



Less-Than-Truckload (LTL) shipping is more than a way to move smaller freight. It's a strategic lever in your supply chain – when done right. But not all 3PLs are built to deliver speed, reliability, and cost control for your business needs.

The wrong provider? Missed deadlines. Unexpected fees. Poor visibility.

The right provider? Consistent performance. Smarter routing. Real freight cost savings.

If you want better results from your LTL freight shipping strategy, you need a 3PL partner engineered for execution.

Here's your no-fluff, high-impact checklist to evaluate whether your current or prospective 3PL is built to keep you competitive.

Understanding Their LTL Capabilities

1. Does your 3PL offer the right mix of LTL capabilities and service levels?

Your 3PL should operate like a freight specialist – not a generalist. Can they handle standard, expedited, or specialized shipments? Do they offer tiered service level to meet different customer needs? If their carrier network and operational scope are limited, so are your options.

What to listen for: Service flexibility, strong carrier relationships, and proven LTL expertise.

Evaluating performance and reliability

2. Can your 3PL consistently deliver on time – and prove it?

Speed wins – but only when it's consistent. A performance-driven 3PL should provide data on their on-time delivery rates and stand behind their claims with proof.

Pro tip: If they can't show trackable results or case studies

Handling Damaged or Lost Shipments

3. How does your 3PL respond when things go wrong?

Claims are inevitable. What matters is how your 3PL responds. Do they have a streamlined claims process? Do they act fast and proactively? A weak approach here causes delays, unhappy customers, and lost revenue.



Assessing cost and pricing transparency

✓ 4. Are you getting pricing clarity and cost-saving strategies from your 3PL?

Transparent pricing is non-negotiable. Ask how they structure rates, whether they negotiate directly with carriers, and how they help you offset rising freight costs.

Look for: Consolidation strategies, volume discounts, freight class optimization, and clear billing with no surprises.

Exploring technology and visibility

✓ 5. Does your 3PL give you the real-time visibility and tech integration you need?

A 3PL without tech is a liability. You need real-time visibility, proactive alerts, and analytics that empower smarter decisions.

Pro tip: Make sure their Transportation Management System (TMS) provides easy access to tracking and integrates seamlessly with your ERP or WMS.

Customization and additional services

✓ 6. Can your 3PL tailor solutions to your unique freight needs?

Your freight isn't one-size-fits-all – your logistics partner shouldn't be either. Whether you need temperature-sensitive handling, white-glove delivery, or end-to-end transportation management, your 3PL partner should have the flexibility to meet unique operational demands.

Value-added services

✓ 7. What extra value does your 3PL bring beyond basic freight moves?

Go beyond the basics. Freight consolidation, claims management, route optimization, and analytics-driven insights can create a competitive edge.

Bonus: A 3PL that helps you uncover hidden efficiencies is more than a vendor – they're a strategic asset.

Building a strong partnership

✓ 8. Is your 3PL provider a true partner – or just another vendor?

Great partnerships are built on clear communication and aligned expectations. Will you have a dedicated rep? How do they manage escalations? Can they scale with you?

Ask to see their playbook – and don't settle for vague answers.

The Right 3PL Makes All the Difference

If your 3PL provider isn't answering these questions, it's time for a new one. LTL freight shipping isn't just about moving goods – it's about moving your business forward. A high-performance 3PL partner helps you:

- Lower freight costs
- Increase delivery reliability
- Gain visibility and control
- Scale with confidence

TA specializes in LTL logistics that perform under pressure. Our expansive carrier network, integrated tech, and expert teams are built to deliver results – on time, every time.

*Ready to turn LTL into a competitive advantage?
→ Let's Talk Logistics – and start delivering peak performance.*