

# Railroad Thought Leader On: New Perspectives To Spur Railroad Growth And Profitability - 8 Key Areas

*As the industry emerges from the pandemic and evolves, there are 8 key areas where companies can better prepare for the next growth cycle.*

MT. LAUREL, NEW JERSEY, UNITED STATES, August 25, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- According to the Association of American Railroads (AAR), the last couple of years have been challenging ones for the railroad freight industry. Annual gross freight volumes have experienced continued weakness in supporting a total industry bounce-back following the pandemic. This year, even though carload growth continues to be suppressed especially by the downturn in coal production, the overall numbers for 2024 are showing promise in turning that declining trend around. The rail industry's first quarter numbers have trended positive so far this year, for combined freight traffic.



Brian Gorton, President & COO Conrail Corporation

Brian Gorton, President and Chief Operating Officer of Conrail Corporation, the nation's largest rail terminal and switching service provider, says, "As we start to see signs of freight recovery, the industry needs to evolve its thinking, from defensive management strategies that got us through the pandemic, to those that make rail companies ready to accommodate the next cycle of growth, as well as capture market share from other modes of freight transportation."

Gorton advises industry leaders to take a new perspective in order to evolve beyond the "business as usual" strategy of raising rates and cutting expenses. He said, "Certainly one needs to be mindful of prudent business practices, but now, as traffic trends are starting to grow again, we need embrace new management initiatives to keep our industry competitive, especially in the areas of service, value and leadership." Gorton suggests adopting the following initiatives:

1) Embracing those segments that are trending upwards.

According to the AAR, intermodal, chemicals, automotive, petroleum and other segments are growing while others may not be as emergent. Instead of cutting costs and raising prices across the board, railroad management should revise strategies in order to put resources behind the



Succeeding in a post-pandemic world requires shifting the management paradigm from one of defense to one of growth in order to create evolution in our industry.”

*Brian Gorton, President and Chief Operating Officer of Conrail Corporation*

growing segments while pursuing efficiencies in areas that are diminishing.

2) Finding ways to increase customer flexibility.

As customers strive to reduce their costs, there are real opportunities in the rail freight industry to capture market share from other transportation options by demonstrating the value we offer. Improving rail flexibility in both pricing and accessibility will help make rail more attractive to customers.

3) Enhancing the customer experience.

Post-pandemic, railroads need to appreciate their position

operating in a competitive environment with other freight providers, such that they offer a superior customer experience. Management should adopt new perspectives that focus on creating a competitive advantage because the opportunity is right for rail freight to capture market share and grow.

4) Investing in people and training.

In order to grow and service customers properly, the rail industry will need more people working in it. Already, the rail industry offers some of the highest salaries and most competitive benefits programs around. Our industry needs to communicate our advantages and pursue more aggressive messaging in the employment market in order to have enough trained people to be able to provide the highest degree of service. In addition, our industry needs to invest in education and training to ensure that we provide the safest and highest quality customer experience.

5) Investing in technology to help drive efficiency and lower costs.

Although the rail industry has traditionally been slow in adapting technology such as AI and robotics, adoption is growing. The time is now to invest in technology because of its positive effect on creating efficiencies in reducing expenses by helping railroads more efficiently manage loading, switching, maintaining, planning operations and more.

6) Becoming more customer-centric, especially in making access to rail shipping more convenient for customers.

To grow business in this competitive environment, it will be increasingly important for rail to be more competitive in catering to customers’ needs. One way to accomplish this is to make rail more convenient to customers which can include bringing freight customers closer to onboarding, as well as in finding ways to make onboarding more accessible to more freight customers.

7) Increasing reliability and promoting the superiority rail freight shipping offers.

Compared to other modes of freight transportation, railroads have an impressive record for reliability. In today's uncertain world, superior reliability can be a valuable advantage worthy of tracking, improving and promoting as a competitive advantage over other modes of shipping.

#### 8) Promoting sustainability advantages.

Numerous studies have shown that freight by rail is the cleanest, most sustainable form of shipping. As sustainability continues to be a top priority for many Fortune 1000 companies, their appreciation of this advantage will be valuable in their selecting rail shipping to help them achieve sustainability goals more efficiently.

Said Gorton, "Succeeding in a post-pandemic world requires shifting the management paradigm from one of defense to one of growth in order to create evolution in our industry. The companies that best prepare for the next growth cycle will be in the best position to capitalize on it."

-----  

#### ABOUT CONRAIL CORPORATION

Founded in 1976, Conrail is a premier terminal and switching service provider, operating about 1,200 miles of track for its owners CSX Transportation and Norfolk Southern. The company provides safe and efficient rail service to local freight customers in the areas of Detroit, New Jersey and Philadelphia. Operating in shared asset areas, Conrail connects customers to the national rail network through CSX and NS. Guided by the core values of Safety, Service, Value and Leadership, Conrail remains committed to providing excellent rail services. For more information, visit <https://conrail.com>.

Conrail Corporation  
330 Fellowship Road, Suite 300  
Mount Laurel, NJ 08054

Phone: (215) 209-2000

Website: <https://www.conrail.com>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/conrail>

Twitter: <https://www.x.com/conrailofficial>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/conrailofficial/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100057582814790>

# # #

Leo Levinson  
GroupLevinson Public Relations  
+1 215-545-4600

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[Facebook](#)

[X](#)

[LinkedIn](#)  
[Instagram](#)

---

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/738194593>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2024 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.