



A “Steel-Tight” Partnership

Ruan began its partnership with Charter Steel in 2018 after Charter Steel issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) seeking a transportation provider capable of delivering consistent, ongoing improvements to its freight network and transportation operations. Ruan was ultimately selected as Charter Steel’s chosen dedicated provider in this RFP process due to its ability not only to execute day-to-day functions but also to align heavily with Charter Steel’s core values and commitment to continuous improvement initiatives. In 2019, Charter Steel invited Ruan’s Managed Transportation services and team to be part of the mix, with the intention of minimizing costs in the tight freight market and executing a strategic integrated solution that pairs well with Dedicated Contract Transportation.



THE COMPLEXITIES OF STEEL

Charter Steel is an engineer to order steel manufacturer, specializing in coil and special bar quality (SBQ) bar. Many orders are shipped to customers within a day of completed production; a lean manufacturing approach that relies on a transportation provider that is agile and flexible.

“Ruan helps us provide a competitive advantage in the industry. We don’t stock large quantities of finished goods in warehouses; we rely on just-in-time manufacturing and delivery. We take pride in being the best service provider in this market, and Ruan plays a significant role in our efforts to delight our customers,” said Greg Schaefer, Director of Planning at Charter Steel.

Additionally, Charter Steel has seen the benefits of having Ruan as its dedicated provider due to the industry experience brought to the table. Having a large pool of carriers to service a time sensitive organization can bring challenges, especially with a unique, heavy product like steel that requires an extra emphasis on safety. Ruan’s Integrated Solution alleviates this headache by providing reliability and exceptional customer service to Charter Steel’s partners.

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TARIFF RESPONSE

Fluctuations in demand are an expected outcome of today's economy, making it imperative to have a transportation partner that can accurately forecast and quickly adapt to sudden changes. When tariffs on imported steel were announced in 2025, demand increased by 10% nearly immediately. Ruan's dedicated fleet responded immediately, supplying the necessary drivers and equipment to support the initial surge and ongoing increased requirements. Ruan's Managed Transportation team handled all the load planning to ensure no load was left behind and strategically executed deliveries with Ruan's fleet and our trusted network of carriers.

"During this time, the team at Ruan really stepped up to continue providing services that our customers have come to expect, all while keeping costs in line as our volume grew tremendously," said Jeremia Reynolds, Transportation and Inventory Manager at Charter Steel.



ENDURING PARTNERSHIPS

The Ruan team communicates with Charter Steel on a day-to-day basis, especially since one of the biggest pieces in the transportation planning of steel product is forecasting. The Ruan drivers that are dedicated to Charter Steel play a significant role in this partnership, and the relationship would not be as strong as it is without them.

"Most of the Ruan drivers and office team members have been with Charter Steel for a long time. We consider them to be part of our team and they play such an integral role in our customer satisfaction," said Jeremia Reynolds, Transportation and Inventory Manager at Charter Steel.

As we look toward the future, Ruan's goal is to keep seeking continuous improvement initiatives, supported by open communication between both organizations to ensure a clear understanding of Charter Steel's needs and priorities.

"The best part of this partnership is our team's ability to provide forecasting with open communication and transparency. Over the years, our surge capacity solutions ensure we bring on the best team members to train and haul varying products such as steel during unpredicted increases in demand. This could not be done without communicating on a regular basis – that's what makes this partnership steel-tight," said Mark Griffin, Dedicated Operations Leader at Ruan.