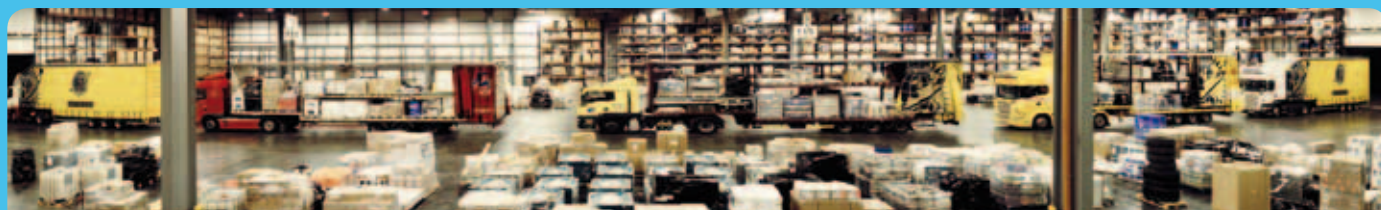


FIVE YEARS ON - AND STILL GROWING HAPPY BIRTHDAY TPN!



TPN Hub 2009 now handling 1500 pallets per night

Blow up the balloons, light the candles, raise a glass - and help TPN celebrate its fifth birthday. And we all certainly deserve to toast ourselves: from the 150 pallets handled per night by 12 hauliers, TPN has grown to a network of 23 members, handling 1500 pallets a night.

TPN was started by Independent Express in 2004 because, after years of working with pallet networks in the UK, it thought Ireland could do with its own version. "IE had always wanted to crack the next-day pallet distribution conundrum in Ireland," explains Seamus McGowan, TPN's MD. "At one point, IE even set up four depots around the country in a bid to improve the next-day service, but it was not economically viable to maintain these sites."

Instead, IE's delivery sub-contractors, joined by a few newcomers, formed the basis of a TPN network.

Things haven't always been easy, though. Two hauliers pulled out in the first three weeks, leaving the network with no service in Kerry or Waterford. IE had to cover the gap in order to guarantee service at the agreed network rates.

"Service levels in TPN are unbelievable," emphasises Brendan Morgan, MD of Tuckmill Transport, depot 103 covering Wexford and south Wicklow and one of the six original members still in the network. "Everyone has to run to the same standard, which is a guaranteed next-day delivery; we all work for and with each other."

"We all share the same ethos," agrees Darren Connolly, MD of Liam Connolly (Road Freight), depot 114 covering Fermanagh and Tyrone, and another of the six original

members. "We all want to give customers what they want and we know the customer is always right."

Depots join TPN for one main reason: to provide customers with a next-day delivery service covering all of Ireland and a reliable 48 hour service to the UK. And the reasons for becoming a founding member were not really any different. AM Next Day, depot 101 covering Antrim and Derry, bought one of IE's subsidiaries, Next-Day, when TPN was being set up.

"We thought it was a good thing to get into," comments Alex Maguire, a director of AM. "We saw the future in pallet networks: it's a low-cost, environmentally friendly way to move cargo."

Some depots were approached by TPN to become members. Brian O'Reilly, MD of founder member Breffni Couriers, depot 112 covering Cavan, Monaghan, Louth and Meath, wondered how he could trust someone else to look after his freight. "I'd been approached by another network," he explains, "but I didn't have the same confidence in them that I had in the TPN principals. But because everyone had the same fear about giving their cargo to someone else, we all did look after each other's cargo the same way we looked after our own - and it's been like that ever since. Anyone who didn't meet TPN's high standards left the network."

"There were teething troubles in the beginning," adds Brendan Morgan, "but every time one depot left, we ended up with a better one. And now, TPN is **the** pallet network to be in."

Roll on the next five years.



Opening night of TPN in 2004 - 150 pallets handled

TPN OPENS THE DOOR FOR MCD



L to R Alan, Shane, Brian, and Peter from MCD

Peter McDermot had a successful business providing trucking operations for Danzas, the freight forwarder later snapped up by DHL. But Peter also saw that new pallet networks were a way of expanding and of providing a much-needed overnight delivery service for the Cork region, so in 2004 he set up a separate company, MCD Transport, to do just that.

"Peter was the delivery agent for DHL in Cork, Waterford and Tipperary," explains Brian O'Keeffe, operations and sales director, "but he could see a need for a guaranteed overnight delivery service."

MCD joined TPN soon after it was launched in 2004. "TPN now accounts for 60% of our business," Brian adds. "We move three trailers per night for TPN and two for DHL."

Most of MCD's customers come from the drinks industry, although the company also moves a significant amount of tiles. "As a major freight forwarder, we handle anything," Brian says. "Holland is our biggest market for drink import loads, followed by France."

"We also offer storage in our 20,000 sq ft warehouse, which was opened this year with two loading bays and we have doubled the size of our previous site." A workforce of 10 warehouse and office staff and 17 drivers are based at the headquarters, where MCD runs a fleet of seven 45-foot trailers and 12 rigids.

"TPN opens the door to new customers for us," says Brian. "Once we get a customer with a pallet, we can look at the rest of the customer's business and quote for other parts of their operation. We can move containers to and from ports or full loads to and from Europe. We began our groupage operation to and from the UK on the back of TPN, too."

MCD has grown so much, its warehouse is full and it has no room to accommodate new customers. "We are discussing extending the warehouse and building more loading bays, but plans were put on hold until after the recession," Brian comments. "We can't fulfil our potential unless we expand - and TPN has given us a lot to look forward to."

THE HUB MAKES OUR WHEELS GO ROUND



L to R, MARIUSZ, WITEK, ROMEK, MICHAL, JAREK, GRZEGORZ

The key to TPN's success is its members - but even they are not enough to keep the pallets flowing 24 hours a day, six days a week. For that, we can thank the network's Blanchardstown hub and the people who run it.

Peter Mills took over the role of operations manager in September 2007 after working for a UK-Ireland groupage company in Wigan, Lancashire, and then in Dublin. "All I've ever done is move freight to Ireland," he says. "I knew Brian O'Reilly at Breffni Couriers, so when I left my last employer, he introduced me to TPN."

"I thought TPN was, and is, a well-developed, well-organised system with solid, well-performing members," says Peter, who just celebrated his 47th birthday. "As operations manager, I try to keep it that way by ensuring everything goes smoothly and the right pallets are in the right place at the right time. I also act as an arbitrator between depots if there are any issues to resolve."

Night manager Piotr (Polish for Peter) Brandt worked for IBM for 18 months when he first came to Dublin, but after working as a warehouse supervisor in his native Tczew (near Gdansk), in charge of 36 employees, he was drawn back into the world of pallets and forklifts. He started at TPN in October 2005 and took over the night operations three months later.

Helping the two Peters are six forklift drivers; Dorota, who takes care of clerical work at night; and network administrator Michael Zdunczyk. No job is any more or less important than any other: TPN is a team and without that team spirit, TPN would not be the success it is today.



L to R PIOTR, DOROTA AND PETER

TPN CHAIRMAN - ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR FINALIST

TPN Chairman Owen Cooke has been short-listed for the prestigious Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award out of over 120 entries. Successful candidates have to show a dynamic way of looking at business and be able to demonstrate that they built successful businesses in the face of adversity.

"Seamus put me forward," says Owen, who is a finalist in the Emerging Company sector. "Although the award is for Entrepreneur of the Year, it really recognises the entrepreneur's company; I think the reason why I was selected is because pallet networks are a new, progressive mode of transport. They're smart, green and futuristic".

In addition to a series of networking events, finalists were taken off to Brazil - and no, it wasn't all rum cocktails and tango partnerships: each candidate had to show the judges that they would be able to replicate their successful

business model in an emerging market, in this case, Brazil. "We've been to Poland four times to discuss the possibility of setting up a network there," Owen pointed out the week before the trip, "so I won't have any difficulties in dealing with that. Brazil isn't in our schedule, but who knows?"

Now in its 12th year in Ireland, the October awards ceremony will be televised on RTE. You can also catch Owen and his fellow candidates in special television broadcasts or read about him in The Irish Times' Entrepreneur of the Year business profile series.



Owen Cooke- TPN Chairman

NEW MEMBER

TPN welcomes Tand Holdings to the network, becoming depot number 133 covering Leitrim South. Tand Holdings, based in Roscommon, began operations in 1982, offering a general distribution service throughout eight counties in the West and Midlands. Tand Holdings runs a 15,000 sq ft

warehouse, a workforce of 18, and a fleet of 14 curtain sider trailers and three artic cabs. MD Michael Leech explained: "We joined TPN to offer our customers greater coverage and UK services."

SIX REASONS TO USE TPN

TPN...has the best central hub of any pallet network. It's new, it's big, and it's managed by people with a 'can-do' attitude. Service is key and if there's a problem, they'll sort it.

TPN...has 23 professional, well-run member depots which all share the same service ethos and which are all ISO 9001 audited and certified. Pallets can be picked up as late as 18.00 and still be guaranteed to be delivered next-day throughout all of Ireland.

TPN...has a tie-up with TPN UK to give Irish members a reliable 48 hour export service to all of the UK, as well as the opportunity to receive UK pallets for their customers overnight for next-day delivery. No other Irish pallet network can match that.

TPN...has the best IT systems. Not only do they support hub operations, but every member is connected into the system

to create consistent processes and standards and provide full track and trace for every member. And the web site is the best of any pallet network, too: clear, informative, easy to navigate and always up-to-date.

TPN...communicates with its members and the members communicate with each other. There have been 19 quarterly members' meetings so far, where people can meet, talk, and sort out any problems, while TPN Times drops through the letterbox three or four times a year to keep members up-to-date with network news.

TPN... is an award winning operation, so members are proud to work for it. Not only has Fleet Magazine voted TPN the Best Pallet Network in Ireland, but TPN was shortlisted in the Green Awards Transport Initiative and the Services and Sustainable Energy categories of the Irish Small Firms Association Awards, and our chairman, Owen Cooke, is in the running for Ernst & Young Irish Entrepreneur of the Year. Not only that, TPN gives out its own awards to members to recognise the best of the best.

QUIZ

- 1 Who shot the man who shot JFK?
- 2 What was the name of the first ship that broke the siege of Derry in 1689?
- 3 What is the name of the last person to walk on the moon?

Answers to peterm@tpn.ie before 15th September 2009. All correct answers will be included in a draw and this time the first two names drawn out of the hat will win 100 euros each.

The answers to the Spring 2009 quiz were
1. Lilongwe 2. Mohamed Al Deayea 3. Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats.

We had 8 correct answers and the winner was Aidan Brabazon of Sureweld who receives a prize of €200. Well done Aidan.

CUSTOMER PROFILE

Storsack/Noor Ireland manufacture FIBCs - Flexible Intermediate Bulk Containers. Made out of polypropylene, FIBCs are used extensively in the agriculture, construction, chemical and pharmaceutical industries to carry things like grain or aggregates.

Founded in 1979 as a subsidiary of the German Storsack Group, Storsack/Noor moved into its current site in Little Island, approximately 10km from Cork city centre, complete with 15,000 sq ft warehouse, two years ago. Initially, Storsack used a variety of transport companies to provide it with an all-Ireland distribution service, but when Peter McDermot launched MCD Transport in 2004, Storsack decided to contract all its haulage needs to the new company.

"We had worked with Peter before at different companies," explains a Storsack spokesman. "We knew he could do a good job."



The fact that MCD joined TPN from the outset helped ensure a guaranteed 24 hour delivery throughout the 32 counties in Ireland, shaving up to a day off the previous lead time and letting Storsack deliver to places it previously could not reach. Storsack plans to expand its delivery into the UK on the back of TPN's service.

"We also have the ability to trace our consignments from the moment of despatch to the delivery point," says Storsack. "In addition, we receive all of our original paperwork back, signed by our customers, which makes it easy to answer customer queries. And, if there are any delays caused by bad weather or equipment failure, MCD has always done its utmost to resolve the situation and kept us informed throughout."

"Business has grown since we began using TPN. We now ship 20-30 pallets per week, in addition to full loads. We have come to trust MCD - and TPN - as part of our supply chain, knowing they will offer the security and confidence we demand in delivering our product to our customers."

www.tpn.ie

GOOD BRANDING BRINGS BUSINESS

TPN



THE PALLET NETWORK

www.tpn.ie

PALLET NETWORK'S
NEW LOGO

Any successful business has to have a good brand, an attractive logo and a name that is easy to say and easier to remember. To this end, The Pallet Network has officially become TPN, with a new logo to compliment the new name.

"Using just three letters makes it easier for people to remember us," points out our MD, Seamus McGowan. "TPN rolls off the tongue, in the same way that DHL, TNT and UPS do. The use of a short logo also opens up new advertising opportunities. We want to make 'TPN your pallet' as common a catchphrase as 'Google us on the web' or 'FedEx it today'."

The new logo still includes The Pallet Network, but as a strap line, not as our name. It also highlights TPN's website, so that potential customers can quickly look us up and see we move pallets, rather than make them.

Business gurus world-wide cannot emphasise the importance of good branding strongly enough. Strong brands increase business performance. They have the power to transform a company from one of the pack to the pack leader.

TPN will help change our image from one of just another quality distribution company to the best, most efficient and most cost-effective distribution company in Ireland.

But to get the message across, every single member depot must make sure it uses the new logo on its vehicles, its paperwork and its web site. If we don't all shout about the virtues of TPN with the same logo, we will not only fail to capitalise on the new branding, but we will confuse our existing and potential customer base and risk doing ourselves more harm than good.

So remember: from now on, TPN means pallets - delivered anywhere, any time and any place in Ireland or the UK.

Presented by your Local TPN member.

TPN



THE PALLET NETWORK
www.tpn.ie

North West Business Park
Blanchardstown
Dublin 15

tel 00 353 1 8219999
fax 00 353 1 8212433
email sales@tpn.ie

www.tpn.ie

