

“Working in Transportation Wasn’t on the List”

Written by Emily Saunders

When I was a young girl if you had asked me (Emily Saunders, Marketing Manager for Bolt Express) what I wanted to be when I grew up, working in the transportation industry would not have been the first thing on my list. In fact it probably would not have made my list at all.

Growing up in Waterville, Ohio, a small suburb of Toledo, I had dreams of being a professional women’s soccer player. After graduating high school I attended Bowling Green State University where I played soccer and majored in Graphic Design. Graduating from BGSU in 1993 with a Bachelor in Fine Arts I headed west to Colorado. With the opportunities for playing professional soccer at this time being slim and none, I went to work for a small software programming company in the training department. I spent the next couple years learning everything I could about computers, from break-fix to networking. With the impending “end of the world” coming with Y2K and the demand for information technology professionals this is where I found a career.

After several years in Colorado, I returned to Ohio to be closer to family and

friends and continue my career. Over the next few years, I managed several large conversion projects getting organizations ready for the year 2000. Once Y2K came

and went, the demand for IT professionals slowed down and I decided to take some time off I had not had before to spend with my young daughter Erin. Although I loved the few years I got to spend with her, once she was fully enrolled in school I decided it was time to get back to work. Being several years removed from current information technology, it made sense to pursue other opportunities and not return to the field I had spent developing.

In 2004, Ben Bauman, President & CEO of Bolt Express, in Toledo, Ohio, took a

chance and hired me as a Safety & Compliance Administrator. Bolt Express is an Expedite carrier that provides a 24 hour, 7 day a week dock-to-dock exclusive use transportation service for rush-critical shipments throughout the 48 states, Canada, and most recently Mexico.

Without any prior knowledge of the transportation industry, especially DOT regulations and truck drivers, I really had my job cut out for me. Learning how to fix or



*Emily Saunders, Marketing Manager
at Bolt Express*

network a computer was never as difficult or stressful as dealing with the DOT or an upset driver. Although it was challenging, I really enjoyed working with the owner operators, hearing their stories and learning about the trials of life on the road. As difficult as my job was, I knew it was nothing compared to what our contractors were dealing with being on the road away from home for weeks at a time. After six months with Bolt Express, I was promoted to manage the Safety & Compliance department. I was thrilled to have the opportunity and more than that, in the short time I had been with the company, I knew I had found a home. Not only had I found a home with Bolt Express, but also in the trucking industry.

In a small company, like Bolt Express, it is common for employees to have to wear multiple hats and take up slack wherever needed. Not only was I handling our Safety & Compliance, I was working with our Recruiting Manager, Mark Heiges on marketing. I loved working for Bolt Express but I can honestly say that I did not love Safety & Compliance, so two years later when I had the opportunity to take over Marketing full time and hand off Safety & Compliance, I jumped at the chance.

Bolt Express may have been small, but was growing by leaps and bounds. Since I

joined the team in 2004, we have gone from 13 employees in a little office to 45 employees in an 8,000 square-foot state-of-the-art facility. With a 55% growth in revenue last year over the previous year, we have now outgrown our current building and will be breaking ground shortly on another 8,000 square-foot addition. Last year was not uncommon for Bolt Express; we have consistently experienced a significant amount of growth. In fact, two of the last three years we have been named GPSNet AlliancePro Company of the Year, Highest Year-Over-Year Sales Growth and a close second the third year.

Not only has Bolt Express been successful financially, but the culture that has been developed and maintained is like no other place I have ever worked before. All of us at Bolt are truly a family; we all genuinely care for one another and take pride in our company. I know for me a paycheck is not the most important thing about choosing a company, it is about finding where you belong and where you feel you can make a difference. Bolt Express has given me the opportunity to experience both. So if I had the chance tomorrow to play professional soccer, I can not tell a lie, I would do it in a heartbeat, soccer is still my first love, but Bolt Express is a close second!