

CILT AWARD

TPN Provides Best Logistics in Ireland - and that's official!



Owen Cooke Chairman TPN accepts the Logistics Best Practice Award from Paul Malee President CILT.

TPN has added yet another award to its ever-growing list of accolades by picking up the Logistics Best Practice title at the Irish Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport's first-ever awards night.

Beating a dozen other candidates for the title, TPN was singled out for its commitment to quality and top class IT system, leaving Kuhne and Nagle, Expeditors, DPD and Stena Line in its wake.

"The Pallet Network is a great idea," says Colm Holmes, CEO at CILT. "It's great to see it succeed so well. I'm really pleased that TPN's business has grown by 500% in five years.

"The Logistics Best Practice award was intended to honour outstanding achievement in any aspect of freight transport, including operations, processes and service, in any mode or combination of modes. Many of the entries met that criteria, but the two key factors that lifted TPN high above the other candidates were the commitment to quality and the rigorous IT system that ensures all cargo can be tracked and all member depots know what is going on.

"And it's the TPN members that make it all work. They all are focused on the job and want to provide a good service."

The MC for the night was Mark Little of RTÉ fame and the award was presented by Paul Malee, President of the CILT to TPN chairman Owen Cooke at a glittering gala night held at the Burlington Hotel, Dublin, on Thursday 11th February. The awards scheme was established to recognise the world class excellence of individuals, companies, and operators in the Irish logistics and transport sector which help create and sustain a competitive edge for the Irish economy.

"We believe it is right to recognise excellence in our industry," Colm continues, "especially at this time when our sector is playing a vital role in providing services and infrastructure that will help build towards economic recovery."

TPN's submission emphasised its efforts to attract the best hauliers in the country to the network and the design and build of the new hub. The network's weekly league tables, quarterly competitions based on on-time delivery, POD completeness and scanning activities, annual survey of 'softer' KPIs, such as telephone answering and collection service, and the TPN awards scheme were also highlighted.

TPN's logistics capability together with its distribution network makes TPN the number one logistics provider in the country.

MEMBER PROFILE

Depot 125 Makes Hearty Contribution to Network

After years as a lorry driver, Colm Hearty veered into publishing when he decided to be a newspaper and magazine wholesaler. But Colm, like so many others, found transport gets under your skin so, in 2003 he began transporting newspapers and books for companies like Newsread and Easons.

At the same time, what was by then known as Hearty Distribution began doing sub-contract work for Independent Express.

"We still do sub-contract work for IEC," Colm explains. "But we joined TPN in February 2008 as depot 125, covering North Wicklow, when we wanted to expand our business. We recognised the huge potential of the network."

Hearty Distribution still supplies haulage services to the newspaper industry, although it sold its wholesale operation in 2006, but its main business today is moving pallets.

"At the moment, we've been trying to ride out the recession like everyone else," Colm says. "But we have four or five big jobs on the cards and are looking to expand - partly with the help of TPN."

"We do all sorts of haulage, both full and part-load, containers, same-day, next-day - but the TPN work is growing the most."



Colm and Melanie Hearty of Hearty Distribution, TPN Depot 125

We put 150 pallets into the network per week and take 80 or 90 back to North Wicklow."

Based at the TPN hub in Blanchardstown, Hearty Distribution has its own dedicated space in the warehouse and parking for two artics, three rigids and one van. Colm's wife Melanie runs the admin side of the business from their home in Dundalk, taking care of accounts, payroll and other tasks necessary to manage the team of six.

So does Colm have time to indulge in his love of lorry driving? "What with growing the business and spending time with my three small children, I don't have as much time as I'd like," he admits. "But I do manage to drive sometimes on the weekend."

It seems that, yet again, once a lorry driver, always a lorry driver.

SNIPPETS



MCD, depot 115, shows off the new TPN logo on the latest addition to its fleet - a double-deck trailer which can take 60 pallets. "We were growing so much, we needed the extra capacity," explains MD Brian O'Keefe. "And the new vehicle gave us the chance to use the re-designed TPN logo, too."

TPN handled its biggest ever volume - 7500 pallets - in the week ended 23rd April 2010 - not bad considering Ireland is still struggling in what is possibly the worst recession since the 1930s!

We would like to welcome Martin Vahey who has recently joined Independent Express Cargo, TPN Depot 102 for Dublin. Martin has vast experience in the Dublin freight market having worked with JMC for over 13 years. TPN's volumes can only go higher and higher with people like Martin on board.



MCD Transport, TPN Depot 115 for Cork sporting the new TPN livery on the latest addition to their fleet of double deck trailers.

Not content with dominating the Irish pallet distribution business, TPN is now tackling the growing logistics needs of retailers and manufacturers throughout the country by storing goods, picking and packing orders and then delivering them through The Pallet Network in a service called Hub Site Logistics.

"We've always done some logistics work," explains chairman Owen Cooke, "but the growth of the pallet business restricted space availability. Now we have 100,000 sq ft of warehousing available adjacent to the TPN hub in Blanchardstown so we can again address the needs of customers who want to go beyond pallet distribution."

TPN has recently invested €100,000 in high bay racking, a third turret truck and a new warehouse management system to support the move into logistics.

Although TPN will offer full logistics services for Irish-originated goods, demand is coming primarily from retailers dealing with imported consumer goods. "We can collect the container at the port or receive it from the retailer's haulier, strip it down, store the goods and then pick off orders as we receive them," Owen continues.

"Orders are then packed, put into cartons or pallets and transferred to the TPN hub for next day delivery throughout Ireland. The best thing for customers is that we can receive orders as late as 17.00 and still get them out within 24 hours. Such a late close-off and quick turnaround is not generally available in this industry.

"The other crucial thing for our customers is that we take a complete layer of cost out of the supply chain. Instead of the container going to the shipper's warehouse for storage and then transferring goods to the distribution centre, we take care of the entire process, eliminating double handling."

Currently TPN has approximately 2,000 pallets of consumer goods stored for companies like Mothercare, Kandyco and Travertine. Now it has also entered a joint venture with UK forwarder Atlantic Pacific Global Logistics to handle Irish storage and distribution for Weber, the barbecue supplier.

"Weber wanted to expand in the Irish market," explains Andy Quincey, regional manager, Manchester, for Atlantic Pacific. "It already had a presence in Northern Ireland, but 80% of its customers were in the south. We suggested opening a distribution centre around Dublin - but I'd worked with TPN in the UK and already knew Independent Express, so thought it might be more efficient to use an existing set-up."

"I went to see TPN's facilities and thought they were ideal. The IT system was key to our decision: we know that as well as being able to supply all orders electronically, the warehouse management system will control stock on a day-to-day basis and provide us with accurate, up-to-date inventory information at any time."

While Atlantic Pacific has given TPN a new boost in the logistics market, most of the network members have been quietly expanding this part of their business on their own. Depot 105, Store-All, for example, has 555,000 sq ft of warehousing in three locations around Waterford, 100,000 sq ft of which is devoted to the pharmaceutical industry.

"Pharmaceuticals are our main business," emphasises Liam Dalton, founder of the firm, "although we also handle other commodities, such as dairy products. We work for four or five substantial pharma companies, providing warehousing and some pick and pack, including packing for airfreight. We bring in the raw materials and store at the right conditions, which may involve temperature controlled storage, and pick as per the company's requirements. They then take the materials into manufacture and return the finished products to us for storage and pick and pack."

Allen Logistics, depot 129, has doubled its storage, pick and pack activities in the last year. "We have 2,000 pallets stored in Moira, in County Down," explains MD James Allen. "We have 60,000 sq ft in Northern Ireland, but also have warehouses in Liverpool and Leicestershire in the UK. Our Irish business is expanding on the back of TPN because customers know we can store their goods, pick their orders and deliver them anywhere in Ireland within 24 hours."

James believes the development of the Hub Site Logistics will help members to expand the logistics side of their business. "The faster distribution of pallets TPN can provide will encourage customers to come to network members, who in turn can expand into storage and pick and pack to meet customer demand," he says.



The new TPN Logistics Centre beside the TPN Transport HUB in Blanchardstown.

“Logistics is an add-on to our existing business,” adds Ger Hyland, owner of Hyland Transport, Depot 113. “It makes the network more attractive to a wider customer base. We have 24,000 sq ft on a five-vehicle site, with our own weighbridge. We can even provide office space if customers ask. Our main storage business is charcoal imported from Namibia, but this part of our business is growing.”

Damien Maguire, MD at AM Transport, depot 101 in Antrim, already finds half the business at his 30,000 sq ft site comes from retail logistics. “We work for companies like SuperDrug, B&Q, SemiChem and WH Smith,” he says. “We’re Wincanton’s joint venture partner in Northern Ireland for multi-user retail.

“I think it would be great if TPN could move into cage distribution in a greater way as there is huge demand for it. In the past, a lot of retailers considered Northern Ireland as part of the domestic UK market, but now they’re beginning to view Ireland as a complete unit. The sales push into retail benefits all members, because any business the network can get is spread throughout all the depots.”



TPN staff scanning and picking customer orders at the new TPN Logistics Centre.

Which is exactly what Hub Site Logistics plans to do. “We are promoting TPN as a logistics provider and are actively looking for warehousing and distribution contracts,” Owen emphasises. “We have 30,000 sq ft available and have access to more space nearby if needed. We have a lot of smaller users, with just five - 50 pallets, but are now looking for some bigger contracts to fill up our space as quickly as possible.”

GALAXY COMPONENTS : Out of This World!

Glen O Beirne together with Keith Harris identified an opening in the Irish market and established Galaxy Components which is now one of the major players in the Irish Lighting Industry.

“We sell approximately 400 products, mainly commercial lighting for the wholesale market,” Glen explains. “These include low-energy waterproof light fittings, warehouse lighting, and lighting solutions for the office and retail sectors. Twelve new lines were introduced in 2009 and another 10 are being added this year. All of our products are imported from Europe and the Far East and transhipped through continental ports for delivery to Dublin”.

“We bring in between four and six 40-foot containers per month” Glen explains. “Hearty Distribution collects these from the port and delivers to our warehouse in Santry. We have around 20,000 sq ft of warehousing and 5,500 sq ft of offices space there”.

Galaxy was using a different network for distribution, but weren’t happy with it. “We could never get an estimated time of arrival, we couldn’t deal direct with the destination depot, and we used to spend an hour or two every day just chasing our pallets. We pride ourselves on customer service, so if our haulier let us down, we would have to deliver ourselves.”

A chance spotting of Hearty Distribution’s livery, proudly boasting membership of TPN, led to a change of supplier in



Hearty Distribution, TPN Depot 115 ready to move out Galaxy trailer

2008. “We now use TPN for everything in Ireland and the UK,” Glen says. “And Hearty does all our Dublin deliveries, too. We never have a problem with TPN: we know our orders will be delivered in 24 or 48 hours, depending on how much our customers are willing to pay.”

“By using TPN, we save 10 - 12 hours a week in phone calls because I don’t have to chase our transport company. We can give our customer Hearty’s phone number and they can call direct if they have a query.”

Galaxy retains four vehicles, just in case of emergency. “But we aren’t using them at the moment,” Glen admits, “because Hearty Distribution and TPN are so good, we never need to.”

TPN ACADEMY LAUNCHED

Despite winning a shelf-full of awards, TPN is not about to rest on its laurels - and in yet another move to maintain and improve service levels, it is launching the TPN Academy to offer training to any and all TPN members.

The first module of the Academy began on 17th April covering sales and marketing, but other subjects will be included in future.

Courses are being given by Pearce Flannery, a well-known motivational speaker whose clients include the Irish national soccer team. So what does kicking a ball around have to do with moving pallets? Maybe nothing, but in order to succeed at any activity, people need to be organised, motivated and focussed.

"I want to use my experience of local area marketing and training to help companies find prospects, market their business and close the sale," Pearce comments. "Whatever you're doing, you need to build the programme from the ground up. In the service industry, it's a case of marketing the brand locally, identifying potential customers and making sure they are aware of you as a potential service supplier.

"Network members have to recognise and synergise the power of the network. If a member depot grows its business, it benefits the whole network, just as any growth in network business benefits its individual members. The Academy will show members how to capitalise on the benefits of being in a network."

Pearce has already set out two key goals. "First, members can develop the penetration of their local market," he continues. "Once they've done that, they can capitalise on the growth of other members, since the new business could well be pallets delivered to their area. This then helps TPN overall."

"The course was very interesting," says James Marren of East West Express, Depot 116. "Although a lot of what Pearce said wasn't new to me, there were some very useful tips. For example, while receptionists won't always put callers through to the top brass, there are ways to get round this. For example, ask for accounts receivable and then ask to be transferred to the 'right' department. I did gain from Academy and would go again when a different topic is covered."

Future modules will include marketing, public relations, time management, personal effectiveness, accounting and customer service.



TPN members pictured with Pearce Flannery

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to two new TPN members, Store-All and, in a real coup for TPN, Schenker Ireland. Store-All, depot 105 covering Waterford, joined in January. "We saw TPN as a natural extension to our business," says Liam Dalton, founder of the firm. It has already brought us new customers.

Schenker Ireland has become depot 150, to cover international movements for TPN members. "We were looking for a good domestic Irish distribution network," says Greg Hourigan, land product manager, Ireland, for Schenker. "TPN can give us a better coverage in Ireland and help us grow our business, while at the same time we can help member depots who have requirements for European road and rail transport."



Store-All one of the new TPN members.

UK DEPOT PROFILE

Lombard Links to Ireland



When Andy Dawkins bought Lombard Express in December 1992, it was a franchise for a parcel delivery company. But, in the heyday of the parcel sector, when anyone could, and did, start a courier business and numerous parcel delivery networks sprang up throughout the UK, it was a precarious sector, to say the least.

“Every time we started to get going well, the parcel network would go bust,” Andy recalls. “I thought about starting my own parcel network, but there were so many cowboys out there. I did try to establish LDX as a parcel network, but we had a lot of problems with bad debt, so we decided to pull out of parcels altogether. I knew there was no money in general haulage: I had to be in a network. And that’s when I joined TPN UK.”

In the beginning, Lombard, which is based in Kettering, Northamptonshire, was putting around 40 pallets a night into TPN UK; today it is more like 400. And instead of taking just 30 or so out of the hub, it now handles 200 for distribution in its Northamptonshire area.

“TPN was the smallest pallet network in operation at the time and it took us a while to get in, but once we did, we’ve never looked back.”

Pallet distribution makes up 99% of Lombard’s business, but it can do storage on request, as it has 25,000 sq ft in a two-year-old facility in Kettering. Its fleet numbers 14 vehicles: four artics, four 7.5 rigids, four 18 tonne lorries and one van.



Lombard is a major contributor to TPN Ireland, too, sending roughly 10 to 15 pallets per night. “TPN Ireland does an excellent job. The service is good; communication is good. It’s not the cheapest, but you do get what you pay for, and because we can rely on the network, we are able to actively sell our Irish service. Not everyone knows we cover Ireland, but we are trying to remedy that by marketing it heavily.”



Lombard Express, TPN Depot 57 has a modern warehouse in Kettering

OUR SUMMER STUMPER!



A man had twelve toothpicks in front of him. He took one away. Now he had nine in front of him. How is this possible?

Send answers to peterm@tpn.ie

All correct answers will be put into a hat and €200 will go to the first name drawn out.

The answer to our riddle in the winter edition was: He takes the chicken across first, then comes back. Then he takes the fox across and brings the chicken back. Then he takes the corn over. Finally, he comes back alone and takes the chicken across. There was no winner.

Presented by your local TPN member.

TPN



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TPN - The Pallet Network is Ireland’s leading distributor of palletised goods.

TPN - is the only network in Ireland and the UK where all its member depots are ISO9001 accredited.

TPN - The High Quality Low Cost Network

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