

# nightstar express



Night Star Express

Customer magazin  
4/2018



**WANTED:**

CAPTAINS OF THE ROAD



2019 IS NEARLY HERE!  
OUR ANNIVERSARY YEAR COMES TO A CLOSE

Twelve months ago, I wrote a piece in this very magazine providing an outlook on the big Night Star Express anniversary year. But now our milestone birthday is over. The 25th anniversary of the company was defined by activities relating to the big event. The highlights included our big anniversary event on 5 May 2018 in Frankfurt and our “first-class” street food festival on 15 September 2018 at our hub in Hünfeld, see page 10. But we weren’t just motivated by our birthday celebrations – there was also plenty to do. In the first half of the year, we focussed on our new IT system, which connects us up with our

system partners’ in-house systems, and are now more than a little proud of how well this feat was handled. Right on time, on 31 July 2018, all Night Star Express operations in Germany started working with the new IT system in day-to-day business. I would like to warmly thank everyone involved in the successful partnership, including 1st Log, our system partners’ and the central coordination office’s IT departments, our staff and the drivers and administrative employees at the various companies. This kind of project can only be managed by pooling our efforts and working together. The growth that our

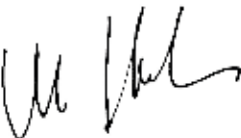
new “all-in-one” solution has shown since then is something we will be discussing in the first issue of express next year.

In addition, we will also be taking a closer look at the topic of the driver shortage in this issue. Due to its pressing nature, we have made it our cover story. And, last, but not least, we are also examining our brand image. We’ve already given this much away: Next year, we’ll be flying the flag in our new corporate design.

Before the Christmas celebrations commence in a few days’ time, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you most sincerely for your loyal partnership and interest in our customer magazine. Lasting customer relationships are the key to our success and we want to build on them in the future.

We are able to see out 2018 with optimism and are looking forward to working together with you in an eventful and exciting 2019! The whole team at Night Star Express wishes you a very merry Christmas, a restful and revitalising break and a great start to the new year.

Best wishes,



Matthias Hohmann



STAR OF THE NIGHT  
SHINING EVEN MORE  
BRIGHTLY

RELAUNCH OF THE CORPORATE DESIGN

In order to give the star in our logo even more of a shine, the Night Star Express look has undergone an overhaul in the last few weeks. As Matthias Hohmann says: “It’s our aim to drive forward with the long-term development of the brand and to communicate our quality standards via a modern, elegant ‘first-

class’ brand image to our target groups, including clients, potential employees, drivers and interested parties, across all relevant channels of communication. We are delighted to be presenting our new look in the new year.” In order to support our new corporate design, a corporate photo shoot was also

organised. In the next few months, we will be presenting the company via fresh, new photos, some of which are truly spectacular. Look forward to seeing the new Night Star Express branding! The new corporate design will, of course, be presented in detail in the next issue.

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Byline articles do not necessarily reflect the editorial  
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# CONSTRUCTION MACHINERY FOR THE BROADBAND ROLL-OUT

TRAMANN+SOHN GMBH & CO. KG

Germany is about to become a gigabit society, with the German government pumping billions of euros into expanding the country’s digital architecture. The aim is to roll out a nationwide, high-speed fibreglass Internet network. To do this, cables are required – and they need to be laid. Tramann+Sohn in Oldenburg provides the construction machinery required. Business in horizontal drilling technology and compact excavators is flourishing, as is the after-sales business, which has relied on Night Star Express since 2017.

It’s a special history that links Tramann+Sohn and Night Star Express Bremen. It took more than four years until external sales advisor Andrea Hoge was able to welcome the machinery specialist on board as a client. Previously, she “warmly but firmly” – as she puts it herself – courted the Tramann+Sohn Director of Replacement Parts Supply, Volker

Widzowski, and got Hellmann in the door for a meeting. When the company then decided to switch logistics partner, Night Star Express was ready and waiting. They have been working together now since February 2017 – to the fullest satisfaction of all involved: “We’re very happy to have made this step, the error rate has been reduced to al-

most zero – and the service is streets ahead. The NSE staff in Mahndorf in particular do a fantastic job – always proactive and solution-oriented,” Volker Widzowski confirms.

The origins of the family-run company go back to 1926, when Fritz Tramann founded a company that sold construction materials. Because the company founder was only 17 years old at the time and therefore still a minor, his father August had to be unceremoniously put down in the commercial register as founder. That’s the story of how the company was founded – and it is now run by the fourth generation of the same family. Today, Tramann+Sohn employs more than 90 people at six sites. In addition to Oldenburg, it has branch offices in Domshül (Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania), Norderstedt (Schleswig-Holstein), Spreeenhagen (Brandenburg), Schönebeck (Saxony-Anhalt) and Hanover.

## SALE OF “DITCH WITCHES”

The growth of Tramann+Sohn is closely linked to the names “Ditch Witch” and “Kubota”. For over 40 years now, people have been working with the US machine manufacturers Ditch Witch, which focusses on the sale of horizontal drilling systems, trench-cutting machines and cable ploughs – high-tech machinery costing between € 15,000 and € 550,000. Other products such as SUBSITE location technology and moles for laying underground cables and pipes have expanded the product range over the years. Tramann+Sohn represents the US company throughout the whole of Germany as general importer. The second pillar is

based on north German sales of compact excavators, earthmovers and crawler dumpers made by Kubota. Every year, the Oldenburg company sells nearly 1,000 of the construction machines in the characteristic orange of the Japanese manufacturer.

One major area of focus for Tramann+Sohn is on replacement parts and repairs. “The first machine is sold by the external sales team, the second is sold by after sales,” quips Volker Widzowski. As the company’s own service promise says: “No machine is at a standstill for more than 24 hours.” In order to make good on this promise, the company employs 35 of its own fitters and service vehicles, which are on the road throughout the entire sales region. However, 99% of the time, deliveries are made to the client’s own fitters and technicians. To do this, the Oldenburg-based company operates a replacement parts warehouse with a continual stock of 9,500 different items worth several million euros: “A bit old-fashioned, perhaps,” as Volker Widzowski says, “but absolutely essential to keeping our service promise.”

## HEAVY PARTS REQUIRE PRE-CARRIAGE WITH 12-TONNE TRUCKS

Every month, Night Star Express makes an average of 500 urgent deliveries all around Germany for Tramann+Sohn. Most deliveries are to fitters from the pipeline construction industry, usually directly to the hotels or bed-and-breakfasts where the workers are staying for the duration of the pipeline construction. “For us, that’s nothing too out of the ordinary – we know how to deal with the constant changes of address,” says Andrea

Hoge. Deliveries are also occasionally made to the European neighbouring states of Denmark, Austria and the Benelux states whenever the relevant replacement parts are not available in those places. As a result of the variations in weight of the heavy construction machine parts, day-to-day pre-carriage in Oldenburg is done with a 12-tonne truck.

The outlook for Tramann+Sohn is rosy. “We’re currently snowed under with orders. The public construction projects to expand the broadband network are only really just getting off the ground. For one thing, we are expecting massive investments in the power grid in the next few years in order to be able to provide a nationwide network of charging stations for e-mobility. For another thing, there’s the upcoming north-south green energy lines,” Volker Widzowski explains. As a result, the team in Oldenburg is feverishly working on concepts for the future in order to ensure the best strategic position for the company: “First of all, we have to watch how the situation develops because we are currently right at our limits in terms of staffing and space. But we are absolutely sure that we have the right partner at our side in Night Star Express,” Widzowski concludes. The best possible conditions, therefore, for a lasting, successful partnership.

*Frequent discussions about the dispatch of replacement parts during the night: Andrea Hoge and Volker Widzowski*





# WE'RE FEELING THE PINCH, SO WAHT CAN WE DO?

DRIVER SHORTAGE AND  
A LACK OF NEW TRAINEES

**"Thank you for your time. I'll be in touch." You often hear this at the end of an interview. But if it's not the employer saying it but the applicant, one thing quickly becomes clear: We are currently experiencing – not just in the logistics industry but across all sectors – a significant shift towards a labour market that favours the employee.**

The logistics business is worth billions – but it still has an image problem. Well-educated, expert and motivated drivers are the calling card of a logistics company. According to estimates by the German Association of Freight Forwarders and Logistics Companies (DSLW), there is currently a shortage of 45,000 professional drivers in Germany alone – with this figure on the increase. This is making the existing competition for qualified drivers even tougher.

One in four professional drivers in Germany is already aged 55 or over – with the obvious result that 40% of the 529,000 or so drivers currently in the industry will be retiring

in the next ten to 15 years. It's a deficit that can hardly be remedied – particularly when you consider that road transport in Germany is showing steady, single-figure growth.

The problem is now affecting all logistics service providers. According to a comprehensive survey by the German Logistics Association (BVL), 82% of companies expect that the shortage of qualified staff will have a negative or highly negative impact in the next ten years, not only on the success of the company but also on the supply security of the value chain for industry and commerce.

"At the moment, we are simply poaching the drivers off one another. Money alone



won't help to solve the problem," Matthias Hohmann emphasises. "What's much more important is that we manage to work on our image and make ourselves particularly attractive to young talent. Those in the industry know what logistics achieves. We find the industry exciting – we see how unbelievably complex and demanding it is. And we discuss it at a very high level with like-minded people in logistics circles. But people who aren't in the know aren't aware of all that. They see negative aspects, such as lorries causing traffic jams, or they watch a thriller showing drug smuggling at a container terminal and make judgements about the whole industry. According to a whole range of studies, our industry is seen as 'unsexy' by school-leavers. We logistics specialists therefore need to make the business feel so

real to future candidates that it really appeals to them. We need to change our communication so that we use great images and stories that bring emotion and verve to the world of logistics. Only by doing so can we really appeal to people. But this can't be done by one company alone. That's why I think that the 'Logistikhelden' [Heroes of Logistics] initiative presented by the Wirtschaftsmacher business decision-makers in Berlin at this year's logistics congress is a great measure that will only achieve the necessary clout to reach our mutual aims if it has the full involvement of everyone involved in logistics. Night Star Express will make its contribution to this and get involved. For more information, visit [www.die-wirtschaftsmacher.de](http://www.die-wirtschaftsmacher.de). As we said, Night Star Express cannot solve the image problem of the logistics industry alone, or

make up for the deficit in drivers and specialists. But a few of our system partners have been applying pressure for some time now to areas where their businesses have influence. This includes promoting a positive work environment, giving the position of professional driver a boost with fair pay and better working conditions, with the truck no longer being unloaded on the ramp by the drivers themselves but by colleagues from the handling centre. Furthermore, the ongoing training of our own staff across all areas of specialism is also being promoted. Facilitating a positive work/life balance and a modern working environment are also key factors in others' perception of us as an attractive employer."

**NIGHT STAR EXPRESS FOUNDS PROJECT GROUP TO "RECRUIT DRIVERS AND LOGISTICS ENTREPRENEURS"**

In order to discuss existing options with regard to the recruitment of drivers and logistics entrepreneurs specifically for the overnight express business, an independent project group made up of representatives from all our companies was recently set up by the Night Star Express central coordination office, headed by Project Manager Joachim Zeuch. Positive experiences with regard to the measures that have already led to local success in finding or maintaining the loyalty of drivers were discussed in detail during the first meeting, along with completely new approaches to recruiting. "We've already made an urgently needed step in the right direction," Joachim Zeuch emphasises. "Delivering a package of measures that applies to everyone, however, is going to be very tough in this complex area. This is something upon which all project group participants agree. Over the long term, however, the group is pursuing the aim of positioning Night Star Express as an attractive employer over the medium term – one that offers a diverse range of trainee positions and interesting opportunities for logistics entrepreneurs and drivers. This ad is just one such example, directed at the young generation target group. What other examples are there? Well, we'll keep you up to date."



**Never hit the hay before 8 a.m.?**  
Cool, neither do we!

Because we make our deliveries overnight to our customers **by 8 a.m.** – making Night Star Express one of the fastest logistics service providers in Europe. **But don't worry!** Of course working in the logistics industry will mean you can get plenty of sleep. And, not only that, but a decent salary, good opportunities for promotion and a varied and interesting job. **Be curious about us!**

[www.night-star-express.de](http://www.night-star-express.de)



# „GOODBYE, CHRISTINE KUHLMANN“

## A PERSONAL DECISION: **A MOVE** IN A NEW DIRECTION

After more than two decades, our editor-in-chief and valued colleague, Christine Kuhlmann, will be leaving Night Star Express in order to seek out new professional challenges. The editorial team would like to express their thanks for the wonderful time together:

*We at Hellmann Worldwide Logistics would like to express our gratitude to Christine Kuhlmann for the exceptional partnership over the past 20 years or so. It was a joy to work with her and the discussions within the editorial team in particular were always very pleasant thanks to her friendly and professional attitude. We would like to wish her the very best of luck and much success in her new endeavours.*

**Kirsten Willenborg,  
Hellmann Worldwide Logistics**

*Thank you, Ms Kuhlmann, for the friendly, reliable and appreciative partnership. I would like to wish you the best of luck, great success and happiness in everything you choose to do – both professionally and privately.*

**Caroline Hofmann,  
ZUFALL**

*Dear Christine,  
It was with great regret that I heard that you would be leaving the Night Star Express central coordination office. Your absence will be a great loss to everyone. I wish you all the very best for the future – for the challenges and new experiences. It's always best to just get on and do it rather than just talking about it or wishing you had had the courage later on – so I truly admire you!*

**Warmest wishes from Austria,  
Josef Schöllhuber**

*Dear Christine,  
Although long journeys eventually come to an end, your travelling companions are still there – and that's the main thing. Thank you for everything – it was an honour for me and for us. May the future bring you fulfilment.*

**Marcel Tüscher,  
Night Star Express Schweiz AG**

*Dear Christine,  
You are someone who was always ready to listen when it was needed. I could always depend on your advice. And that's something I would like to thank you for. I wish you all the very best, both professionally and privately, and will keep all my fingers crossed for the next step in your career. Thank you for everything and best wishes from Berlin,*

**Benjamin Maße**

*A big thank-you to Christine Kuhlmann for the great partnership over the years! On behalf of the Night Star Express Hellmann staff, we would like to wish Christine the greatest success in her new endeavours!*

**Robert Overgoor and Daniel Siemens,  
Night Star Express Hellmann B.V., NL**







# GREAT BURGERS, GREAT US-BEEF AND GREAT MUSIC = GREAT ATMOSPHERE

## NIGHT STAR EXPRESS-„FIRST CLASS“-STREET FOOD FESTIVAL

To mark the 25th anniversary of the company, over 140 nightstars got together at the hub in Hünfeld on 15 September 2018 for this year's staff weekend, which was entitled the "first-class" street food festival.

In the pleasant warmth of late summer, the participants from Germany and neighbouring countries were able to fully enjoy the culinary and musical spectacle. Delicious treats such as burgers, served from the food truck, were

available, along with premium US beef from the barbecue, along with numerous side dishes.

"I hope you all have a great day and a brilliant time chatting to your colleagues, both from your area and further afield," said Managing Director Matthias Hohmann in his opening speech. "Before I wish you all a great meal, I would like to thank you for the 25 years of Night Star Express and to con-

gratulate one person in particular who has been with us, right from the start: Thomas Drüschler!" (Photo below.)

"Now, let the music play! Enjoy the food and have fun at our festival!"

Afterwards, the happy and well-fed nightstars were asked: So, was the food good? The unanimous opinion was that the meat was absolutely incredible. "First-class" quality and pure enjoyment!



# WORKING WITH OUR DEAR FRIENDS AT CUSTOMS!

## THE DIGITISATION OF CUSTOMS CLEARANCES

Batch customs clearances, individual clearances, tax representatives, TARIC numbers and Swiss import tariffs (Tares), certificates of origin, EUR.1 movement certificates are all terms that seem daunting at first and may result in negative emotions – and quite rightly. One little example: Imagine you have before you an unmanageable stack of invoices, lists and customs documents for consignments that you need to send to Switzerland. The invoices are littered with hundreds of different items and products that are associated with just as many different customs tariff codes. To make things even more difficult, they have different countries of origin, VOC content, weights, etc. And to crown this off, these items need to be dispatched from two different warehouses with different invoice addresses. On top of this, we're also working with six Swiss importers.

The challenge in all this is definitely time management, combined with exactly the right declaration for such a diverse consignment. We have accepted the challenge of this customs chaos and put together a team of experts comprising representatives from Sales, Customs and our IT department. The solutions developed based on their expertise

will then be able to meet all requirements and challenges. Our Head of Sales for Switzerland worked with the local Night Star Express partner and the client in Germany to develop a solution that – although fairly technical at the first glance – stands the test of time and is fully digitised:

- Customs data processing is done on the basis of the existing invoicing data file held by the client.
- This invoicing file is automatically supplemented with other data by our system, summarised by importer and the relevant customs file generated for the customs officials.
- At the same time, our software creates another file for the relevant dispatch notes, including the master reference numbers, which are then entered into the German customs system.
- The next step is a fictitious customs invoice per importer, summarised and simplified by the system.
- The data generated automatically in this way is subjected to a plausibility test and, if it passes the test, is submitted to the Swiss customs system, which returns either its approval or requests an audit.

• If Swiss customs requires an audit, they come to the hub in Wolfwil (Solothurn) during the defined route arrival time between 5 a.m. and 10 p.m. and the relevant checks are made. Clearances at the border, with all the delays that can entail, are then no longer necessary.

Thanks to these simultaneously dovetailing automated processes, Night Star Express Schweiz AG is able to conduct the entire customs clearance process paperlessly, with the exception of the documents required as originals. Another major advantage, in addition to using less paper, is the data-related automation of the customs clearance processes with the subsequent high-quality results for issuing the correct tariffs. This leads to lower customs duties and, as a result of the accuracy, to fewer customs checks. In addition, we save time because only a fraction of the time previously required for customs clearance is now necessary. The customer wins across the board – less complexity, lower costs, fewer checks, more precise data, longer pick-up times, higher satisfaction with delivery personnel – this is how customs clearance is done, and that's how it also works with our Swiss neighbours.





# A FIRST-CLASS PARTNERSHIP

TIP TRAILER SERVICES  
AND NIGHT STAR EXPRESS HELLMANN

**TIP Trailer Services and Night Star Express Hellmann have been working together for several years now for the overnight “first-class” supply of TIP sites and end customers with replacement parts. Overnight express is a major component of the company’s service portfolio because it ensures that clients in the transport and logistics business receive replacement parts for their trucks and trailers in good time, keeping vehicle downtime to a minimum.**

For 50 years now, TIP Trailer Services, headquartered in Amsterdam, has been offering trailer hire, maintenance and repairs, as well as other services for transport and logistics customers throughout Europe. TIP is now a reliable advisor and service provider in 17

countries. With around 80 workshops and a fleet of more than 160 mobile service units all around Europe, TIP offers its customers a comprehensive range of services for maintenance repair for entire fleets. TIP also has an extensive warehouse for replacement

parts: FTTP Truck and Trailer Parts. Thanks to the wide range, which represents replacement parts for all major brands of semitrailers and trailers, the workshop and/or customer’s requirements can be met quickly. The nightstar express editorial team spoke to Marco Jacobs (right), Benelux Parts/Logistics Manager, TIP Trailer Services, and Robert Overgoor (left), Commercial Manager, Night Star Express Hellmann, about their partnership.

**Editorial team:** *Mr Jacobs, why did you choose Night Star Express Hellmann four years ago?*

**Marco Jacobs:** At that time, our overnight logistics service provider could not offer the quality that we urgently required within our organisation. Night Star Express Hellmann was already known to us – which meant we were able to make the switch very quickly in order to achieve the level of quality we needed for our overnight business. A flexible and reliable partner offering efficient communication was of major importance for us, which is why the decision was easy to make.

**Editorial team:** *How would you describe the partnership with Night Star Express Hellmann?*

**Marco Jacobs:** Our partnership works extremely well. As we all know, time pressure plays a huge role in the logistics industry. We can’t afford to wait during the day for con-



signments. From our main warehouse in Wijchen (NL), we are not only able to serve our own 16 sites to our satisfaction but also our end customers in the Benelux states, thanks to the guaranteed deliveries by 8 a.m. Overnight express has therefore become a key factor for us. We don’t have any more downtimes and can keep our customers completely happy.

**Editorial team:** *How are things going from your point of view, Mr Overgoor?*

**Robert Overgoor:** Very well indeed. The efficient communication in both organisations makes it possible for us to react quickly. This

is associated with significant added value in the logistics industry. We also talk to one another regularly in person to stay in touch. I am also happy that I can invite Marco Jacobs to the football games by De Graafschap on behalf of our company. The relaxed, fun atmosphere in this setting perfectly reflects the chemistry that defines the relationship between our companies.

## SITE EXPANSION IN 'S-HEERENBERG

Night Star Express Hellmann B.V. is expanding its logistics site at 's-Heerenberg. With the expansion of the existing site, the company is responding to increased demand and the resulting increase in overnight deliveries. The site will see the addition of a modern office building with 312 m² floor space, as well as a new handling warehouse covering 1,884 m². The investment volume is € 2.8 million. The groundbreaking celebrations for the new-build took place on 5 September 2018.

From its 's-Heerenberg site, Night Star Express Hellmann serves the entire Dutch and Belgian delivery area. The services are primarily aimed at customers in the after-sales business in the automotive, agricultural and construction machinery sectors. “The expansion of the site at 's-Heerenberg is the logical

consequence of the strong growth that Night Star Express has enjoyed in international transport over the past few years,” says Night Star Express Managing Director Mat-

thias Hohmann, delighted. “With the necessary investments in our infrastructure, we are able to secure our ‘first-class’ quality for our customers.”





# BUILDING SUCCESS

PARTNER G. ENGMAYER  
IS BUILDING IN HUNGARY

As of 1994, Austrian-based G. Englmayer's largest foreign site with central hub has been in Biatorbágy on the outskirts of Budapest. It also has four other depots in Hungary, with a fifth planned for 2019.

While the early years there were characterised by customs clearance processes, much has changed in the meantime – not only politically, but also for Night Star Express partner G. Englmayer in Hungary. Today, it is express deliveries and parcelled goods that make up the main business. A broad mix of different industries, such as textiles and tools, mean that services are in consistently high demand. Another major area of focus is also parts delivery and procurement logistics for the automotive industry. For example, G. Englmayer organises overnight express deliveries to Austria and around Europe for a high-profile truck manufacturer from the manufacturer's site in Hungary to its authorised dealers.

## DEVELOPMENT OF THE G. ENGMAYER SITES IN HUNGARY

The G. Englmayer site in Veszprém was founded in 1994 solely as a customs agency. This was followed in 1999 by the opening of a logistics office in Vecsés. In 2003, the first new-build project was initiated at the Biatorbágy site. By 2008, it had to be expanded to 3,650 m². Nine years on, the Englmayer Group was in the planning phase for another, much larger site, with the groundbreaking ceremony held in mid-2018.

Right in time for the 25th anniversary of its activities in Hungary, the new site in Biatorbágy will go into operation in July 2019. The new-build, which is directly opposite the old site, will triple the capacity in one fell swoop to nearly 10,000 m² of space for handling



and logistics. This will open up completely new opportunities on the market. "Over the past few years, the economy has really boomed in Hungary and we are delighted to be able to benefit from this as a high-quality service provider," explains Robert Breitwieser, Managing Director of Englmayer Hungary. "However, there are many challenges to be faced. The unemployment rate is very low in Hungary, so it's hard to find sufficiently qualified staff and to maintain their loyalty."

In terms of fine distribution, nearly 350,000 consignments are dispatched by the company's five current sites on 85 delivery tours within Hungary every year. In the Night Star Express network, consignments are dispatched from Germany to the greater Budapest area on day B by the early afternoon, with the rest of the regions dispatched on day C – also with set arrival times. Going the other way, deliveries from Hungary can be dispatched via the overnight express service

from day B to day C in Germany. Biatorbágy is thus the biggest hub for eastern Europe for the Englmayer Group. From there, drivers can reach:

- Overnight express, days B and C:  
Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Slovenia
- Day express, days B and C:  
Croatia, Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia
- Day express, days C and D:  
Bosnia, Macedonia, Montenegro

The continued expansion into eastern Europe is already enshrined in the G. Englmayer corporate strategy. The logistics company will further expand its sites and partnerships in eastern Europe and improve its network quality in order to join the top ranks in eastern Europe in terms of processing times and quality.

