

SINCE 1911



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AN EYE FOR DESIGN

FLASHIEST FLEETS

CCJ's Five Flashiest Fleets winners exemplify excellence in marketing and messaging

BY JEFF CRISSEY

If your tractor and trailer graphics lack imagination, you're not alone. But you and others are missing an opportunity to tell your customers and the motoring public more about your company, the services you provide and the products you haul.

However, tractor-trailer graphics are about more than just eye appeal and bold colors. The best graphics incorporate these elements along with messaging that raises eyebrows and hits home for those who see them on the road.



5 A kid at heart

» **CARRIER:** Rock On Trucks

» **GRAPHICS DESIGNER:** Rock On Production

STARTING with one truck and one trailer and the idea that she could make a little extra money,

Krystal Vierkant began Rock On Trucks in August 2001 as a 25-year-old already working a full-time job. Kevin Vierkant, her first driver and now her husband and operations manager, had the idea to identify each truck with NASCAR-like numbers on the tractor doors.

As the concept's popularity and the fleet both grew, so did identifying Rock On Trucks. In five years, Krystal built Rock On Trucks into Rock On Companies, which includes six independent

Check out the CCJ's Five Flashiest Fleets winners for 2016, and get inspired to tell your company's message. Or if you want to promote the trucking industry as a whole, head over to Trucking-MovesAmerica.com, order a Trucking Moves America Forward trailer wrap, and spread the word.

Since 1978, *Commercial Carrier Journal* has recognized excellence in fleet graphics design and execution. The judges for this year's competition included the editorial, art design and marketing staffs from CCJ and fellow Randall-Reilly publications *Truck Parts & Service*, *Successful Dealer* and *Overdrive*.

Each judge ranked their top five out of all submitted entries, and scores were weighted to determine a final ranking. The five winning submissions this year successfully relate the company's purpose, tell a story, champion a cause or promote a strong corporate brand image.



Minnesota businesses with 60 trucks, 70 trailers, 60 employees and 40 dedicated owner-operators.

With the birth of the Vierkants' first child came trucks that brought smiles to children's faces as they thought of all the moms stuck in traffic with their little ones, including these themed trucks from Walt Disney Pictures' *Frozen* and Pixar's *The Incredibles*.

WHY WE LIKED IT: "These tractor-trailer designs are eye-catching, to say the least. The details of the cartoon characters bring them to life on the sides of the trucks and trailers, especially when combined with the matching color scheme." – Matt Cole, CCJ and *Overdrive* associate editor



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Vroom, vroom

» **CARRIER:** Mackie Transportation
 » **GRAPHICS DESIGNER:** Sign Design
WHITBY, Ontario-based Mackie Transportation started in 1928 and now is a fifth-generation family-owned business specializing in dedicated truckload, refrigerated, flatbed and automobile transportation across North America. It has grown its fleet to more than 90 trucks and 200 trailers.

“In addition to creating brand identity for Mackie Transportation, the idea behind our design with our enclosed car haulers is to give the general public a look at the layout inside one of these special-

ized trailers and provide a visual of the different types of vehicles we can transport,” said Sara Mackie, director of special services.

Mackie’s graphics feature peeled-back corners of an otherwise white trailer side to reveal a look inside the enclosed automobile hauler with images of motorcycles and cars, showcasing one of the company’s core freight segments in the process.

WHY WE LIKED IT: “I like how the graphics give the viewer a look inside the trailer. It not only looks cool, it tells the viewer what the Mackie trailer is used for.” – *Ken Stubbs, Overdrive art director*



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A peek inside

» **CARRIER:** Dempsey Uniform & Linen Supply
 » **GRAPHICS DESIGNER:** Dempsey Uniform & Linen Supply
DEMPSEY UNIFORM & LINEN SUPPLY has

grown to become one of the largest family-owned suppliers in the Mid-Atlantic region, offering weekly pickup, cleaning and delivery services. Despite having a fleet of trucks with the Dempsey logo delivering to thousands of customers across six states, the company decided it needed its trucks, not just its employees, to do the talking.

“The idea behind our design was to convey the products and services that Dempsey provides in an eye-catching way,” said Kristin Dempsey, vice president. “It’s been effective. Our drivers

have been flagged at stoplights by concerned citizens telling them to close their doors!”

Dempsey’s fleet graphics provide a three-dimensional “glimpse inside” the trailer to showcase all of the products and services the company offers.

WHY WE LIKED IT: “One of the most critical elements of a linen or uniform service is that their goods be clean, and the colors and usage of white space on the trailer do a good job of giving off an appearance of cleanliness. That the graphic looks like a storage closet is a unique way to visually showcase the company’s products in an organized and effective manner.” – *Jason Cannon, CCJ equipment editor*

2 Over hill, over dale

- » **CARRIER:** Celadon Trucking
- » **GRAPHICS DESIGNER:** Celadon Trucking

CELADON recently began an initiative to hire military veterans from all branches of the U.S. Armed Forces for over-the-road and administrative positions. To highlight its efforts, the Indianapolis-based company began looking for ways to communicate its new focus on the military.

“During a meeting with one of our suppliers, the topic of promoting our veterans initiative came up,” said Ben Green, Celadon’s senior manager of marketing and creative services. “The results were these designs promoting each of the four major branches of service.”

The four tribute tractors feature camouflage, slogans, logos and colors for the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines. Together, the four designs make up the company’s Warrior Fleet to honor the service of the driver behind the wheel.

WHY WE LIKED IT: “I appreciate the smart design of these military trucks. While keeping with an overall consistent design and layout, the trucks are uniquely tailored to each branch of the military. The clever use of military colors and camo patterns allows the viewer to recognize what branch each truck represents. Also, the logos are large and prominently placed on the cab to help drive the point home.” – David Watson, CCJ art director





1 Honoring past and present

» **CARRIER:** Dart Transit

» **GRAPHICS DESIGNER:** The Johnson Group

THE DART NETWORK unveiled three trucks and trailers this past Veterans Day to honor the service and sacrifices of the U.S. military. Three owner-operators were selected from a pool of entries to lease the trucks, including both retired and active members of the military. The trailers will be used for special events, including the Eagan, Minn.-based company's participation in convoys, parades and Wreaths Across America this month.

"Military men and women sacrifice a lot for us, so it's important that we recognize and pay tribute to them," said Kristen Ries, communications manager. "Our driving community is very excited about the new trucks and trailers, and we couldn't be happier to offer this to them."

Dart's fleet graphics honor the sacrifices of our nation's past service members and recognize current military men and women for their brave service. The tractors feature a silhouette of the raising of the American flag at Iwo Jima, while the trailers feature the words "Freedom is Fragile" with the silhouette of a modern soldier.

WHY WE LIKED IT: "These Dart tractors and trailers are truly an eye-popping and whiplash-inducing way to grab everyone's attention on the highway and remind them of the sacrifices that our veterans present and past have made to protect and defend the United States. The colors of the sun, clouds, hills and U.S. flag carry over on front and back and are highlighted by the soldiers in silhouette, images that could embody anyone who's ever worn the uniform." – *Dean Smallwood, CCJ managing editor*

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