

Case Study

Haulage Exchange supports Browns Distribution's next day delivery ambitions

Browns Distribution is a well-established family-owned distribution and warehousing business run for over 50 years from Stoke on Trent, ideally situated on a 6 acre site off the A500 between junctions 15-16 of the M6 with warehousing to store over 4000 pallets.



Browns Distribution specialise in the movement of palletised goods throughout the UK and Ireland and now worldwide. Browns are an award winning member of the Palletline network which enables them to offer customers unrivalled Next Day deliveries throughout the UK distributing over 1000 pallets per day.

This expertise has been further refined with their membership of Haulage Exchange which has enabled them to generate strategic partnerships with other hauliers.

With fuel costs being increasingly prohibitive for traditional long distance haulage work the company has invested heavily in its Palletline operation which continues to expand. The Palletline 'trunks' take several double-deck trailers every day to the Palletline hubs in Birmingham and Preston. Another double-deck trailer is already on order to meet increasing demand.

The ever increasing requirement for Next Day deliveries brings its own specific problems. A key issue is how to efficiently manage customer consignments that are greater than 5 pallet deliveries but less than full loads to outlying areas away from the Stoke-on-Trent base. This is where Haulage Exchange comes into its own.

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Browns Distribution has been using Haulage Exchange for nearly 3 years. "In the early days we tested the Haulage Exchange service via its website for a whole month. The effects were dramatic - low margin work became profitable by using Haulage Exchange. We were quickly convinced of its value to the business." stated Mick Stirzaker, Operations Director.

"Haulage Exchange is now a key partner along with our Palletline operations and General Haulage fleet in delivering a quality service to our customers" added John Brookes, Business Development Manager.

Having developed a network of high quality partners through Haulage Exchange, John says Browns Distribution does not now have the need to post so many jobs on the system. We have now also joined the sister site, Courier Exchange. This gives our customers a high quality same-day delivery capability. Courier Exchange also supports the Palletline operation by solving any delivery issue we might have for one pallet consignments. "Using Courier Exchange has been a major benefit to Browns Distribution, comments John. "The vetting of members of both Haulage and Courier Exchange members means that we are confident they will deliver for us." This is important as Browns Distribution is an ISO accredited company and does not want to jeopardise its quality reputation. "We know from the forums on the site that if there are problems with an operator we are first to hear of it" concludes John.

John Brooks is also impressed by the management of the site and is currently working with loads manager Luke Davies to develop backload opportunities. By using Luke's knowledge of how Haulage Exchange works and linked into the type of traffic Browns Distribution is looking for John is able to identify specific opportunities that compliment existing traffic routes. "This is particularly important at the moment with fuel representing up to 40% of costs. Any opportunity to improve profitability has to be seriously looked into" says John"

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The transition at Browns Distribution from a traditional general haulier to a specialist next day operator has been hard but rewarding.

Having taken the decision to reduce the fleet to a core 40 vehicles, Browns

Distribution has never looked back. Looking to the future John sees similar trends with the business increasingly concentrating on next day traffic.

Browns Distribution enjoys a close working relationship with its customers and has invested heavily in its I.T. systems to ensure this is continually improved. Over 90% of all customer orders are now received through the internet based job portal system which supplied by Haultech.



With the key partnerships of the Palletline network and Haulage Exchange to compliment their general haulage operation Browns Distribution are confident that they will continue to develop the business whilst maintaining a quality service for its customers.

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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