

### TruckStops® Routing and Scheduling System



#### Company

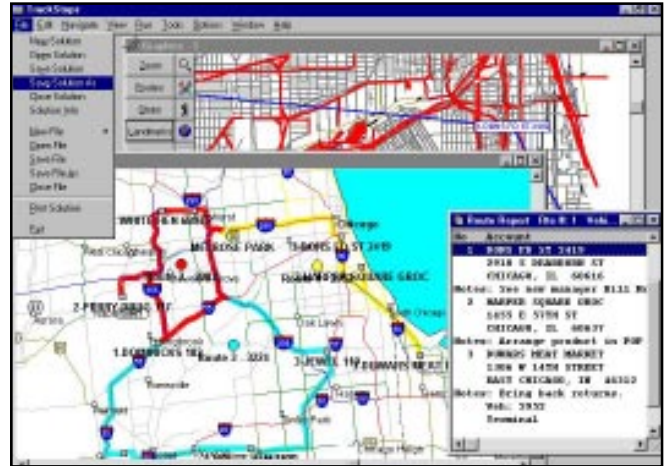
Metrolina Greenhouses, located in Huntersville, North Carolina, just north of Charlotte.

#### Industry

Metrolina grows and distributes plants to retail stores in the Mid-Atlantic region, including Virginia, North and South Carolina, Georgia, West Virginia – and during the poinsettia season – to Maryland and Florida.

#### Background

During the busy Spring season, Metrolina has 300 employees and distributes via 35 tractor-trailers and 12 smaller trucks, making deliveries six days a week. Metrolina became a TruckStops user ten years ago when they purchased the system in its original DOS format. Though TruckStops has been in Windows since 1996, Metrolina has only recently upgraded.



#### Automation

Since changing to the Windows version several months ago, Johnson said Metrolina has reaped benefits such as additional stop details in the Graphics Window. "With tractor-trailers it's nice to see where the roads are, instead of just seeing dots scattered around," said Helen Johnson, routing manager at Metrolina. "I also like being able to edit a stop in the graphics window."

*"The drivers really like knowing the mileages because it helps them to know how long their route is going to take...they're paid by mileage and TruckStops' mileages are so accurate, we rarely have to pay them extra for driving more miles."*

Helen Johnson, Metrolina

#### Daily Operation

"Our routes change every day and we never have a duplicate route because it's based on the orders that come in six days a week," said Johnson. "We ship everything from rolling carts – 42 carts fit on a tractor-trailer – and a store might want an order on a Friday one week and the next week on a Monday." The orders are stored in Starcom's Plant Partner, an order entry system and database, from which data is easily exported into TruckStops.

#### Implementation

Johnson said both TruckStops Training and technical support have been equally helpful in getting Metrolina set up with electronic routing. "I came to training three years ago – that's when we were going to originally switch to TruckStops for Windows," she said. "I knew DOS really well, but we had to switch to Windows. If I had not come to training, I don't think I would have been able to upgrade to Windows." Johnson said the Help files and MicroAnalytics' technical staff have also been helpful. "They really walked me through it," she said. "They even called the next day to make sure it was still working."

#### Since TruckStops

Johnson said that since TruckStops has been such an integral part of their routing for ten years, she would (and has) readily recommend it to other companies. "I've recommended TruckStops to many people," she said. "It is very easy to use and really helps speed up your routing. Our dispatcher likes the system and she's been routing for over 20 years. I think we've saved at least the equivalent of a person a year – an average of \$30,000 a year," added Johnson.

"If you didn't have (TruckStops), you'd have to have more than one person routing."

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