

LOGISTICS SOLUTION GUIDE:

How to Find the Right Air and Sea Freight Partner

Enhance your international logistics and shipping strategy

In today's connected world, businesses regularly forge global partnerships that require effective shipping strategies — but where do you start when evaluati ng logistics solutions? A reliable freight forwarding partner makes the difference between successful supply chains and those that come up short.

There isn't one correct or all-encompassing shipping solution. Your logistics plan should reflect the needs of your organization. Even within the same industry, differing business models may dictate a company's decision to rely on air or sea transportation. As you launch or expand your import and export programs, review these key considerations before moving ahead with a logistics solution.

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What to look for in sea freight logistics providers

If you've incorporated sea transport into your shipping plan, logistics providers make up a key part of your success. As you evaluate companies for this important partnership, look for these qualities:



01 | Adaptable offerings

Your sea freight needs can change, and your freight forwarder should change with them. Whether you're importing or exporting, sending full-container load (FCL) or less-than-container load (LCL) shipments, transporting out of gauge or project cargo, or have unique product needs, find a shipper that works to understand your challenges — and presents solutions customized to your organizational needs.

02 | Additional services

Logistics providers that go beyond simply moving freight can add immense value to your company, from time savings to a reduced workload. Look for companies that provide a full range of logistics services like end-to-end visibility, global purchase order management, and customs clearance to streamline your shipments and centralize supply chain oversight.





03 | Strategic network

Seek out a partner with a widespread, nimble and unified global network that enables optimized transportation, creative solutions and enhanced efficiency. Additionally, strategic carrier partnerships are important for securing optimal pricing and reliable capacity procurement. Companies with a vetted list of carefully selected core partners are likely to offer a better, more robust experience.

What to look for in an air freight logistics provider

Air freight is a strong option for time-sensitive shipments, offering speed and reliability. While typically more expensive, the right logistics provider can optimize routing and service levels to reduce total landed cost—and faster transit can improve inventory velocity. As you evaluate a freight forwarder, focus on these key considerations:

Network leverage

As with sea freight, a resilient global network is critical to air shipment success. Look for a partner that accelerates speed to market through strategic gateways and flexible trucking hubs. Broad cartage coverage supports efficient ground transport, and strong airline relationships with secured capacity enable expedited service at more competitive rates.

Adaptable solutions

Prioritize selecting a provider that designs solutions around your requirements—not a one-size-fits-all model. An experienced, well-connected partner can align your product needs with lower-cost options (e.g., consolidated services or alternate gateways) without sacrificing performance. Value-added capabilities such as end-to-end visibility and customs clearance further strengthen service and control.

Service flexibility

As your air freight strategy evolves, you need a provider that can scale with you—including urgent, short-notice moves. Choose a partner with a full range of domestic and international options and clear service tiers, so you can balance speed, cost, and risk for everything from routine shipments to last-minute exceptions.



Air Freight Options

Whether your freight is moving to domestic or international destinations, AIT's solutions make sure it arrives on time and in great condition.

Domestic

- Same day/next flight out
- Next day
- Second day
- Time-definite delivery
- Charter services

International

- Elite: 24–48 hours airport-to-airport
- Premier: 48–72 hours airport-to-airport
- Economy: 5–7 days

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Selecting a shipping option: sea vs. air

When companies grow internationally or adjust business models, identifying the correct sea or air shipping method can be challenging. To determine the best mode of transportation for your goods, here are two important considerations:

Your budget

Financial constraints constantly occupy the mind of business decisionmakers, but it's worth noting that traditional guidelines about sea and air transit costs may not always apply.

While sea freight is generally less expensive than air freight, the slower timing may cause missed revenue opportunities. Budget should be a factor in your decision, but so should customer expectations and your bottom line.

Business timelines

Transit time should also be considered when selecting your shipping needs. Though typically more expensive, air shipments can arrive in days, whereas sea freight can take weeks depending on routing. However, ocean trips between some locations (such as Asia to the U.S. West Coast) are quicker than others.

Air freight's pinpoint, airport-to-airport service can greatly reduce ground transport mileage compared to sea freight, allowing your business to capitalize on time-sensitive or fast-moving products.

Sustainability goals

Sea shipping is far less emission intensive than air freight transport, and sustainable marine fuel options can also offer further reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

Common Sea Commodities

Sea transit excels in transporting a wide variety of items — especially those without tight delivery timelines. These commodities are a few commonly shipped via sea vessels.

- Freight all kinds (FAK)
- General department store merchandise (GDSM)
- Auto parts
- Plastics
- Hardware
- Hazardous materials and dangerous products

Ready to get started? Contact AIT's shipping pros today.

With more than 45 years of logistics experience, AIT creates air and sea freight solutions that conform to your business' evolving needs.

We support shipments for almost every industry, with transportation plans customized to accommodate your organizational needs. Our established relationships with ocean carriers and airlines grant us access to competitive rates and capacity, which translate to savings and faster transportation for your freight.

Partner with AIT to expand and enhance both your air and ocean transportation needs. AIT provides the world-class support of a reliable, solutions-oriented logistics partner.

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