

## The Pallet Network Ireland

# At the top after just five years

The Pallet Network (TPN) commenced activities in Ireland five years ago. Today it is the country's leading distributor of palletised goods and provider of pallet transport and sorting systems. It generated revenues of more than EUR 9 million in 2008. The firm envisages further expansion, despite the meltdown in the Irish economy.

Seamus McGowan, the managing director of The Pallet Network (Ireland) Ltd (TPNI), said that «TPNI was set up as a response to changing market requirements.» The concept of pallet networks has been around in the UK since the early 1990s, but such systems did not reach Ireland until recently.

The network started in 2004 with a small hub and ten hauliers, initially moving just 150 pallets. «In the meantime we have taken in a further 13 hauliers. We recently opened a new EUR 10 million hub, through which 1,500 pallets are handled every night in our 24-hour pan-Irish delivery service. We now form the largest pallet network in Ireland.»

TPNI generated revenues of EUR 9.2 million last year and made a EUR 300,000 profit for the first time since its inception in 2004. «We don't really expect to repeat this result this year. But we are pretty pleased with the way business is going at the moment, especially in the light of the massive economic difficulties that Ireland is currently facing. We think we will stay in the black.»

### Alliances with TPN UK and Woodland UK

Two years ago the Irish network set up a strategic alliance, based in Rugby (England), with TPN UK. This has created an Anglo-Irish network of 112 road hauliers. They work together using the same software and operating procedures, which gives every member access to all the relevant transport and freight information at any time through the internet. The Pallet Network (Ireland) also established a strategic alliance with the internationally-active freight forwarding and logistics company Woodland UK in spring 2008. Woodland provides



TPN Ireland executives **Seamus McGowan** (on the right) and **Owen Cooke**.

worldwide freight forwarding for TPN Ireland members, and the latter deliver Woodland's freight in Ireland.

«TPN Ireland has not only grown to become the largest pallet network in Ireland since its founding,» McGowan explained. «We also provide our customers with top quality services. We have moved in excess of 1.5 million pallets since starting up the business, and we have yet to lose a single pallet.» The Pallet Network (Ireland) is ISO 9001 accredited and is the only pallet network in Ireland or the UK to have every location ISO 9001 certified. TPN Ireland has also won some prestigious awards, such as the Pallet Network of the Year prize in the annual Fleet Transport Irish Haulier of the Year awards, for example. Owen Cooke, TPNI's chairman, is currently in the running for Ernst & Young's Entrepreneur of the Year 2009 award.

TPN is planning to set up similar networks to the one in Ireland in other countries in the medium term, including Poland, Czechia and Hungary. McGowan said that it is difficult for smaller enterprises to establish good, fast transport services in these countries without support from multinational corporations, adding that «TPNI is currently on the lookout for partners and investors who can help us to realise these projects.» The network will commence with activities in Poland. *ben*

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The Pallet Network Ireland handles 1,500 pallets a night. TPNI established its leading market position in Ireland in just five years.