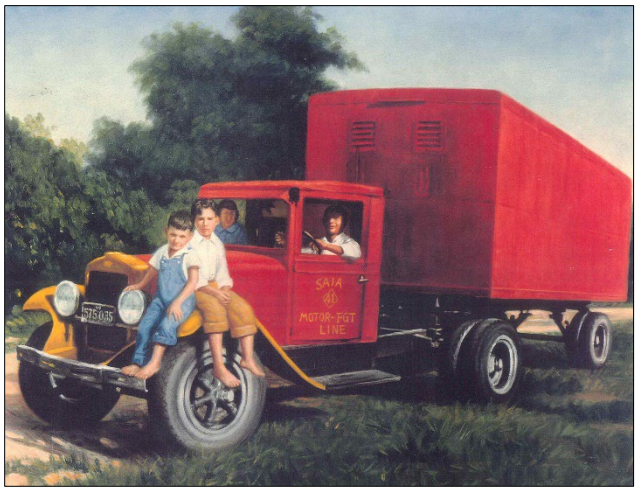
From humble beginnings to national footprint
Saia LTL Freight: Over a Century of Excellence

Founded in response to the many requests Louis Saia Sr., of Houma, Louisiana, received from his customers to haul their goods to New Orleans where he'd travel to pick up produce, Saia LTL Freight began when he transformed the family car, removing its backseats, into the company's first "truck." This modest start in 1924 laid the foundation for what would become one of the largest and most respected less-than-truckload (LTL) carriers in the United States.



Growth Through the Years

Over the next several decades, Saia expanded its terminal network across Louisiana and Texas, and by the 1980s, it had become a major regional player with 23 terminals, 1,000 employees, and over $50 million in revenue. In 1987, the Saia family sold the company to Preston Trucking, which was later acquired by Yellow Corporation. This acquisition led to a merger with Smalley Transportation, expanding Saia's reach into the Carolinas and western Texas.

The early 2000s marked a period of aggressive expansion. Saia integrated Action Express and WestEx, increasing coverage to 21 states and over 100 terminals. In 2002, Saia and Jevic Transportation were spun off to form SCS Transportation, a publicly traded company. By 2004, the acquisition of Clark Brothers Transport Inc. added key Midwestern markets like Chicago, St. Louis, and Minneapolis to Saia's network.



Becoming a Public Powerhouse

In 2006, SCS sold Jevic and consolidated all corporate functions under the Saia name. The company began trading on the NASDAQ under the ticker symbol SAIA. The following years saw further acquisitions,

including those of The Connection Company and Madison Freight Systems Inc. By 2008, Saia surpassed $1 billion in gross revenue for the first time. Saia continued to grow, diversifying its services, by purchasing two third-party logistics (3PL) and non-asset-based truckload companies - Robart Companies in 2012 and LinkEx Inc. in 2015.

A Century of Innovation

Saia celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2024 with a series of initiatives and celebrations, including two interactive mobile museums. The company kicked off the year in New Orleans where it honored the legacy of the Saia family and its storied past while also reaffirming its commitment to the employees and customers who have been central to its longevity.



In tandem with its anniversary, Saia invested $1 billion in its operations, underscoring the company's dedication to innovation, efficiency, and customer service. Saia currently operates 213 terminals across the country, employs nearly 15,000 people, and owns a fleet of over 6,500 tractors and 22,000 trailers.

Looking Ahead

As Saia enters its second century, the company remains focused on growth, innovation, and customer-first service. Saia is not just reflecting on its past - it's actively shaping the future of freight transportation.