



Nestled in the heart of Berne, Indiana’s Amish country, Smith Brothers is respected across the nation for producing high-quality, hand-crafted sofas, chairs and ottomans. Since each piece is custom made, Smith Brothers wanted to ensure their retailers received inventory in the same condition as when it left the manufacturing floor. That’s where our team was able to help.

CASE STUDY PROFILE

<b>Industry</b>	Furniture
<b>Pain Points</b>	Aftermarket modifications Difficulty with standard docks Trailer quality and longevity

“We purchased from Strick because they were able to supply the specialty trailers with the customization that we needed to run a successful operation while keeping the safety of our drivers in mind.”

– Kevin Nussbaum  
REBA Transport  
Fleet Operations Manager

See the story [here](#).

THE CHALLENGE

A standard trailer requires furniture pieces to be placed on their sides or stacked on top of each other to maximize trailer space. Smith Brothers wanted to avoid both options because of potential damage to the furniture’s structure; after all, a sofa is made to be supported by its feet, not its sides. That’s why for many years they had used a double-drop trailer equipped with three levels for shipping furniture.

While these double-drop trailers provided the interior space Smith Brothers wanted, they also caused several other challenges. The trailers’ low ground clearance caused difficulty navigating loading docks, and they were not designed for standard dock heights. This meant Smith Brothers had to modify new trailers to facilitate unloading at standard docks, as well as to add steps for drivers. With all of these modifications, trailer longevity still was not where they wanted it to be.

THE SOLUTION

When our sales team first began exploring solutions with Smith Brothers, the manufacturer was resistant to using anything besides their trusty double-drop trailers. But after measuring furniture to obtain dimensions for loading and unloading, our team collaborated with theirs to design a more aerodynamic trailer that worked better for Smith Brothers, their drivers, and their retailers – with no aftermarket modifications required.

The new trailers offer less of a drop for more belly clearance, which helps drivers as they navigate docks. We created a stronger roof and moved the roof bows to the outside to increase space inside the trailer, so the new trailers still offer floor space plus two levels of furniture shelving, and they meet all critical dimensions for standard dock height and delivery. We also added stronger steps for driver safety that slide inside the trailer between the uprights.

THE RESULTS

Easy to stow slide-out step design is improving **driver safety** while using the rear entry for unloading/loading for onsite deliveries in the absence of a loading dock.

Collaborative design engineering is delivering **greater use for drivers** for final mile deliveries.

Galvanized components and consistent manufacturing quality are resulting in **longer trailer life**.



UNIQUE CUSTOMERS.  
UNIQUE CHALLENGES.  
UNIQUE TRAILERS.

To talk to Strick about your unique challenge, contact us today.  
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