How US Xpress is Leveraging AI to Transform Recruiting and Create a Powerful Advantage in a Hyper-Competitive Industry

About U.S. Xpress Enterprises

Company: US Xpress
Employees: 8,900+
Headquarters: Chattanooga, TN

35%
of Candidate Conversations Happening After Hours

99.95%
of Candidates Rate the Application Experience Positively

<3 minutes
to Automatically Schedule Interviews with Qualified Applicants

Imagine this dilemma: Your business is a major player in a hyper-competitive industry, where almost everyone is fighting over a relatively small candidate market. Making things worse, those candidates — who are almost constantly being recruited — generally distrust technology, are constantly on the move, could easily have three job offers at all times, and aren't likely to take time out of their busy day to fill out a job application.

Welcome to the long-haul trucking industry — a world that Chattanooga-based US Xpress knows all too well.

Founded in 1985, US Xpress is the fifth-largest asset-based truckload carrier in North America. The company has grown exponentially since its founding — including during the global COVID-19 pandemic. While other companies were laying off staff, US Xpress was hiring agressively as an essential business.

Its secret: Strategic investments in automation and AI to drive digital transformation.

"In a competitive industry like ours, you have to find a way to operate differently," says US Xpress CEO Eric Fuller.

"We're doing it by obsessing over our people and customer satisfaction and getting creative with how to use technology to be a lot more efficient," Fuller says. "The results we're seeing already speak for themselves. And long-term, we believe our strategy will help us create a powerful advantage."

## Instantly Matching Drivers with the Right Jobs & Opportunities

If you've never driven an 18-wheeler, it's hard to appreciate just how much expertise and experience is required to do it well. At the most basic level, licensed CDL and long-haul drivers are required to follow strict state and federal guidelines and pass a series of tests. Obtaining the skills necessary to pass those exams can take years to develop, which narrows the candidate pool already.

Combine that with growing demand for logistics services and a dwindling number of young people seeking careers in trucking, and you have a bonafide talent crisis. This isn't a new problem, either. The trucking industry has dealt with a driver shortage for nearly 15 years and in 2018, the American Trucking Association reported that the industry's talent gap grew by 20%, widening the gap to 60,000 fewer drivers than open opportunities.

So, how do you solve that problem?

"You can either choose to accept that as reality," says Jacob Kramer, US Xpress's VP of Talent Acquisition. "Or you can find a new way to do things."

US Xpress is doing the latter.
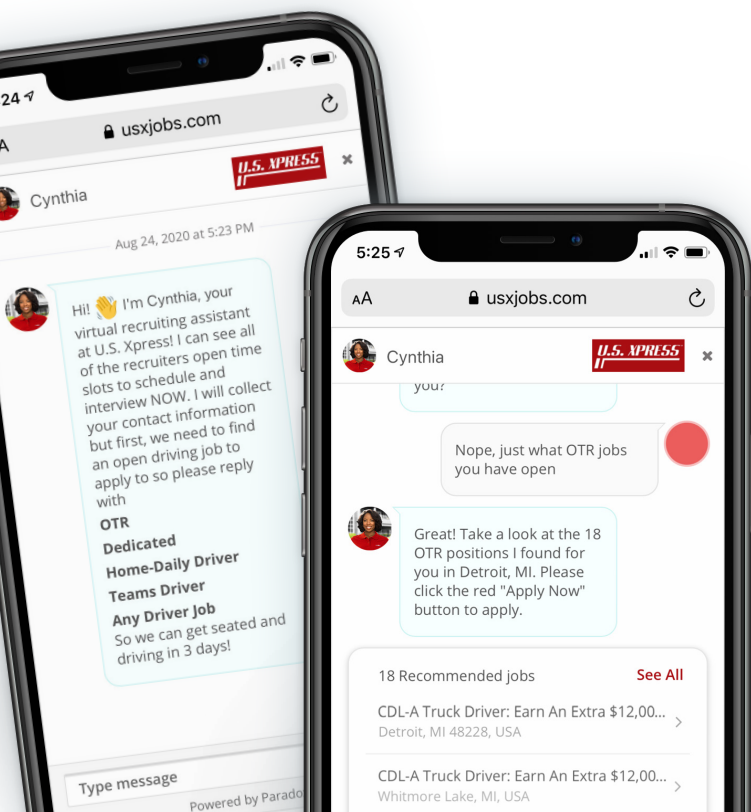
> "The results we're seeing already speak for themselves. And long-term, we believe our strategy will help us create a powerful advantage."
>
> **Eric Fuller**
> US Xpress CEO

The company piloted what it calls a "digital fleet" — a cohort of trucks that's largely recruited, planned, dispatched, and managed using artificial intelligence and digital platforms. It started as a conceptual hypothesis, but Fuller says it quickly evolved into a much bigger initiative.

"We now have more than 400 trucks on the road that are part of this digital fleet and we're hoping to scale significantly over the next couple of years," Fuller says. "It's all part of an effort to make the business as efficient and effective as possible, so our drivers can maximize their earnings and our customers get the best experience possible."

Leaning into Assistive Intelligence to Streamline Driver Recruiting

In April 2020, US Xpress took its technology innovation and digital transformation a step further, partnering with Paradox to completely transform the driver recruiting experience.

The idea was simple: Take a process that was previously time-consuming and archaic for recruiting staff and drivers and make it completely mobile-first and ubiquitously available. That meant ensuring the hiring process was seamless, simple, and fast — for both drivers and recruiters.

So, US Xpress again turned to AI — implementing conversational assistive intelligence to create an easy way for interested candidates to get answers to questions any time of day, and apply to jobs right when they're interested. When someone comes to US Xpress's career site or texts a number to look for a job, an AI assistant can deliver recommended positions based on details a candidate shares in a quick chat.

If someone wants to apply, the assistant can capture their information and screen every candidate in real-time. And if someone meets key requirements, that candidate is fast-tracked by automatically scheduling them for an interview through direct API integration with the company's other software platforms.

The result: A dramatically simplified candidate journey and immense burden removed from the recruiting process.

Personalizing the Assistant to Create More Connected Experiences

Kramer says US Xpress didn't want to stop only at simplicity. The company also wanted to ensure candidates interested in a job are greeted by a
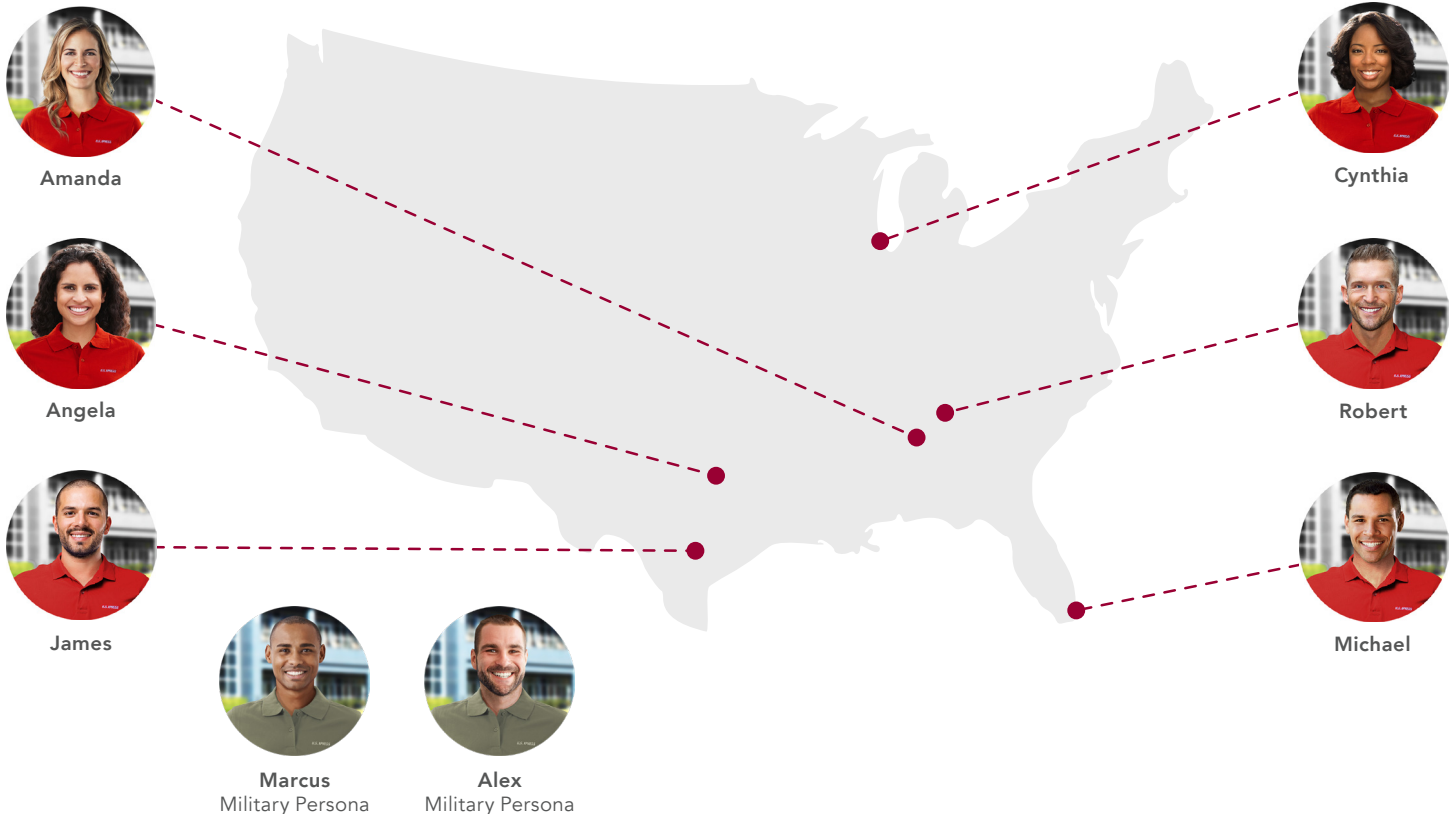
"The ability to diversify assistant personas is helping us create experiences that each candidate can personally connect with, regardless of their background."

Jacob Kramer
US Xpress VP of Talent Acquisition

friendly face they can relate to. So, US Xpress and Paradox collaborated on a first-of-its-kind feature that leverages real-time personalization to instantly present a diverse cadre of AI assistant personas to drivers who visit the company's career site or apply to its jobs through their phone. In a fraction of a second, the technology automatically personalizes the AI assistant to each driver, utilizing geo-location and demographic data.

"Behavioral science shows that people naturally gravitate toward people that feel familiar to them," Kramer says. "The ability to diversify assistant

Amanda

Cynthia

Angela

Robert

James

Michael

Marcus
Military Persona

Alex
Military Persona

personas is helping us create experiences that each candidate can personally connect with, regardless of their background."

## Transformational Results and Big Ambitions for the Future

Since launching its conversational AI solution with Paradox, US Xpress has seen substantial results:

- 35% of candidate interactions are happening on nights or weekends when candidates wouldn't typically have the option to interact with a recruiter.
- The majority of candidates are now applying via a mobile device — a critical differentiator in a market where most candidates are always on the move.
- 38% of candidates who start a conversation with the AI assistant convert into applicants
- Qualified applicants are scheduled for an interview in less than 3 minutes
- 99.95% of candidates who complete a conversation rate it a positive experience

"At the end of the day, we're reducing friction and radicaly simplifying hiring, not just for drivers but for our own team, too," Kramer says. "The AI assistant can automatically identify open jobs and find positions that fit the candidate's needs, not the other way around."

US Xpress is working to reduce friction in other areas too, including automated employee referrals and reducing burdensome administrative tasks for recruiters.

Gone are the days sifting through applications or coordinating interviews," Kramer says. "That's all being automated, which is better for everyone."
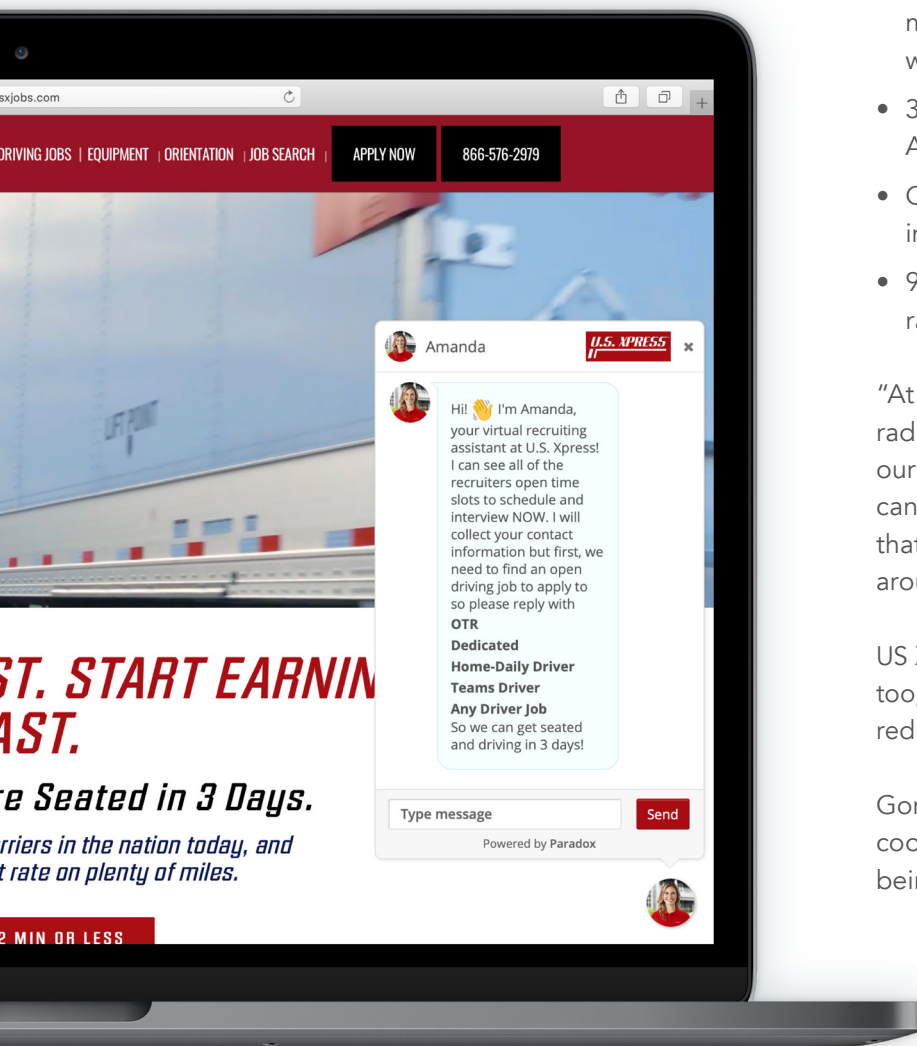
Want to learn more?

Visit www.usxpress.com or www.paradox.ai

U.S. XPRESS