



Nip Tuck

One of the original members of The Pallet Network, Wexford firm Tuckmill Transport has experienced the benefits of being part of a countrywide collective. Managing Director Brendan Morgan spoke to Irish Trucker about the company's success.

Birthday celebrations, when they come around, are something to be savoured. For survival if nothing else: we're still here, still upright, still turning the collar up against the wind.

Based in Enniscorthy, Co Wexford, Tuckmill Transport celebrates its 15th anniversary in 2010. In the current economic climate, survival as much as prosperity is the stated aim of most businesses, but Tuckmill have managed to buck the trend through its affiliation to the successful The Pallet Network (TPN), launched by former Independent Express Cargo chief Owen Cooke in 2004.

Having graduated from a single-vehicle, owner-driver operation in 1995, Tuckmill now has a fleet of eight vehicles on the road and moved into a purpose-built premises outside Enniscorthy in 2008. And while the company was a successful venture in its own right, founder and Managing Director Brendan Morgan concedes that the link with TPN has helped to take it to a new level.

"Five of the original companies who came together under the TPN banner are still there, and we're one of those," Morgan tells Irish Trucker. "We started out with a single truck in 1995, a second hand Scania

143, things went well from the start and we purchased a brand new truck in '96. We had three between 1997 and 2001 and as things stand today the business has grown to six trucks and two vans, covering all manner of haulage and courier work. The two strands are all together under one roof in Enniscorthy now."

So how exactly have the links with the Northwest Business Park, Blanchardstown-based TPN manifested itself on the day-to-day business of Tuckmill?

"As a local courier and haulage service we were covering the Dublin-Wicklow-Wexford route at the time," says Morgan. "A lot of our customers were doing nationwide deliveries and we weren't in a position to offer that service before we became involved with TPN. We had built up a good reputation with our customers, and when it came about that we could offer to do nationwide, a lot of them took it up.

"It's been a huge benefit to us - we went from a situation where we had three vehicles on the road in 2004 to the current set-up, where we have six trucks and two vans in operation. Probably 80 per cent of our work at the moment comes through TPN. We were a sub-contractor to Independent Express Cargo from 2002 and when they were setting up TPN they invited us on

board.

"We serve south Wicklow and Wexford and there are other carriers covering their own specialised areas (mostly just one county) throughout the country. TPN guarantees next-day delivery anywhere in the country. No other pallet network can offer that so we have a market advantage. We're delighted to be a part of TPN and we're looking forward to continuing that relationship long into the future - it's fair to say that TPN has been the whole key to our success. We would never have been able to grow the business by ourselves at the rate we achieved since joining TPN. We have gone from a position where we were carrying six or seven pallets a night nationwide in 2004 to now, when we carry 60-plus nationwide and another 10 or more for export

each night as well."

That expansion necessitated a move to new premises in 2008, and Tuckmill is growing into its new headquarters nicely.

"We had been operating in a small premises in the wrong location but we knew we needed extra space and storage facilities. With TPN business we could afford to move into our new base in Enniscorthy in 2008, and we invested a further €240,000 in a storage facility which we opened in September 2009."

While transportation remains the core activity of the business, storage, pick-and-pack and container handling is now growing steadily, and Morgan has found that companies are open to the prospect of outsourcing storage and warehousing services which previously they may have looked after in-house.

"Some of our customers were downscaling and we found that they were open to the prospect of

us offering some storage space," he says. "A few years ago everyone had a unit or a forklift but nowadays some of them might not be carrying the same volume of stock. So we can offer them a variable cost option, where they may be able to get rid of the fixed cost of a warehouse, forklift and warehouse staff.

"It's a great facility, with 12,000 sq ft just of storage space, with drive-through for loading and unloading, and dock-levellers for handling container loads. We now have some European transport companies using our container stripping services and then out nationwide delivery service via TPN. Our location close to the port of Rosslare is one reason why we are an attraction option for international hauliers.

"We have some big customers on our books who have their own warehousing and storage but we also have a huge amount of small customers and they are treated with the degree of attention as the larger ones. We hope to be able to offer them a more complete range of services now and in effect to be a 'one-stop shop' for all their transport and warehousing needs."

So from haulage and transportation to warehousing and storage, Tuckmill has the answer.



Tuckmill Transport is one of the original members of the **Pallet Network**



Tom Scully, Adam Sledz, Thomas Kardaz and Matt Bolger are some of the qualified drivers at Tuckmill Transport

Publication: Irish Trucker

Date: Thursday, April 01, 2010

Page: 47

Extract: 3 of 3

Circulation: 0

Author:

Headline: Nip Tuck

