



## Colony Brands Moves Millions of Packages a Year With the Help of FedEx and BluJay

Headquartered in Monroe, Wis., Colony Brands, Inc., together with its subsidiaries and affiliates, is one of the largest direct-to-consumer marketing organizations in the U.S. Founded in 1926, this privately held, family-owned business has grown to encompass 12 brands, including The Swiss Colony®, Montgomery Ward®, and Monroe and Main®. Five shipping facilities across the Midwest move millions of packages a year, with a surge of activity at the end of the year as the gift-giving season arrives.



### More than a decade of partnership

"Our number one goal is to provide an efficient order-through-delivery process. The more tightly we manage our costs, the more savings we can pass on to our customers," says Colony Brands Director of Parcel Logistics and Operational Systems Steve Wheeler. To help meet that goal, they use FedEx as one of their shipping providers and FedEx® Compatible Program provider Kewill's Parcel product — an enterprise parcel shipping solution that supports high-performance and high-volume shipping.

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*Steve Wheeler  
Colony Brands Director of Parcel  
Logistics and Operational Systems*

Prior to moving to BluJay's parcel shipping solution, Colony Brands relied on mainframe systems that were not integrated into the shipping process. Colony Brands premanifested and preprinted shipping labels, a system that required extensive labor, was prone to errors, and didn't give managers any flexibility to respond to real-time fluctuations in customer demand and package flow. The switch to BluJay made an immediate difference. BluJay was able to customize its program to meet Colony Brands' highly diverse shipping needs. "Switching to BluJay reduced errors, definitely improved our labor efficiency and keeps us carrier-compliant 24/7, which gives us a great deal of flexibility," says Wheeler.

The flow of packages at Colony Brands can vary greatly depending on the time of year, and BluJay gives facility managers the capability to respond on a day-to-day basis to that demand, including seasonal spikes in shipping activity. Now, instead of preprinting labels and preparing manifests before picking orders, orders are picked, labels are printed and manifests are created in real time. "Now, it's always the right label and the right manifest," said Wheeler. The shipping process is tightly integrated with warehouse systems, increasing efficiency across the enterprise.

## FedEx helps Colony Brands deliver value

Colony Brands uses all the FedEx Express® services, including FedEx Priority Overnight®, FedEx Standard Overnight®, FedEx 2Day® and FedEx Express Saver®, as well as FedEx Ground®, FedEx Home Delivery® and FedEx SmartPost® services. “FedEx SmartPost provides a cost-effective option to better manage costs, while still meeting our customers’ expectations for on-time delivery,” said Wheeler.

“BluJay and FedEx have worked together very closely to help ensure the success of one of the largest volume shippers in the U.S.,” says BluJay Director of Product Management Pete Starvaski.

## Meeting challenges with solutions

Over the last decade, Colony Brands has continued to refine its shipping processes. Working together, BluJay and FedEx created customized labels for the range of catalog brands under the Colony Brands umbrella, including their food catalogs. “Our food businesses serve as gift-giving enterprises, so it’s important that every aspect of the package looks like a gift, including the label. We worked with BluJay, and BluJay worked with FedEx to help us meet a marketing need,” said Wheeler.

The partnership between Colony Brands and BluJay goes beyond vendor and customer. Colony Brands is a member of the BluJay advisory council and helps determine the roadmap for new developments in the program. For example, in 2010, Colony Brands wanted to start offering customers return labels, but BluJay didn’t support this process at that time. Colony Brands worked with BluJay to put together a plan, and now BluJay is poised to roll out a return label system for FedEx SmartPost® Returns. “It’s a win-win for everybody,” says Wheeler.



### Your criteria. Your solution.

The FedEx Compatible Program helps you choose a single third-party system with FedEx shipping functionality integrated into it. You eliminate the inefficiencies of maintaining separate systems for different carriers, minimize the cost and time required for employee training by focusing on a single system, and evaluate shipping options and rating information for FedEx and other featured carriers from a single touch-point. Go to [fedex.com/compatible](https://fedex.com/compatible) to learn more about the program and to request a consultation from a FedEx Compatible provider.

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