

My Benesch My Team Campaign – BTMC Corporation

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Albert Wittkopp
COO
BTMC Corporation

Keeping a business going in a tough economy is a challenge the logistics experts at BTMC are overcoming with Benesch at their side. From contract management and human resource matters to real estate negotiations and regulatory compliance, BTMC’s Benesch team helps Al and his colleagues move forward with confidence.

Below is a testimonial from Albert Wittkopp, COO of BTMC Corporation.

What does BTMC do?

We are a logistics company that manages, packages and distributes materials, primarily those used by the Department of Defense. We provide special material handling service to the Defense Logistics Agency as well as those who sell to the DLA that wish to outsource the packaging component to comply with all the varied DOD requirements. In addition to logistics, we also distribute and broker product to the government. We have about 22 employees and expect sales volume of about \$24 million in 2011.

How did your relationship with Benesch begin?

In early 2000, I was managing a rapidly growing trucking company that was owned by a very large OEM here in Central Ohio. We were growing so rapidly, we knew we needed counsel who really specialized in the whole trucking and logistics industry. We did our research and kept running across Marc Blubaugh’s name as a very well-noted attorney in the field of logistics. Marc’s reputation led us to Benesch. He was excellent and did a great job for us. When I moved to BTMC in 2008 and continued to need legal services in the field of logistics, it was Marc and Benesch that I turned to.

What kinds of things does Benesch help you with?

Because of the intense regulatory nature of this business, we focus on compliance. Benesch gives us reassurance and quick answers when we need them.

We don’t provide the physical transportation, but rather arrange and manage it for clients, so contracts to ensure service levels are maintained are critical. Having the right contracts written in language that protects the organization is key.

More recently, Benesch has supported us in our real estate acquisition. We also have unique HR requirements: As a contractor for the federal government, we're required to have all of our employees registered with Homeland Security. So I turn to Benesch for advice on HR issues as well. I call Marc as my point of contact, and he'll direct me to other attorneys depending on the situation.

What do you like about working with Benesch?

Benesch really makes me feel like 'THE client' not just 'a client.' I've dealt with a lot of law firms and sometimes I just don't feel like the client-I feel like maybe they're doing me a favor. That's not the case with Benesch. They bring insight from their overall experience and the current experience of the marketplace. Having that is a huge difference. The key with our relationship is that both entities really listen to one another and work together in a team setting. From my perspective, that's what client service is-when you feel like you're the only guy in town. That's what Benesch and the entire team is like. It's like a cultural condition for them. It's not just Marc; everybody I'm directed to has that same attitude. It's a comfortable place to go and people who are comfortable to work with.

Are things evolving in your industry as far as regulations or technology?

Things have really changed for us. When I was brought on, we had new ownership, so going through the rigors of new ownership on top of the economic disaster for our nation, I had my hands full. I was dealing with events that don't happen every day or even every decade. When you're not involved in those every day, you need somebody who's in tune with the conditions and has already gone through some of these issues. Every time I talked with Benesch, it seemed they had already adjusted for the current economic environment. Their professionalism and insight was very beneficial, particularly during our move to a new facility. They were able to provide advice based on their experiences from both the buyers' and sellers' perspective and considering the challenging marketplace. They handled some really delicate contract negotiations that turned out very successfully for us.

Do you have plans for where you want to take the business?

Our focus continues to be on those clients who'd like to sell their products to the federal government without dealing with the exceptional and varying packaging requirements that come with every contract. We're going to a non-asset-based VMI (vendor managed inventory) 3PL (third-party logistics) environment. Our new facility has given us 100 percent more usable space, and we're beginning to reach out to those who serve the government in large capacities that are looking to outsource to specialists for the physical repack and distribution of their product to the government on a just-in-time basis.

We're also looking to private sector companies as a market for our specialty services. We have RFID labeling capability, as well as large laboratory spaces that can be converted and used immediately for pharmaceuticals distribution. We also have lab space that has static-free floors for packaging of sensitive electronic components.

It's a good position to be in. None of us has really been through this type of economic downturn before. The early '80s are somewhat reminiscent, but I don't think we've seen this sustained period of business difficulty. We're surviving, though, and good partners like Benesch are more critical than ever.

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