CHALLENGE
A prominent drug development service company required a logistics solution that would help it surpass the competition. It needed to provide optimal convenience to its customers, and also to be assured of greater-than-normal speed, reliability and protection for its shipments – including risk mitigation capabilities should the unexpected happen.

SOLUTION
A customized set of UPS services, combined with proximity to UPS’s main shipping and distribution hub, ensures the shipment protection and early delivery that the company needs to provide optimal customer convenience.

UPS HELPS BRING MIRACLES OF MEDICINE TO MARKET SOONER

UPS provides peace-of-mind solutions for a laboratory’s time-sensitive shipments – and a significant competitive advantage.
Unique industries present unique logistics challenges.

Take, for example, one of the world’s largest and most comprehensive drug development service companies.

A leader in laboratory testing, the company manages clinical trials that develop ground-breaking drug therapies to help physicians treat sick patients.

Controlling key processes such as shipping, receiving, testing and reporting is a demanding undertaking. Specimens may travel across continents to reach the testing lab, and they need to travel safely and without delay.

There’s simply no room for error.

So when it comes to patient-critical logistics, UPS is the carrier to trust.

The company is dealing with patients who may be very ill, according to the company’s logistics manager. Consequently, time is critical, and if a patient is not reacting to treatment appropriately, the patient’s doctor needs to be notified immediately. The sooner the company can turn a sample around, the better it is for the patient, the doctor and the company’s reputation.
UNCOMPROMISING REQUIREMENTS

What logistical standards are needed to run a worldwide lab testing operation?

Protection: Specimens may spoil outside a narrow temperature range. Spoiled specimens create disruption for physicians and anxiety for patients.

Visibility: Knowing when specimens will arrive allows lab physicians to plan for peaks and troughs, adding efficiency to the testing process.

Speed: How quickly specimens are transported to labs affects the timeline of test results.

When seeking a new logistics partner recently, the company looked for assurances that potential third-party logistics providers were up to the incredibly demanding task.

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

One way the company surpasses its competitors is the speed with which it can deliver test results to doctors’ offices. By special arrangement, inbound packages shipped via UPS Next Day Air® Early A.M.® are separated from other packages at Worldport®, UPS’s Louisville, Ky., central air hub for package processing and transport, and delivered to the company’s lab by UPS Express Critical® agents as early as 5 a.m. Should a shipment be delayed into Worldport by an unforeseeable event such as inclement weather, an Express Critical agent will pick up and drive the late arrival immediately to the lab as soon as it is rushed off the arriving aircraft.

These arrangements, with backups all along the way, allow specimens to be tested earlier than other labs can achieve, even providing test results to physicians the same day. “Our partnership helps ensure that physicians receive patients’ test results the same day that the specimens are tested,” says the company’s UPS healthcare enterprise account manager. “For this to work, it’s vital to be within a three-hour driving radius of Worldport,” she says. The drug developer’s facility is positioned about two hours’ drive from Louisville, allowing samples to arrive earlier so that results can be provided sooner.

The UPS manager assigned to support this company believes the partnership has been so successful in part because UPS has been willing to go beyond typical shipping arrangements. “When we began to work with this company, the advantages of earlier delivery to the facility were clear, and we didn’t hesitate to customize our service so that we could give our customer a clear market advantage,” she says.

Meanwhile the drug company, too, sees the value that the right shipper can bring. The partnership with UPS has truly been beneficial, according to the company’s logistics manager.
Plus, UPS’s commitment to find new, better ways of doing things helped create logistics that work for his company’s specific needs, he says.

Solutions that save lives
UPS has included in its customized solution additional service elements that help move samples faster and help doctors take care of their patients with greater speed – and greater accuracy.

Improved inbound package data: Technology is rapidly improving upon the traditional “peel-and-stick label” solutions that make it easy for physicians to create shipments to laboratories. For customers that prefer the familiar approach, however, UPS implemented a returns system that provides the laboratory greater visibility. Now, the lab can see more information about its inbound packages sooner than ever before, including status alerts that permit to more accurately staff up or down for coming deliveries.

A dedicated clinical trials support center at UPS: Having access at a moment’s notice to knowledgeable UPS staff who work exclusively with the testing company provides immediate on-demand shipment support whenever necessary.

A dedicated area within Worldport: This special area within Worldport is exclusively for specimen packages. If one of the company’s eye-catching white packages is inbound to the lab, you’ll find it here – a white box in a brown world. And the drug company line is more than capable of accommodating thousands of packages daily.

UPS Express Critical: When delays can change lives, Express Critical offers time-critical, secure and specialized shipping options with full visibility that can meet any requirement. Products move not only through the UPS air network but also with access to next-flight-out capability on thousands of daily commercial flights – 24/7. A guaranteed arrival time is given when your shipment is created, optimizing your supply chain and providing the ultimate peace of mind.

UPS Proactive Response®: This service provides 24/7 monitoring of packages throughout the UPS network. Predefined actions, from dry ice replenishment to same-day delivery reattempts, are promptly initiated whenever UPS’s proprietary, sophisticated technology anticipates a package delay, helping to ensure that shipments remain protected and unspoiled even in unavoidable adverse circumstances.

Next Day Air Early A.M. Saturday Delivery Return: This premium service from UPS allows time-critical deliveries on Saturdays as well as weekdays. This speeds up test results for patients by up to a half a day.