



Distribution

Pallet Network Ireland keeps moving upwards



What is it?

The Pallet Network Ireland (TPNI) is the number-one distributor of small consignments of palletised goods with a national network of 21 regional carriers known as Pallet Network members. TPN provides a system for distributing palletised freight, which enables transport companies to offer their customers an overnight service across the 32 counties and a two to four days service from the UK and Europe.

The concept involves each member company operating in a small local area, reducing mileage, improving service and knowledge in the area. The system is based on two-way loading and using efficient double-decked trailers at night between the centre hub and regional depots. Costs are dramatically reduced over the industry norm and the working time directive on driving hours is fully complied with. In the UK, 85% of transport companies operate in this manner, compared to 25% in

Ireland at the moment. TPN is headquartered in a purpose built 100,000sq ft hub in Blanchardstown, the cost of which was €10m.

Who's behind it?

The company was established by Seamus McGowan and Owen Cooke in 2004. McGowan had been working in accountancy since 1976 and became a FCA chartered accountant in 1985. He joined Australian multinational freight group TNT in 1988 and, as their internal auditor, visited 20 different TNT operations around the globe.

Financial situation?

Turnover last year was €7.8m, projected turnover for this year is €9.5m. Growth is a healthy 40% per annum. Assuming that the market capacity in Ireland is 10% of the UK's, TPN estimates that 15,000 pallets per night could be handled in Ireland and they are confident that within the next three years, they will have 20% share of market.

Future plans?

TPNI is looking at rolling out environmentally friendly and cost-effective bio-diesel operated trucks for the entire fleet. It plans to convert the fleet network to run on pure plant oil (PPO) with only 20% of the emissions level of diesel oil. ■