can be re-sent at the push of a button
- Can include or exclude documents
- Includes standard reporting
Solution: Load Processor Module

Load Processor Module manages all the details of advance carrier payments prior to goods being delivered and an invoice being created. One feature Foley appreciates is the ability for factors to create a load in anticipation of an invoice and advance a portion of the total load/invoice amount as a fuel advance or other expense to a hauler. When the invoice does come in, advances are automatically deducted.

“The Load Processor is one of the reasons we chose FactorSoft. We have always offered 50% fuel advances but the software we were using couldn’t track them, so we were entering them manually on a spreadsheet. A lot of advances were getting missed and we were paying carriers in full when they had taken 50% advance – it was impossible to keep up. The Load Processor automatically tracks it all so when it’s time for final funding everything is settled right there. It also gives us the ability to set credit lines and limits and communicates with FactorSoft so we’re not advancing on bad credit and can better manage our risk. Plus it benefits our carriers because they’ll know whether or not they’re picking up a load with a credit-worthy debtor.”

Load Processor Benefits

- Organizes the details of advance carrier payments
- Quickly settles invoices within FactorSoft
- Maintains list of haulers
- Automatically settles loads and updates invoice and PO with Purchase Import
- Tracks load verification
- Organizes load documentation
**Solution: Credit Monitoring Interface**

Credit Monitoring interface automates the credit verification/authorization process according to criteria set by the user. It dialogues with several credit monitoring partners (Ansonia, Experian, Transcredit), requests the necessary clarifications, and delivers a credit score and/or credit report quickly. Once a user begins monitoring a company, any related alerts are automatically pushed to FactorSoft.

“Before we’d have to go to the Ansonia website, enter the carrier information, search, review a report, save it as a pdf, and put it on our servers. Now, we click a button that says ‘generate’ and all the information comes up automatically. The really great thing is that there’s an integration that runs throughout the day. For every credit report we pull, all the data is automatically uploaded right into that debtor screen for us, and their credit report and credit score/rating are automatically saved in the documents for that debtor. We used to have a full-time credit employee manually looking through the alerts to find out what’s going on with each debtor. With the FactorSoft/Ansonia interface we’ve cut that down to part time.”

**Ansonia Interface Benefits**

- Speeds up the process of verifying credit
- Enables credit team to focus on exceptions
- Ensures a consistent process

**Solution: SaferWatch Interface**

SaferWatch is a one-step carrier qualification service that interfaces with FactorSoft for easier due diligence. It monitors carriers for compliance, notifies customers of critical changes and captures them in FactorSoft so users can flag problem carriers, document due diligence, and protect their businesses. It organizes current data from multiple government sources and displays it within FactorSoft, ensuring users have the most up-to-date and thorough picture of their carriers. Over 200 customizable alert criteria let users configure triggers to create their own consistent carrier-validation process.

“Before we had FactorSoft with SaferWatch, we had a full-time person monitoring FMSCA resources for those alerts manually. Now, SaferWatch pulls up all the information we need and monitors it for us. FactorSoft flags problem carriers and puts them on a No-Buy status according to parameters we have set, and we just look at the queue to see what’s going on. Underwriting uses it to make sure carriers have the required proper authorities, and Lending uses it to monitor issues like accidents or shutdowns. The interface has really helped us manage our risk. It has also helped account reps communicate with carriers in real time. Before we would wait to review a problem list and send an email to the account rep. Then the account rep would reach out to the carrier to find out what the problem was.”

**SaferWatch Interface Benefits**

- Delivers instant and reliable carrier qualification, monitoring and trend analysis
- Enables credit team to focus on exceptions
- Highlights issues that you deem important in reports for quick processing
- Helps identify chameleon carriers for additional fraud protection
- Gives daily notifications of carriers’ critical changes
**Value Add: Responsive Support**

LaFollette appreciates both the sense of partnership and community she gets from choosing FactorSoft.

“They are always very responsive and reliable. Their IT team has been phenomenal over the years.”

**Technical Services Benefits**

- Professional support team with product knowledge and real-world lending experience
- Available directly via the web, phone, and email
- Supported by an Incident Tracking System
- Immediate acknowledgement and prompt analysis of every incident
- Client Portal contains a library of current product information including release notes, how-to documents, and technical bulletins
- Help files accessible via each screen in FactorSoft

ProfitStars, a division of Jack Henry & Associates, is a leader in business and financial technology solutions, providing feature-rich products and services that improve the performance of companies like Foley Carrier Services and other diverse organizations as well as financial institutions.

FactorSoft and the transportation add-on modules described above represent just a sample of ProfitStars’ industry-leading solutions that help power the performance of approximately 11,000 clients around the globe.

*This solution is part of ProfitStars® Commercial Lending Center Suite™, a customizable collection of innovative tools and services that allow financial institutions to deliver a superior commercial lending experience while safely and efficiently growing, underwriting, and managing loans.*