

CASE STUDY

TWO MEN AND A TRUCK Franchises Accelerate Shift to Virtual Consultation and Expand Their Territory Using BlueJeans

Like any entrepreneur in the moving industry, Dustin Blakemore wants accurate estimates of what's involved in a job to ensure he can provide the best possible quote and optimize resources. Traditionally, this has involved having a full-time agent drive to a customer's home or business to assess the cost of the move.

"The person had to spend their entire day on the road, spending money on gas and all that to see what needed to be moved and then put together estimates. This wasn't very efficient," says Blakemore, franchisee of TWO MEN AND A TRUCK in Michigan's Oakland County. He's also General Manager of the TWO MEN AND A TRUCK franchise in Genesee County, Michigan.

So, when the franchises' agent quit, Blakemore decided to look for a faster way to estimate costs without sacrificing accuracy. "I told our team, 'I don't see why we can't go virtual with this' and basically eliminated the agent position altogether."

Getting Rid of Connectivity Issues

Blakemore found a solution in a video conferencing platform, which his sales team could use to perform virtual consultations, along with over-the-phone estimates. In a virtual consultation, a customer gives a tour of everything that needs to be moved to help the sales agent calculate the cost. But not everyone in the team embraced this and the platform.



Industry: Transportation and Logistics

Challenge: TWO MEN AND A TRUCK franchises in Michigan's Oakland and Genesee counties needed an effective way to virtually and accurately estimate moving jobs.

Solution: They transitioned away from estimating moving costs in person and replaced their old video conferencing platform with BlueJeans Meetings.

Results: The franchises sped up their shift to virtual consultations, avoiding disruption to business during COVID-19.

They have saved time and costs, while reaching an all-time high of 87% in their estimate accuracy.

They now cover areas that were previously too far away to perform estimates, enabling them to expand their business.

Internally, the franchises have been able to hire workers despite COVID-19 restrictions.

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– DUSTIN BLAKEMORE, TWO MEN AND A TRUCK FRANCHISEE AND GENERAL MANAGER

“We had many connectivity issues and always needed customer support,” says Blakemore. “And we were getting a lot of feedback from customers who’d say, ‘Can’t you just come out here? I can’t hear you. This connection is awful.’”

After Blakemore learned about BlueJeans and saw how easy it was to connect, he quickly switched to the enterprise-grade meetings platform. “Our sales team just raved about it,” he says. “When I showed them how clear the BlueJeans connection was, how more professional the presentation and how much better the audio, they were bought right in. It made it so easy to do virtual consultations.”

Blakemore deployed BlueJeans in early 2020, so by the time the COVID-19 pandemic hit, his sales team was more than ready to shift to more virtual consultations. The team transitioned away from in-home estimates and now does a mix of over-the-phone and virtual consultations, avoiding serious disruption to business.

“Our consultations via BlueJeans really grew and have become a standard practice,” says Blakemore. “Our sales guys would just text a link to the customer, the customer opens it, and boom, they are in it, no downloads required.” And there is no longer negative customer feedback about connectivity issues. “Now, we just hear, ‘Okay, this is easy. Let’s do this.’”

Blakemore personally likes how instead of showing his entire screen during a call, he can just share the application, avoiding disclosing any unintended content. “The whiteboard feature is also pretty cool,” he adds. “You can annotate over the displayed screen while on a call.”

Maintaining Accuracy and Growing Geographic Coverage

With one less team member and reduced transportation costs, Blakemore’s businesses have trimmed their operating expenses while keeping the accuracy of their estimates high. “Typically, we want to be accurate on

80% of our cost estimates,” he says. “This might sound low but is a difficult thing to do when you’re collecting information over the phone or virtually.” The franchises now average an all-time high of around 87% accuracy. “We’re extremely proud of that,” says Blakemore.

He adds that the sales team now also covers parts of Michigan that were previously too far away to make estimation a cost-effective process. “I was in Clarkston [Michigan] the other day, and that’s a good two-hour drive for us,” says Blakemore. “In the past, we probably wouldn’t drive all the way there just to go look at a job that’s not going to be high in revenue. So, to be able to do that on the fly, we’ve definitely stretched our territory and made everything more efficient.” The team even recently moved belongings to an island using a pontoon boat. Through BlueJeans, they were able to see the actual process of launching the boat.

Recruiting Through BlueJeans

Internally, Blakemore has also started using BlueJeans to interview job applicants. This has come in handy during COVID-19 restrictions and has increased the number of candidates showing up for interview, who only need to press a button to join a call.

“It also really helps to make our applicants feel more at ease,” he says. “I think it’s a good way to kick off the relationship and make them feel comfortable with us from the get-go.”

With virtual consultations now a key part of the franchises’ operations, Blakemore doesn’t see the business going back to doing in-home estimates again. “I think this is the future,” he says. “Not that I don’t enjoy doing estimates face to face, but this is so much more efficient. It saves you a lot of time and cost.”

ABOUT TWO MEN AND A TRUCK

Headquartered in Lansing, Michigan, TWO MEN AND A TRUCK is one of the largest franchised moving companies in the United States. It operates in more than 380 locations with 2,800 trucks around the world. Its key markets outside the United States include Canada, Ireland, and the United Kingdom.