

# Autolog Revives Piggyback For Auto Freight

Autolog Corporation announced it has entered into agreements with various railroads operating between the northeast and Florida and the midwest and Florida to handle an automobile transporter specially modified to carry privately-owned automobiles by piggyback movement — a method of long distance auto shipment which disappeared in the early 50's.

This new method of transporting automobiles will spark a major commercial boom for both Autolog, the nation's leading transporter of privately owned cars, and the rail industry.

"We're betting that the piggyback method of moving auto freight by flat cars is much more cost efficient than by the conventional tri-level carriers which replaced piggyback years ago," says Autolog president Myron Levine from his Port Newark, N.J. headquarters.

He cites the tremendous growth of piggyback services in other rail freight markets, along with new technology that didn't exist in the 50's, as reasons behind a revival of piggyback auto hauling.

Levine expects the service will cut Autolog's delivery times in half, and eventually lead to major fare reductions for customers along most of the company's rail routes. Within the year, a piggyback service, he projects, could quadruple the size of his business which last

year grossed \$3.5 million.

The new piggyback service could have an even more profound impact on the now-struggling rail system.

"Within 15 years," predicts Levine, who has worked closely with the railroads for the past year, "there won't be another tri-level carrier left in operation for long distance auto shipment. It will all be handled in piggyback movement.

"The conversion will take time and money, but the tremendous cost economies involved will compel the change."

Autolog has invested \$12,000 to modify the rail car prototype," to make it safe and compatible in piggyback transit." But Levine insists, "It's a minor cost compared to the benefits."

Those benefits include a faster, more direct service for customers. From coast to coast, hundreds of new stopping points will open up along Autolog's major rail routes due to the widespread growth of piggyback facilities in recent years.

Up until now, Levine's rail operation has been limited to facilities which can load and unload the conventional tri-level auto carriers — the type Detroit uses to ship new cars. But because there are relatively few of these facilities in the country, Levine has been forced to drop off many cars at far away points, then truck them to their final destination — a slower, and more costly delivery process.

In Florida, he notes, only Tampa, Miami and Jacksonville are equipped to handle the tri-level carriers. But piggyback facilities are located in "35 to 40 towns and cities," including all the major metro areas.

But there are other benefits too.

Cars shipped piggyback are handled less often than when shipped by tri-level carriers. Damage risk and transit time is thereby reduced.

Also, with less handling of cars, manpower is reduced and the overall system saves costs which can be passed on to the consumer.

"Because tri-level carriers are so big, we need 15 cars a load before the run is considered cost effective," adds Levine.

"With piggyback, we need only six cars for a viable run.

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