

# BUSINESS ADVOCATE

Birmingham based **Shipt**'s commitment and caring for their shoppers and customers is at the core of their revolutionary growth. Now serving over 5,000 cities, they pride themselves in delivering southern hospitality all across the U.S.

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# HANDLE WITH CARE



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## PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST IS THE MAGIC FORMULA THAT'S PROPELLED SHIPT TO NEW HEIGHTS

**M**uch like its hometown of Birmingham's moniker, Shipt's meteoric rise since being founded in 2014 seems like magic. While the cause of the company's growth has been anything but, Shipt does share another overarching theme with the Magic City: revolution.

Instead of the industrial surge in the late 1800's that led to Birmingham also being coined the Pittsburgh of the South, Shipt is at the forefront of a 21st century economic transformation that is quickly seeing Alabama's largest city fulfill its potential as the Silicon Valley of the South.

Shipt was founded almost seven years ago in Birmingham by Bill Smith, with the core mission of helping individuals with little or no time for grocery shopping. Like all good disruptors, Shipt was born out of the desire to provide a solution to a simple, everyday problem -- the need for a better shopping experience for busy parents through same-day delivery.

After launching in Birmingham, Shipt quickly moved into nearby cities, growing rapidly and strategically. The company's Alabama roots and commitment to southern hospitality were key



to successful expansion efforts, consistently driven by a people-first mentality. The company launched into 86 markets before being acquired by Target in December 2017 for \$550 million.

## "WHAT MAKES SHIPT STAND OUT IS OUR PEOPLE-CENTRIC MINDSET AND THIS IS NEVER GOING TO CHANGE."

While now a wholly-owned subsidiary of Target, Shipt operates independently and has proudly continued to call Birmingham home

through it all – reinforced by the city's tallest building now bearing the name of Shipt Tower and housing the company's headquarters.

"What makes Shipt stand out is our people-centric mindset and this is never going to change," said Kelly Caruso, CEO of Shipt. "We

get a homegrown sense of community out of Birmingham. Knowing that community will always be the root of our success, I am confident in our future."



Indeed, Shipt has only enhanced its commitment to Birmingham since 2017. The company has certainly surged, now serving the nation across more than 5,000 cities and 80% of all U.S. households. With that growth has brought almost 900 jobs to Alabama.

And, just like Shipt's activity in Birmingham, the company has remained focused on not just growing in size, but also continually enhancing offerings and value for its customers.

Over the past few years, delivery services have transformed from a luxury to a convenience to an essential service. Shipt has expanded to serve more than 120 retail partners nationwide and tripled the number of Shipt shoppers to meet unprecedented demand. In Alabama, Shipt currently serves 21 retailers offering same-day delivery to their customers. This gives retailers an opportunity to expand their business and reach more Alabamians.

Besides the hundreds of Shipt employees in Alabama that make this all possible, the company also provides thousands more



Alabamians with flexible, independent work as Shipt shoppers.

From the very beginning, Shipt shoppers have been the secret sauce to success. Shipt wholeheartedly believes that one of the company's true differentiators is that its shoppers not only know how to shop well, but also care about their customers.

Montgomery-based Shipt shopper Sharieffa S. explained, "I first started shopping for Shipt in March of 2020. I joined because I love getting to set my own schedule and feel like I am running my own business. I wasn't expecting to fall in love with this company and the people I get to deliver to."

"The customers I deliver to are my family members! I know their kids, their allergies, their preferences; that's what makes Shipt so personal. This company has gotten me through a lot."

Just as the company cares for its employees, shoppers and customers, Shipt has a deep connection and commitment to Birmingham.

"Caring is core to Shipt, and we are committed to making a positive impact on the

### LEFT PAGE

*Birmingham Shipt Shopper Rodriguez W. delivers for his customers with a smile on his face. Through Shipt, he is saving up the funds to pursue a degree in social work.*

### THIS PAGE

*Left: Shipt CEO Kelly Caruso has led the company since 2019.*

*Right: Shipt shoppers pride themselves on getting to know and caring about their customers.*

### NEXT PAGE

*Excellence in shopping is another common theme among Shipt's meticulous shoppers.*



communities we serve,” Caruso commented. “We are a people-first company and being a good corporate citizen is a natural extension of our values.”

Shipt supports several local and national organizations striving to make a positive impact in Birmingham and surrounding community.

This includes having donated over \$1.1 million to Feeding America, a commitment that began at the local level in Alabama and expanded nationally. This year, Shipt plans to gift the organization \$300,000 to support its summer feeding program in 13 cities across the U.S., including Birmingham and Montgomery. Shipt is also a major supporter of Meals on Wheels, the American Red Cross and United Way, among others.

“We have a powerful tool that puts food in the hands of those who want and need it, so we’re doing our best to be good stewards of that and give back to the communities where we operate,” Caruso remarked.

An unwavering commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion is also tightly interwoven into the fiber of the company. This has been on display throughout Shipt’s history, including providing an opportunity to receive a company match for donations made to social justice organizations, such as Black Lives Matter and the Montgomery-based Equal Justice Initiative.

“Equity and inclusivity are so important to me. If you think about it, it’s truly holistic and essential to the success of our society,” Caruso advised.

This deeply engrained pledge also shows up in Shipt’s professional development initiatives. The company actively prioritizes



diversity when hiring and upskilling; Shipt has created internal programs for underrepresented populations to get into tech and high-paying jobs.

Ultimately, the company’s goal is not only to expand its workforce and attract highly talented people but to deepen Shipt’s hometown roots and establish Birmingham as the hub of technology and innovation in the South -- and the United States.

Through programs aimed at skill development, hiring talent from around Birmingham, and attracting

highly skilled talent from across software engineering, data science and operations teams, expanding Shipt in Birmingham helps build a foundation for more tech-focused jobs throughout the state and provides a template for tech company training programs.

Moving forward, Shipt’s thriving innovation success story may just provide others with a glimpse into what sets Birmingham and the state of Alabama apart -- and how the company can help foster similar business models moving forward. **BA**

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