



CASE STUDY

Enhanced Customer Satisfaction Through Adaptive Last-Mile Delivery Solutions



The Overview

BuildDirect is an online marketplace that helps homeowners and home improvement professionals find high-quality flooring materials and accessories. Founded in 1999, the online-only flooring company strives to simplify the home improvements industry. It connects customers to trusted sellers from across the globe.

The platform features flooring materials across numerous categories, including hardwood, engineered wood, laminate, tiles, and similar products. The company also caters to customers across North America. Timely delivery of bulky flooring materials, as well as hassle-free returns, are essential for BuildDirect customers.

The need for a dependable and flexible delivery provider compelled BuildDirect to partner with Dolly.



The Challenges with Flooring Delivery

When it comes to delivering bulky flooring materials, LTL carriers can sometimes have limited capabilities. These traditional carriers ship small loads that typically don't require a full truck-load. They operate on a hub and spoke model where a shipment is picked up and taken to a regional hub, unloaded, and then picked up by the carrier for delivery.

The Caveat?

It's usually all done at the convenience of the carrier, often without focus on what the retailer might want, and, most importantly, not at the convenience of the customer. Additionally, there's a risk of damage due to the multiple loading/unloading procedures. Shipping rates fluctuate too as these LTL carriers are inundated with shipments, especially during peak seasons, and will often place surge pricing on retailers.

While BuildDirect's products are of superior quality, the use of LTL solutions sometimes resulted in delivery or product return issues, delays, and a drop in customer experience ratings. These problems were usually found in the last mile of the LTL journey.

THE FOLLOWING CHALLENGES WERE KEY DRIVING FACTORS BEHIND BUILDIRECT'S QUEST TO FIND ANOTHER RELIABLE LAST-MILE DELIVERY PROVIDER:

DELAYS

LTL carriers can grapple with clogged terminals and final-mile choke points. That issue sometimes resulted in significant delays in the delivery of BuildDirect's products. Customers might wait days, or even weeks, for their flooring materials to be delivered.

NO PERSONALIZATION

Considering the weight and size of BuildDirect's products, their customers often expected personalized delivery solutions. These include white glove delivery services, such as the room of choice and inside delivery. LTL carriers often can't accommodate these needs or will do so at an additional cost, leaving customers forced to figure out how to move the heavy flooring material inside their home on their own.

RETURNS

LTL providers refuse to accept returns of flooring materials if the product is unboxed or unpalletized. They can provide support in repacking these items, but at an additional cost that can be prohibitive. This created a stressful situation for customers who are often unprepared for or just don't want to tackle the hassle of having to repack flooring that might need to be returned or exchanged. The onus would fall on BuildDirect to facilitate seamless returns through a delivery provider.

BRAND EROSION

Even though BuildDirect outsourced the deliveries to LTL carriers, customers didn't perceive it this way. For them, the entire order, from payment processing to delivery, was BuildDirect's responsibility. Any delays and hassles in delivery or returns were, therefore, linked to the company. That created a negative impact on the brand's online reputation and ratings.

Senior-level decision-makers at BuildDirect realized the need to enhance their last-mile delivery and return services. It prompted them to turn to Dolly for last mile assistance.



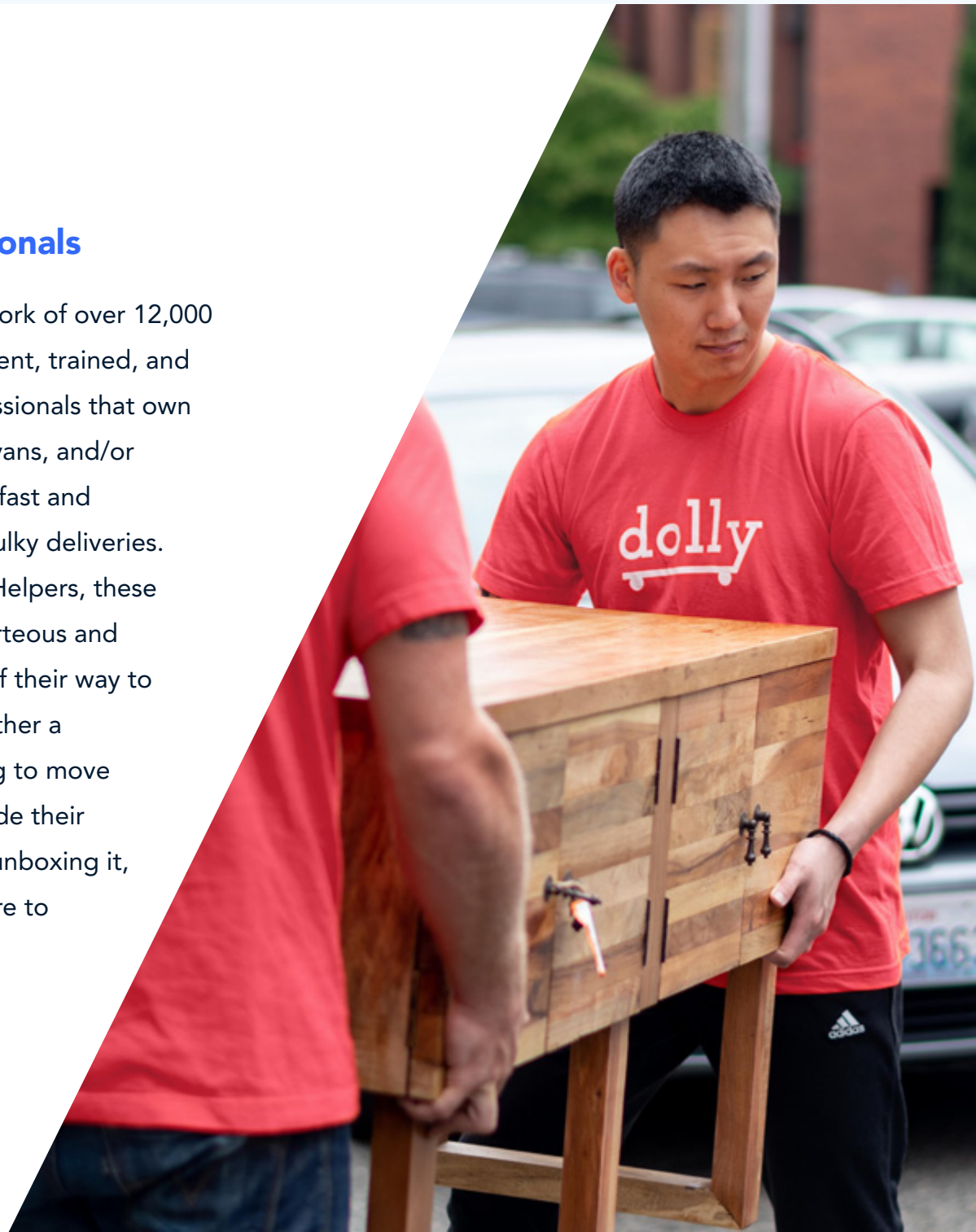
The Solution

Dolly has established a reputation as a credible and trustworthy nationwide delivery provider. Apart from fulfilling the moving needs of individuals, the company provides reliable last-mile delivery services for retailers. Here are some of Dolly's distinguishing factors.



Skilled Professionals

Dolly has built a network of over 12,000 nationwide independent, trained, and vetted delivery professionals that own pickup trucks, cargo vans, and/or box trucks executing fast and hassle-free big and bulky deliveries. Also known as Dolly Helpers, these professionals are courteous and friendly, and go out of their way to help customers. Whether a customer is struggling to move a heavy purchase inside their home or needs help unboxing it, Dolly Helpers are there to help on-demand.





Real-Time Delivery Tracking

Dolly leverages Lighthouse, a proprietary, robust enterprise-grade delivery management system, that reports real-time delivery updates for the retailer and a free app that does the same for customers.

Whether the retailer creates a Dolly delivery for their customer or the customer self-serves and creates their own delivery with the app, the software connects them to a Dolly Helper.

That helps customers coordinate with the designated Dolly Helpers and schedule convenient delivery times. Also, it provides retailers with a unified dashboard to track, manage, and analyze deliveries. During the delivery itself, retailers and customers can track the Helper in real-time on a map with ETAs down to the minute.



Flexible Delivery Services

Dolly offers a broad spectrum of quality delivery services, including room of choice, threshold, haul away, as well as reverse logistics. They can even accommodate rush orders, store-to-store transfers, and same-day deliveries. Also, customers have the ability to set delivery times based on their convenience and availability.



Value Addition

Dolly's services aren't restricted to delivering products at a customer's threshold. Dolly Helpers go to great heights to ensure seamless last-mile deliveries. From dunnage removal and disposal of packaging materials to boxing up bulky products for returns, Dolly handholds customers through everything.

Partnership Details

BuildDirect approached Dolly in late 2020 during COVID-19 to service their California-based warehouses for deliveries. BuildDirect and Dolly eventually partnered to provide their former customers with timely, flexible, and stress-free delivery services. Being a customizable and flexible delivery provider, Dolly tailored a solution based on the unique needs of BuildDirect. The tailored delivery solution included the following services below.



RETURNS AND REPACKAGING

Ensuring hassle-free rescues and returns was one of the key pain points that compelled BuildDirect to look beyond traditional LTL services. Most LTL providers tend to be unwilling to repackage and return unboxed flooring materials from BuildDirect customers. On the other hand, Dolly Helpers assist in re-boxing flooring materials and safely transferring the package to a freight center. They also ensure that the returns are delivered in a re-sellable state.

Apart from cost savings, it has also helped preserve BuildDirect's brand integrity and improve their customer experience ratings.

WHITE GLOVE DELIVERY


Whether customers need the product delivered to their room of choice or even just brought inside, Dolly Helpers fulfill both of these needs. They even unbox the package and remove flooring materials from the pallets.


DUNNAGE REMOVAL



BuildDirect customers often don't know how to get rid of dunnage and other packaging materials that come with their flooring products. Often customers are stuck paying fees for the removal of delivery dunnage. Dolly Helpers step into the picture by allowing clean and safe disposal of such materials.


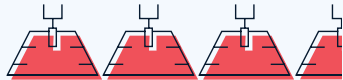
The Impact

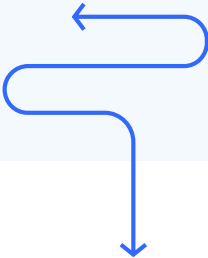
Partnering with Dolly has helped BuildDirect improve the efficiency and speed of their last-mile deliveries, by offering these advantages.

Reduced Waste 

Since the start of the partnership, Dolly has helped BuildDirect save more than **64 tons**  (equivalent to roughly 200,000 sq. ft. of flooring)



 

That's enough flooring required to cover more than  **119** mid-size houses or **3.5**  football fields.



Advantages

Minimal wastage of flooring materials means higher revenues and profit margins.



“Dolly is a trustworthy and reliable final-mile and inside delivery partner. Dolly managed some of the most complex and time-sensitive deliveries and helped us achieve a near 100% customer satisfaction score.”



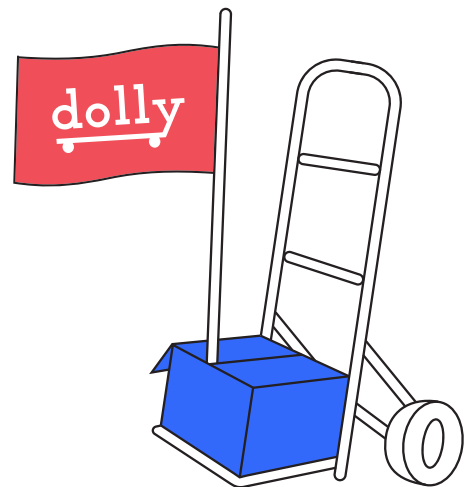
Enhanced Customer Satisfaction

With Dolly, BuildDirect has managed to provide customers with time-sensitive deliveries. This, in turn, has reinforced their brand reputation and integrity. Also, it’s helped them achieve a near 100% customer satisfaction score.

Dolly’s adaptive, professional, and timely delivery solutions helped BuildDirect cater to the diverse needs of their customers. Also, it simplified the processing and reselling of returns, thus helping BuildDirect bolster its reputation and amplify revenue.



DAMAN SINGH
DIRECTOR OF SUPPLY
CHAIN OPERATIONS
AT BUILDDIRECT





dolly

Dolly specializes in providing flexible and cost-effective last-mile delivery services for retailers selling heavyweight products.

Schedule a demo to learn more about their services.

dolly