

Allens of Bolton

Haulage Exchange Case Study

Allens of Bolton, participants in the haulage industry for nearly ninety years, is looking to the future and using the latest online technology to keep their fleet of 12 artics and rigids fully loaded every day. The well-established haulage company was developed on the back of a successful coal merchants business in Astley Bridge Bolton and then developed into general haulage centred on the cotton, engineering and industrial base of the North West.



After their premises in Astley Bridge were compulsorily purchased, the family decided to move slightly out of Bolton to nearby Westhoughton to a purpose built site with 30,000 sq ft of warehousing, hard standing for the commercial vehicle fleet and opportunities to let off parts of the sites to customers. Current owners, Peter Allen and his father, Richard Allen, do not aspire to grow the haulage business to be too big. "We like to be in control and give excellent customer service," says Peter "with ever changing legislation the bigger the fleet the more problems, more costs and potentially worse service.

Out of this philosophy, the haulage company has developed a niche market within the transport industry carrying 'outsize freight' that needs careful handling. This has avoided them going head to head with the pallet network members on palletised freight which Allen's say is pretty low margin business. The key to optimising our revenues from the haulage business is finding courier backloads mainly from the Midlands and the South East. We can usually fill between six to eight vehicles with our own work and customers. So we have been looking at developing partnerships and using freight exchanges to help us achieve our aim.

Peter Allen is delighted with the improvement to his haulage business provided by the Haulage Exchange & Courier Exchange sites. "Haulage Exchange is an excellent business support. It is the first thing I switch on in the office every

morning, and I look for specific loads available every half an hour," he enthuses. "It is a flexible package that you can adapt to how you want to use it. "A very active user of both freight exchange sites, Allen's also puts its small traffic, which the company cannot handle in time, on Courier Exchange usually with immediate response.

Use of these freight exchange sites has also led to new haulage business opportunities with Allens partnering with a large courier company in Lancashire, and developing all their non-compatible van traffic in their 7.5-18 tonne secondary distribution delivery fleet. Allens is also able to support local pallet network members for palletised courier deliveries in the North West. This approach to keeping its commercial vehicle fleet as fully utilised as possible has helped Peter and his father look to the future with confidence.

"And if to prove that the Haulage Exchange site does give 'instant access to work' Peter Allen was able to pick up the last hotshot load he needed 'in front of our very eyes' to be fully utilised next day," says Haulage Exchange loads manager, Luke Davies from Allens on a flying visit to the North West.

Not only did this mean that Peter Allen was able to go home and have a peaceful evening. His day actually ended at 3.30pm!

Haulage Exchange is a trading division of Transport Exchange Group Ltd, which specialises in the development & operation of real time collaborative trading platforms & associated services for the European transport industry. Transport Exchange Group delivers fully supported and managed online services for the transport sector, which enable businesses to realise the synergies that exist when organisations work together. Transport Exchange Group provides the framework & venues for successful online marketplaces, as well as the mechanisms for ensuring that inter-company transactions are conducted seamlessly.

Haulage Exchange (<http://www.haulageexchange.co.uk>)

Real time online trading platform for the haulage industry.

Courier Exchange (<http://www.courierexchange.co.uk>)

Real time trading platform for the same day and express freight industry.

CX Mobile (<http://www.cxmobile.co.uk>)

A sophisticated, yet affordable & easy to use mobile data service for courier & transport companies.

Transport Exchange Group (<http://www.transportexchange.co.uk>)

Europe's largest network of professional freight exchanges and a member of the Fret Alliance.

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