

In Spring of 2018, the Canadian Moving Association (CAM) was approached by a third year computer science student at the University of British Columbia who was interested in researching issues surrounding accountability and administrative efficiency in long-distance moving networks. CAM identified this research as having the potential to further inform and establish trust and efficiency within the moving industry, and possibly contribute to increasing the competitive advantage of reputable movers. Because of this potential to provide some insight, the Association agreed to distribute a survey developed by the student to its members. A link to the optional survey was included in this summer's July newsletter and posted on social media platforms. The survey questions were intended to collect opinions on the moving industry, and responses were guaranteed to remain anonymous. Respondents were presented with a maximum of 8 questions, and identical French and English language versions were prepared for members.

As of the second week of August, 58 respondents had submitted their responses to the survey questions. Of the respondents, 60% indicated that they belonged to a van line. Questions in the survey focussed on item loss, industry reputation, hiring, and efficiency.

The first three questions focused on shipment oversight and item loss. About half (28 respondents) indicated that they often or very often wished they had better oversight of a shipment once they had passed it on to a different company. Over one third (20 respondents) indicated that they only sometimes wanted better oversight, while just over 10% indicated that they rarely or very rarely wished for this. Respondents were subsequently questioned about whether they ever wished for better oversight of a shipment while it remained in the care of their company. About 40% (23 respondents) indicated that they would often or very often like to have better oversight of a shipment while it was still in the care of their company, and 25% indicated that they rarely or very rarely wished for this ability (19 respondents). Just over 20% (12 respondents) answered this question with 'sometimes'. When a customer item became misplaced, most indicated that time was spent trying to find it (50 respondents), and just over half (31 respondents) indicated that time was spent fixing the reason the item had been misplaced. The survey indicated that about 40% (22 respondents) spent time disputing who misplaced the item, and 20% (11 respondents) identified that their insurance costs went up.

Respondents were questioned on how they felt about the moving industry's reputation. The largest proportion of respondents - 40% (23 respondents) - chose the option worded as: "viewed negatively, and I am concerned". About 20% (13 respondents) indicated that while they felt the industry was viewed negatively, they were not worried about it long term. Almost 30% (16 respondents) indicated they felt the industry was well respected but needed improvement. No one (0 respondents) checked the multiple choice option indicating that they felt the industry was well respected with no caveats. About 9% (5 respondents) indicated that they were unsure.

The remaining questions focussed on hiring and efficiency. Approximately 55% (32 respondents) indicated that it was very hard to find good hires, while 35% (21 respondents) indicated it was hard. Only one respondent indicated that it was easy, No one indicated it was very easy. Respondents were then asked to indicate why they felt there was a loss company time or money. This question allowed respondents to select multiple options. Top reasons were: tough industry competition (74%); employee turnover (46%), bad hires (33%); and, paperwork errors (33%).

This survey remains open. Anyone who is interested in asking questions about this research can send an email to movingindustryinterviews@gmail.com. The student (see bio below) is still very interested in pursuing this topic, and will be conducting brief interviews in September with any individuals who are interested in sharing their thoughts.

Bio

Asrai Ord is a third year student in the Computer Science Second Degree program at the University of British Columbia (UBC). She holds a masters degree from UBC in Community and Regional Planning and worked as a planner for three years across Canada where she developed expertise in public engagement techniques, including survey development.