

A “fresh” perspective on the cold chain

Professional and consultative services boosts food safety and quality.



Background

Sometimes the best solution to a tricky problem is to consult an expert. That's especially true in today's cold chain industry, where operations are becoming more complex, thanks to changes in the global ecosystem.

Helping Copeland partners get the most from their cold chain operations inspired customer success manager Ashley Kinney to help develop professional and consultative services, one of five modules that make up Oversight cargo services, which was launched in 2021.

Available as a stand-alone service or in conjunction with any of the other modules, professional and consultative services combine the strengths of modern data analysis technology with in-person observations and expertise. The results are actionable recommendations that can enhance your operation's efficiency and profitability.

"Professional and consultative services evolved out of customer support that we were originally doing in an informal way," Kinney said. "My team used to put together pivot tables in Excel spreadsheets to help customers understand and act on their data. We were getting so much value from it that I went to our leadership and explained what we were doing. They really liked it, so we started formalizing it, and it's come a long way since then. Now we're also using business intelligence to help analyze and interpret the data.

"A common scenario we see is when a customer using the managed services module receives a lot of alarms for a specific carrier. If a situation like this came up for your company, we'd make sure to bring it to your attention. That way, you could look into what temperature ranges have been set or try to find out what they're doing differently from other carriers. We can also help you navigate this process and collaborate on possible ways to help you improve that issue," she said.

Observations yield valuable solutions

For the most challenging situations, or when you need a new perspective, the professional and consultative services team will perform on-site observations and analyses. Team members will visit your operation or key locations throughout your supply chain and provide a comprehensive report detailing opportunities for improvement.

"We once went to multiple warehouses and shipping locations for a California berry grower," Kinney said. "When observing different locations, we found their processes were inconsistent, which in some cases

meant the data was not an accurate representation of their operation. We were able to help our customer to refine their processes and improve their business operations."

More recently, the team performed on-site visits for a major produce distributor. They observed a wide variety of processes, including storing, staging, loading, shipping and unloading their products at restaurants.

"We found a lot of ways they could improve efficiency. For example, they were leaving product in unrefrigerated areas when they made restaurant deliveries," Kinney said. "When we reviewed the findings with them, the company implemented stricter guidelines for their distribution centers, clarified their expectations for weekly temperature data reporting and updated receiving processes at their restaurants. It was pretty exciting to watch them improve their supply chain and ultimately, the quality of their product."

Harvesting data



One of the most common tasks the professional and consultative services team performs is to find trending data patterns and opportunities for improvement. In this way, the team not only identifies the root causes of many challenges, but zeroes in on where solutions are likely to be found.

"Let's say you're having pre-cooling issues at the supplier level," Kinney said. "We can use shipment, sensor and location data from reports and scorecards to pinpoint which origin or supplier location is having those issues, and then take the process to the next level. We can show you how you can use that data, or go on-site to observe the supplier's processes and understand their business at a more granular level."

This approach is particularly powerful when combined with other modules in the Oversight cargo services suite. The potential impacts on food safety and quality can be significant.

About Ashley Kinney



Ashley is a customer success manager, cargo for Copeland's cold chain business. Since 2015, she's been instrumental in growing Copeland's customer success team and expanding the company's range of value-added consultative and managed services.