

Steve Ledwell of Ledwell & Son Enterprises had always considered selling by auction an unnecessary risk. A chance encounter with Ritchie Bros. at a trade show changed his mind.

Steve now uses Ritchie Bros. auctions to sell trucks and trailers – and to reach a global audience of potential new Ledwell customers.

Four generations of Ledwells have built Ledwell & Son Enterprises into what it is today: a successful manufacturer of heavy-duty transportation equipment, including trailers, truck bodies, dump beds and water tanks. L.W. “Buddy” Ledwell and his father established the Texarkana, Texas company in 1946.

“When my dad came back from the war, he and his dad started selling hardwood lumber for home flooring,” says company president Steve Ledwell. “That demanded a truck, so they bought a 1946 Federal with the GI bill. We still have it.” Over the years, the company shifted its focus from lumber to transportation. “My dad still comes to work every day and is very active in the business,” says Steve. “Now my children are entering the business and the future looks great.”

When Ledwell & Son was assigned to a trade show booth next to Ritchie Bros. in 2001, Steve learned about the benefits of consigning equipment to an unreserved Ritchie Bros. auction: not just selling surplus equipment quickly and efficiently, but reaching a global network of potential buyers – and potential new Ledwell customers.

But the idea of selling unreserved – with no guaranteed minimum selling price – still seemed a little risky, so Steve tested the waters with just one piece of equipment. The next time he consigned to Ritchie Bros., Steve took a different approach.

“We decided to put a range of different equipment in the auction – a mix of trucks with different bodies we manufacture,” says Steve. “We were pleased with exposure we got. We could see what the global market was willing to pay for different truck configurations. It was interesting; it gave us a better idea of our market.”

Ledwell & Son has since sold several sets of used and unused transportation equipment at Ritchie Bros. auctions across North America. They’re even selling a selection of unused trucks at an upcoming Dubai auction. “We can reach a different audience through Ritchie Bros.,” explains Steve. “Thousands of people from all over the world are exposed to our equipment through the auctions.”

Steve now counts himself as a loyal Ritchie Bros. customer.



Steve Ledwell

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“Fifty years is a long haul,” says Steve. “You don’t stay in business that long by accident: you have to give your customers a reason to come back. I don’t sell everything through Ritchie Bros. auctions, but I do feel that I get excellent service and value, as well as access to new customers that I don’t think I can get anywhere else.”

For Steve Ledwell, what began as a chance encounter with some Ritchie Bros. employees at a trade show has developed into an enduring business partnership.

“Ritchie Bros. people are good people,” says Steve. “I trust them, I enjoy working with them, and I count many of them as friends. I used to think sending equipment to auctions was like shooting craps over the phone. But if you trust your partner, as I trust the folks at Ritchie Bros., you’ll always get a good opportunity to be a winner.”

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Auctioneers

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YEARS