

HOW TO CHOOSE A (DEPENDABLE) SAND SUPPLIER IN 5 STEPS

You're onsite, the job is well underway. A stop in production would mean tens of thousands of dollars down the drain. It'd be a bad time to get a call from your frac sand supplier saying they can't deliver the full tonnage promised, wouldn't it? Unfortunately, this is a call buyers get frequently. So how do you choose a supplier who won't overcommit while still meeting your logistic needs? For anyone who's been in the business long enough, choosing a supplier may seem like a no-brainer. However, there's a difference between finding a frac sand company that meets your needs today and choosing a supplier you can always rely on in the long-term. To find your go-to frac sand supplier, here are 5 steps you can take to make sure your production schedule isn't at risk:

- 1. Find Location**
- 2. Confirm Availability**
- 3. Check Price**
- 4. Set Timeline**
- 5. Compare Competition**

1. Find Location

If you're reading this right now, chances are you've got a map of frac sand plants in the Permian Basin pinned to your wall. The importance of distance is a given in the oil and gas industry— shorter drive times means less money spent on logistics, and better odds of your production staying on schedule. It's about convenience— how close is the mine? Will drivers have to go out of their way to refuel? What happens when you need sand immediately? You might find that one supplier offers the lowest price, but the cost of the logistics to get the sand delivered cancels out any benefit. Maybe the mine is technically closest to your site, but the delivery route takes them through traffic-heavy towns. The safest bet is to choose a radius from your site that keeps transport at a reasonable cost and start calling suppliers within that radius to see what they have available.

2. Confirm Availability

Overcommitment is a rampant problem in the frac sand industry. A truly reliable supplier isn't the one that promises the most sand, but the one who delivers the amount promised, every time. While it's hard to know when a frac sand company is promising

more than they will likely be able to deliver until the moment of truth, it's safe to assume that if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. When in doubt, ask around. It's a competitive industry, and when something gets in the way of that competition people tend to not take it quietly. This is also where you'll want to make sure their available inventory meets your quality standards. Dependability isn't just about timing, it's also about delivering consistently high-quality product. Your mesh needs may vary, but a supplier that takes the time to test their 40/70 and 100 mesh sands at multiple stages throughout the quality control process is your best bet for a high-quality finished product.

3. Check Price

Price is understandably a deal breaker for many buyers. You shouldn't pay more than you have to for sand, but the lowest price isn't necessarily the best value. Logistics are a huge cost factor, but you're also paying for reliability. A higher price is often worth the peace of mind and speed of delivery you get from a supplier that doesn't overcommit.

4. Set Timeline

Above all else, you want to avoid a halt in production. A sand delivery at a great price won't be much help a week after you need it. Sure, you saved some money on the delivery, but that doesn't compensate for the hourly losses of a production delay. Make sure your supplier can deliver the amount promised within a reasonable time frame. If this is an emergency order, it's especially important to know what their loadout setup is and how much time you should allow for driving, refueling, and loading. A loadout schedule can help ensure your trucks aren't sitting in line waiting for sand.

5. Compare Competition

You may feel like a supplier isn't giving you a great deal...until you make the same calls to the competition and realize that things could definitely be worse. Or they could be better! You won't know until you do your homework and get a full picture of what the local industry has to offer. This is also a good indicator of a supplier's dependability. If they can't be relied on to answer your calls when you need them, they're unlikely to be consistent with their commitments.

Choosing a dependable supplier isn't rocket science, but it's crucial to keeping production on schedule. Taking the time to invest in a relationship with a reliable frac sand company means you'll never have to scramble to find sand at the last minute. Whether you need a supplier to bail you out after your original supplier overcommitted or you're tired of finding yourself in that position to begin with, following these 5 steps will help you find the dependable supplier that ticks all your logistic boxes.