



TPN service goes *up* as volumes rise

MD Mark Duggan says TPN met record volumes with record on-time delivery performance, testament to its passion and investment

TPN – The Pallet Network – has bucked industry trends by continuing to improve its performance through the busiest weeks of the year. MD Mark Duggan says despite record-breaking volumes of 75,000 pallets a week, TPN not only held its KPIs steady but increased its on-time delivery performance by 0.2%.

“Many networks see customer service and performance suffer when volumes peak but we have continued to improve through our record-breaking volume weeks,” says Duggan. “This proves that our strategy to make our network service utterly resilient and stable, peak-proof if you like, has worked.”

The strategy has involved continual future-

proofing of the Minworth Hub and new product development, such as TPN XL, which allows better capacity management for freight. The network has a relentless approach to continual improvement, with the network audit team paying 447 visits to Member depots to support their TPN operations.

TPN is now accredited to the ISO:9001 quality standard for its Hub operations. This means Members’ audited TPN operations will also be accredited, in recognition of the rigour and high quality control involved in the TPN audit.

“Our focus is on high-quality, best-value pallet distribution,” says Duggan. “We will continue to invest and improve because you do not sustain excellence by standing still.”

WELCOME

TPN is currently *The Pallet Network*. We believe we lead the field in terms of performance, depot numbers and pallet volumes because we do not accept anything but fantastic service. We will not become complacent. Our strategy is about continual development of the operation, the facilities and the services we offer.

Our ISO:9001 accreditation is imminent and will include any Member’s TPN operation which passes our

extremely tough audit. And they have passed in their droves. Our audit team visits each depot on average every four months and talks to them continually to ensure that we all work to the same high standards.

Accept nothing less than excellence. We don’t.

Mark Duggan, MD



Customer view

Rotherham-based Mercers Furniture sells to home owners all across the UK, online and through its retail stores in Yorkshire. Its product is a mixture of flat-pack and fully assembled pieces. Much of this is delivered by local TPN Member Ken Mallinson Transport.

Mercers offers free next-day delivery in order to be competitive and so the cost of transport is important. However, says general manager Gary Rumney, “Mallinson’s offer a good price but we get a great service from them. We’ve used other transport and courier firms in the past and had no end of problems with damage and loss. We just can’t fault Mallinson’s.”

Mercer highlights Mallinson’s excellent communication with customers as the key reason why few deliveries fail. “We have been using them for at least three years now to send pallets to customers and to Amazon. Everything is very straightforward,” says Rumney. “They are great.”

Whether you are a TPN Member or a customer please share your views on the Network with us. If you have a story for TPN News contact Louise Cole at White Rose Media Ltd on 01609 771140 or email us at Louise@whiterosemedia.co.uk

TPN Member campaigns for M4 relief road

Caldicot-based Hicks Logistics gave an interview to BBC Wales recently, emphasising the importance to Welsh logistics of the new plans for an M4 relief road. Transport manager Simon Hicks says the company, like many others in the region, loses thousands of pounds a year in time and diesel because of the heavy congestion on the M4 between Cardiff and the Severn Bridge.

The M4 relief road was first proposed in 1991 but a variety of obstacles have prevented its construction. Now the Welsh government has again tabled a consultation on the project.

Hicks told BBC Wales: "I'll believe it when I see the diggers break ground. It would have huge value to the UK and



Hicks shows off the first Scania V8 in Wales

the people of Wales."

Hicks Logistics brought 40 years of haulage experience to TPN when it joined in 2016. The family firm which runs 85 vehicles and has a turnover of £12m says the network will improve its offering.

Hicks moved from another pallet network to join TPN to gain a smaller delivery area, which he says also improves costs and service times. "Having a more manageable delivery area means we can do a better job on those deliveries. Like everyone else, we are seeing an increase in home deliveries and these bring organisational challenges we need to meet."

Hicks also does general haulage, Hiab and Moffett deliveries and plant hire.

FS Distribution plans for growth with larger area in 2017

Thame-based FS Distribution has planned a new phase of growth in 2017, following its successful integration into the TPN network in August of last year. Part of this growth is an expansion of its delivery area to cover more of the HP (Hemel Hempstead) postcode.

"Joining TPN marks an important stage in the evolution of FS Distribution as a company," says MD David Vernau. "We had a substantial fleet and warehousing facilities, and a comprehensive range of logistics services. Partnering with TPN allowed us to complement and complete that range of services with pallet distribution. Expanding the postcode area we deliver to gives us much better drop density and it therefore makes the whole operation more sustainable."

FS Distribution will now service HP1-5 and HP23, as well as its original areas of HP6-9, HP14-22 and HP27. Vernau says the company carefully matches the type

of vehicle and delivery run to the type of customer and area. "We send smaller vehicles into Aylesbury, but we have many customers on specific industrial estates and so we can deliver to them all together from a single artic," he says.

Kevin Vaughan of TPN's network development team says: "FS Distribution passed its TPN audit first time with flying colours which is very impressive considering how difficult it is to pass."

The 35-year-old company, which originally manufactured and distributed horseshoes, has grown into a full-service logistics operation. FS Distribution also has expertise in event

stand and vehicle design, construction and operation. This speciality developed out of its one-time focus on the event and marketing industry, for which it transported a wide range of promotional materials.



JSE Transport adds new Durham warehouse to meet client needs

Durham-based JSE Transport has undertaken a major expansion of its warehousing space on its site at Meadowfield Industrial Estate in order to support a long-term customer's growth.

JSE owner John Edmunds says that the new warehouse has been commissioned to allow expansion for Chester-le-Street-based Tor Coatings which has used JSE and TPN for several years.

Tor will keep 800 pallets of raw materials for its protective building coatings, such as antimicrobial paints, liquid roofs and anti-graffiti systems, at the warehouse.

"We are always happy to invest in meeting customer's needs," says Edmunds.

"This is a large customer and it makes sense for us to facilitate their expansion by



providing more storage here so that we can respond quickly to orders and manage their stock levels," he says.

He notes that it isn't only major customers who receive great service however. "The reason we work with TPN is that every

customer, whether you send a single pallet or 200, is met with excellent service levels and a cost-effective offering."

TWE Haulage moves into new premises

Banbury-based TWE Haulage has moved into a new-build premises constructed on the site of its very first yard on the 1.2-acre Clearway House site.

Ross Edden, son of MD Trevor Edden, realised that the company needed more space to grow than its old site offered. Ross, who is only 23, then oversaw the purchase of the site and was project manager for the entire design and building of the new premises, liaising with planners, councils and architects.

Trevor Edden says that Ross' handling of the site was in keeping with their carefully laid succession plan. "Ross and his brother Tristan will become directors in April and

in a few years they will take over from me," he says. "This is their site to grow into and their vision for developing the business. Ross did a remarkable job in handling every aspect of the build."

The build was completed on time and on target in December 2016. "This is a purpose-built premises which is 33% bigger overall and will give us room to grow and develop both our volume capacity and our customer services for years to come," says Ross.

TWE's succession plan is an example of best practice in the UK logistics industry, which has a high proportion of regional family firms for whom succession is often a problem.



Jays Logistics South-West invested in three stunning additional double-deckers over the winter. The Don-bur (pictured) and Montracon trailers are aerodynamically shaped to make them 'greener'. The company, which specialises in general haulage, and ADR work as well as pallet distribution, has seen 21% organic growth over the past 12 months. "We are seeing a healthy influx of new clients and growth from existing customers," says operations director Paul Phillips.

Taylors encourages women and students into the logistics industry

Sutton-in-Ashfield based Taylors Transport recently hosted the BBC at its Nottinghamshire Training School to create a film encouraging young people into the logistics industry.

Colin Snape, deputy director of policy at trade organisation Road Haulage Association, gave a presentation to students from colleges in West and Central Nottingham. The BBC filmed at Taylors Training School for three days to create a film "A day in the life of a truck driver" which featured on BBC 1's Inside Out on 6 February.

The logistics industry is very short of youth entrants, despite offering a wide



range of careers from operational logistics to marketing and accountancy.

Taylors Transport says that it has also noticed a specific upturn in the numbers of women applying to train as HGV drivers. Only 1% of HGV drivers are female according to official statistics, and a recent Transport Select Committee identified the lack of women, people from ethnic minority backgrounds or young applicants in the UK driver pool.

In the past few months Taylors Transport Training School has helped several women gain their HGV licences, some of whom are now working for the company.

<http://bit.ly/bbctaylors>

GCN invests in all new forklifts

Lanarkshire-based GCN Scotland has enhanced its top-notch service with eight new tractor units, and eight brand new forklift trucks. The tractor units expand the fleet to 35 HGVs, plus several vans, and answer the strong growth within the business. Seven of the Toyota forklifts run on diesel and one gas model will be used for loading and unloading containers.

MD Nigel Kirkpatrick says: "This is the kind of routine investment we make to ensure that our customer service levels are always high. You need to have the right tools for the job and to ensure they are always in great working order."

GCN offers a complete suite of haulage, distribution, warehousing and freight forwarding activities as well as being a Member of TPN.



Roy Fox floors the competition with Dural matting

West Yorkshire-based Dural manufactures and supplies underfloor matting for a range of heavy-duty flooring, such as public spaces, hospitals and shopping centres. The product is unusually bulky and so not many transport suppliers are willing to handle it. However

local TPN Member Roy Fox Transport has worked with Dural for two years now, ensuring that all its deliveries are handled with expertise and enthusiasm.

"Our products go to distributors and sites around the UK," says sales administrator Joanne O'Brien. "It's very

important that the product turns up on time because otherwise jobs are delayed. Roy Fox Transport is very good, they respect our clients' urgency and they are very responsive to whatever we need."

Roy Fox networks manager Tom Latham says: "Roy Fox Transport and TPN share the

same philosophy in that we meet customers' needs. If products don't have standard needs we find ways to accommodate that, both as a company and, formally, as a network."

Roy Fox Transport is part of Kenneth Howley Transport in Castleford. It offers general haulage and Hazchem services.