



MERRY CHRISTMAS

NIGHT STAR EXPRESS WISHES YOU
HAPPY HOLIDAYS AND A WONDER-
FUL START TO THE NEW YEAR

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NEW CHALLENGES, SOLID RESULTS AN EVENTFUL YEAR



Dear readers,

Do you sometimes get that feeling that you start the new year, enter the first appointments in your diary and suddenly, before you know it, the months are passing by at record speed? For me, 2023 was not only an eventful year, but also a very special one. On 1 April 2023, I took over the management of Night Star Express - a challenge that I was excited about right from the start and that has not lost any of its appeal after around nine months. I haven't got the space to go into this in detail here. So I invite you to take a look at my past and future activities in this issue. You can read an interview about this on pages 4 to 5.

The world around us is in the midst of all kinds of turbulence. The economy is also feeling the consequences. At Night Star Express, we are in the extremely favourable position of being able to draw an extremely positive balance for this year - and as far as we can see so far, this continuous upward trend will continue in the

future. The First Class overnight express is and will remain our unique selling point, because our services and products offer more than just fulfilment or a half-hearted customer promise. It is both important and necessary for us to meet regularly and exchange ideas as a team so that we can tackle and successfully realise our demanding tasks, challenges and projects together. One special highlight was our anniversary celebration to mark the 30th anniversary of Night Star Express in Frankfurt/Main. It was an unforgettable event for all of us and this is one of the main topics in the current issue of "express".

I wish you and your families a peaceful Christmas and a successful start to the New Year.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue. Yours,

Nikolaus Frantz
Managing Director Night Star Express

ALSO OFFERED AT NIGHT STAR EXPRESS

THREE QUARTERS IN FAVOUR OF MOBILE WORKING

Working from home has become very popular in recent years due to the pandemic and it is hard to imagine the current and future world of work without it. The relocation of a company-bound activity to another location, working flexibly in terms of time and place, is referred to as mobile working, teleworking, home office or working from home.

According to surveys, three quarters of employees who started working from home during the coronavirus pandemic want to continue working from home at least part of the time in 2023. Only 15 per cent of respondents said that attendance was very important to their superiors, compared to 60 per cent before the pandemic. The percentage of

employees who state that the separation between work and private life and co-operation with colleagues is important to them has also fallen considerably.

DESK WORK IN FRONT

Home office use varies even more significantly by profession. Not all activities are suitable for being carried out within your own four

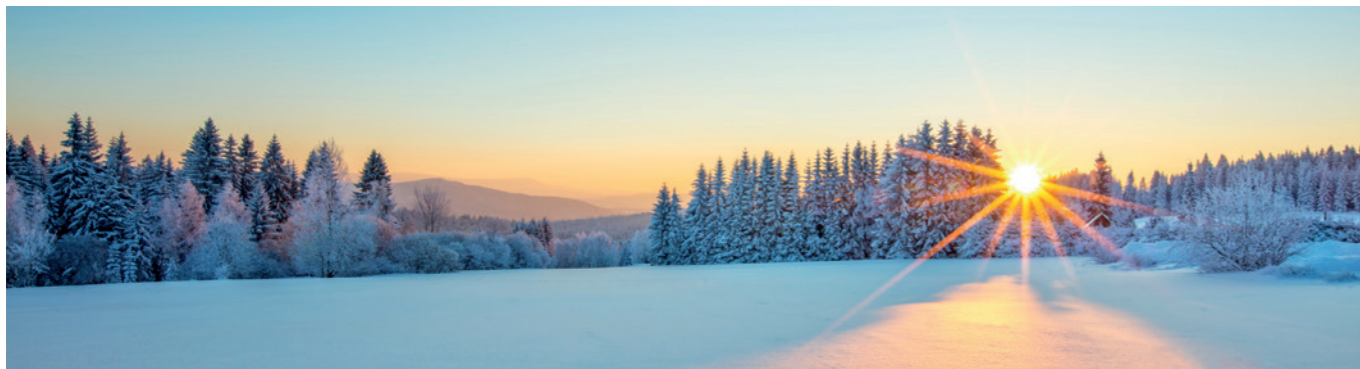
walls. The proportion of employees who can work from home is highest in professions where the majority of work is done at a desk: 50.6 per cent of academics and 42.2 per cent of managers work from home. Office workers and commercial employees (27.2 per cent) and technicians (27.2 per cent) are also slightly more likely to work from home.

TRUSTING COOPERATION

And what about Night Star Express? "Mobile, flexible working has become an integral part of the modern working world. We started with a three-month trial phase at the system centre and decided to continue offering the service after receiving positive feedback from colleagues. For us, mobile working is also a matter of trust and expresses an appreciation for an equal working relationship," emphasises Nikolaus Frantz, Managing Director of Night Star Express.

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Nikolaus Frantz on new tasks and projects

"Things go better with a strong tailwind"

Nikolaus Frantz has been managing Night Star Express GmbH Logistik in Unna for over nine months. In this interview, he recaps his time in office so far and talks about the most important tasks and upcoming projects.



Editorial Team: Mr Frantz, you joined Night Star Express on 1 April 2023, have more than 35 years of experience in the logistics business and know it from the ground up. Was there anything about Night Star Express that was completely new to you?

Nikolaus Frantz: I had known about the Night Express product for some time. That is the result of being in the industry for many years and meeting regularly. Of course, as Managing Director of Night Star Express, this adds a completely different dimension. Anyone who knows me knows that I'm not exactly prone to exaggeration, but I can't and don't want to put it any other way: I think our product is great, I think Night Star Express is great, and the colleagues around me do a great job. This is a unique combination and a real asset.

Editorial Team: How did you anchor yourself? What did you focus on?

Nikolaus Frantz: In order to familiarise myself with a company and its structure, it made sense for me to take a closer look at the processes first. I don't like to just work from my desk, weigh things up and form an opinion, so I travelled a lot right from the start. I visited sites, handling halls and offices, had process-

I don't like to work only from my desk. I travelled around a lot right from the start.

es explained to me directly on site and shared ideas with employees. I was also supported by our shareholders and advisory boards, with whom I am also in close and personal contact. Their opinions are still very helpful to me and have given me valuable guidance right from the start.

Editorial Team: What topics is the company currently most focused on?

Nikolaus Frantz: We are currently analysing

our process and quality management and are thinking hard about how we can optimise it at certain points and intersections and introduce new impetus. Both of these areas are not only intrinsically driven: if framework conditions,

Another focus is a consistent and stringent corporate strategy. It creates added value for the entire network.

market conditions or customer needs change, this has a domino effect throughout the entire system. We also have other topics on the agenda: we want to further develop our IT infrastructure and automation, leverage synergies and harmonise processes in the long term. Another focus is a consistent and stringent corporate strategy. It helps us to further capitalise on our strengths, consistently increase our economic success and create added value for the entire network. As we can only realise this wealth of exciting projects and measures with competent and committed employees, we are currently in the process of gradually expanding our workforce.

Editorial Team: You mentioned the issue of halls. They certainly don't just grow out of the ground either.

Nikolaus Frantz: That's right. But our business depends on the number, size and features of the halls. If our properties are too small or our capacities too low, we will not be able to fully utilise our potential and meet the growing number of customer enquiries. Finding a suitable property is not easy in logistics anyway. Our overnight business and our very specific requirements profile make finding suitable locations even more difficult. But we are very confident that our joint efforts will bear fruit

and that investments made in this area will pay off later.

Editorial Team: You often emphasise the aspect of quality. What do you associate with it

and what are your expectations?

Nikolaus Frantz: Quality is extremely important to me. The only way we can be first choice and credible as a service provider is if we fulfil our customer promise 100 percent and work on it every day. Of course, sometimes things don't run smoothly for various reasons. Especially in logistics, where the unforeseen can happen on a daily basis. But getting to the bottom of the matter also opens up opportunities to approach things better or perhaps even completely differently. This requires constructive criticism and open dialogue. And this needs a clear set of rules that everyone adheres to.

Editorial Team: What did you think of our 30th anniversary celebration?

Nikolaus Frantz: I thought it was great. It was some time before everyone was able to meet up again, partly due to the pandemic. I felt a very positive and motivating community spirit. I had the impression that the guests had a lot of fun, were in a good mood and had stimulating conversations. There were also some new colleagues who were warmly welcomed. And I also sensed something else very important: a strong tailwind and a driving enthusiasm for our common cause. From experience, this dynamic mix always works better – and takes you as directly as possible to your next destination.

Night Star Express Hellmann is building a sustainable future

New warehouse put into operation

Night Star Express Hellmann has recorded significant growth in the Benelux countries in recent years. In July 2023, a new warehouse with a total area of 1,800 square metres was put into operation. It is the base for Urgent and Direct Load, also known as Hellmann Express Services BV, or HExS for short, which was founded in 2019.



Our current customer base has been making various requests for some time to have a single point of contact for urgent solutions, same-day deliveries and groupage shipments. With the expansion of the service package, Night Star Express Hellmann now offers a "one-stop shop" service. "We want to drive as few empty kilometres as possible. This means that our drivers drive their routes as efficiently as possible and deliver and collect consignments during the same journey. We use automated and interactive travel optimisation software for this," explains Robert Overgoor, Commercial & HR Manager at Night Star Express Hellmann.

As sustainability and corporate social responsibility are in the DNA of the Hellmann organisation, the new building is equipped with solar panels so it's prepared for further sustainable developments in the future. "We have an internal policy that commits us to reducing the annual CO₂ emis-

sions of the Night Star Express network. These are measured several times a year for all our transports. This enables us to take appropriate measures to further limit CO₂ emissions," says Robert Overgoor.

INTERNAL PROJECT TEAM

"Route optimisation tools and the use of vehicles that run on environmentally friendly fuels (electric, biodiesel and natural gas) are two examples of how we combine sustainability and environmental protection. We also have a project team that closely monitors developments in environmentally friendly driving," adds Daniël Siemes, Business Development at Night Star Express Hellmann. Drivers and employees in overnight transport often consciously choose this branch of logistics. "The journey at night is much quieter and less stressful, as there are far fewer traffic jams," says Overgoor. "The evening shift arrives here around 6 pm. Around

9 pm, it's busy. Then the sorting and loading of the vehicles begins, which takes until around 1 am. Then everyone starts their route. The aim is to deliver the consignments to our customers before 8 am."

STAFF WANTED

In addition to 's-Heerenberg, there are now also branches in Meppel, Vijfhuizen, Roosendaal and Maasmechelen (B). "We are constantly on the lookout for further employees. We co-operate with subcontractors who are responsible for a number of routes. This allows us to always offer the service that we stand for and are valued for, even as we continue to grow," emphasises Daniël Siemes.

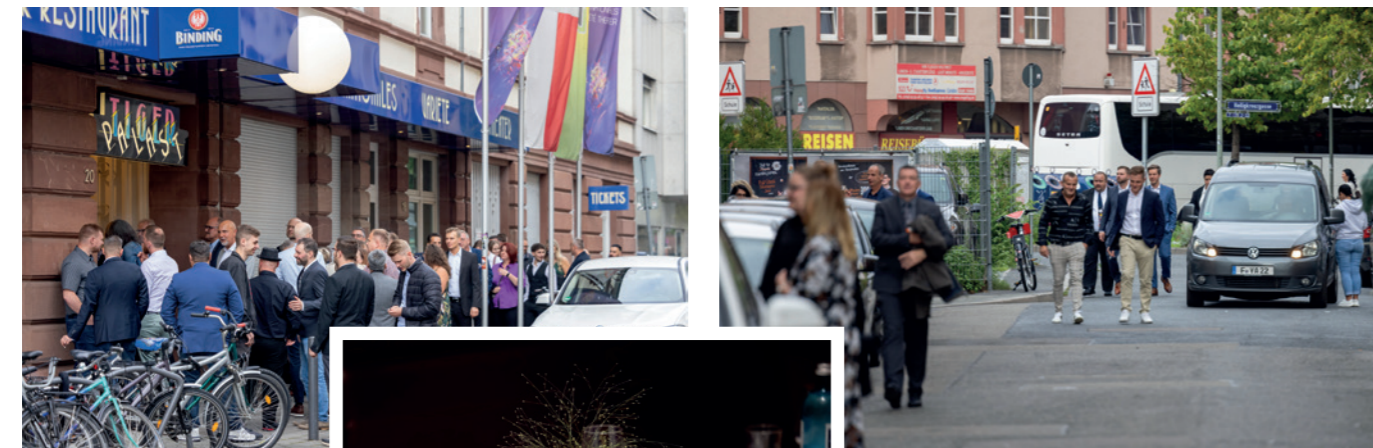
How we celebrated 30 years of Night Star Express

Dear colleagues,

It was a great party with an upbeat, cheerful atmosphere. Almost 200 employees from all regions – including beyond Germany – travelled to Frankfurt/Main on Saturday 23 September to celebrate our company's 30th anniversary in style. With a get-together, a 4-course meal, an impressive variety show at Frankfurt's Tigerpalast and a finale at the hotel (booked entirely for us), there was plenty of opportunity to share ideas and get to know each other. Especially as there were also some new colleagues among us. The official part of

the event was certainly a highlight, with speeches from shareholders of the Advisory Board and from management, as well as honours for long-standing employees. Everyone agreed that we are confident about the future, because Night Star Express still has plenty of potential for further development. The successes we have already achieved and a strong, united team that understands what is at stake and is highly committed to its work every day will provide a strong foundation for this. And the stimulating conversations continued the next morning over breakfast. One hotel employ-

ee said on departure, "They're a cool bunch. We have never experienced such a good mood among so many people and among a workforce here. It was great fun for us too. We look forward to coming back!" Here you can look back on the anniversary event in a photo slideshow. There are no words, because the pictures speak for themselves. Have fun!



(photo left) Advisory Board member Dr Christian Jacobi (right) on his way to the event. Left margin: Chairman of the Advisory Board Arnold Schroven



20 years and more of service for Night Star Express GmbH Logistik: long-serving employees were presented with certificates, plenty of applause and a heartfelt official thank you



(photo above) right: Heiner-Matthias Honold, Managing Partner of Honold Logistik Gruppe GmbH & Co.KG, engrossed in a conversation



Songs and snapshots of the speeches (from top to bottom): Wilfried Hesselmann (Head of CEP Europe Hellmann and Managing Director Night Star Express Hellmann & Honold), Chairman of the Advisory Board Arnold Schroven and Nikolaus Frantz, Managing Director of Night Star Express



There was an exuberant and cheerful atmosphere among the guests. After all, it has been a long time since the last staff party due to the pandemic.

Small picture top right: a selfie with Thomas Bauer (left/ Managing Director Honold International GmbH & Co. KG and Managing Director Night Star Express Hellmann & Honold) and Kay A. Espey (Managing Director of L.W. Cretschmar GmbH & Co. KG).



**CONGRATULATIONS
NIGHT STAR EXPRESS**
05.10.2023



To mark the 30th anniversary of Night Star Express, a wonderful anniversary celebration was held in Frankfurt/Main. Colleagues from the entire Night Star organisation and, of course, from the Night Star Honold universe were invited to the event. In the 1990s, Honold was the initiator and founding partner of the overnight express service provider Night Star Express. This anniversary is therefore a very special reason for us to celebrate.

Thank you very much for the invitation and the great organisation.



HEAD OF OPERATIONS: INTERVIEW WITH SVEN HOOPS

WORK MANUAL, KEY FIGURES AND TEAMWORK



Sven Hoops has been at Night Star Express since the beginning of August 2023. As Head of Operations, he and his team plan, control, monitor and optimise the consolidation of quality and process management into a powerful central unit across all systems.

He is also responsible for network control (line-haul) and operations at the main handling centre (HUB) in Hünfeld. He is also responsible for personnel planning and employee development in these areas. How does the graduate in business administration and seasoned logistics expert, who has also gained experience in international business, summarise his initial findings?

Editorial Team: Mr Hoops, if you could imagine a shelving system, how many drawers would it have? What would it look like now?

Sven Hoops: It would be a shelf with lots of drawers. Some are still closed, others are already open or half-open. Taking that from a picture to reality: I am currently working on some important topics. Each of them is very

complex in itself and, on closer inspection, raises new complexities and, consequently, new issues. In the medium term, everything should come together to form a sustainable overall structure. This requires a lot of work, commitment, transparency and presence. As Head of Operational Processes, I am responsible for this area, but I also see myself as part of a large team. We can only develop solutions that are highly effective, sustainable and accepted if we work together. Measures that raise more questions than answers will get us nowhere.

Editorial Team: Given the diversity of topics: how do you approach the work?

Sven Hoops: One of the main focuses is our work manual, which is in urgent need of revision,

not only in terms of content, but also in terms of handling. Stakeholders from various regions, organisations and teams are currently involved in this process, and their experience reports and assessments are extremely helpful. The aim is to create an updated set of rules that are binding for everyone and enable decisions to be made as quickly and autonomously as possible. This means that the rules must be self-explanatory and not generate additional discussion. That would be counterproductive and more of a hindrance than a facilitator in day-to-day work. I see another significant advantage in a transparent set of rules: when I receive information quickly and easily and can make independent decisions based on it, I work much more efficiently and with more focus. Coupled with the new commitment of our colleagues in the system centre, we are creating good conditions for successful, constructive cooperation.

Editorial Team: Key figures provide precise and summarised information about the development of a company. How far have we got with this?

Sven Hoops: The effort involved in measuring, collecting and calculating key figures is only worthwhile if the company actually uses key figures. Any deviations of the actual values from the target values should be used to initiate the right actions, projects and measures. We all agree that collecting key figures is an extremely important tool for systematically developing Night Star Express based on a solid foundation. To achieve this, however, key figures must be transparent for everyone and accessible at the click of a mouse, for example via a customised dashboard. And they must be discussed regularly and readjusted if necessary. Key figures also have a decisive impact on the strategic planning of a company. Everything we do and achieve is therefore part of an exciting overall context.

FLEXIBLE IN TERMS OF TIME AND SPACE

ADVANTAGE OF VIDEO CONFERENCING



Video conferences can be scheduled at short notice or even ad-hoc. Users also benefit from flexibility in terms of time and space: anyone can take part in a meeting from anywhere,

whether they are in the office, at home or travelling. Video conferencing continues to be a frequently used medium for colleagues in Night Star Express sales, as shown by a new, current

and exemplary survey by Percy Szallnass from the Night Star Express system centre. Student trainee Percy Szallnass launched the first survey from the Night Star Express system centre a year ago. Now he wanted to check again and sent out a corresponding questionnaire. "Overall, video conferencing is being used more and more frequently in sales, as it certainly is in other areas, since the start of the pandemic. It is now a common format for contacting customers and colleagues both externally and internally." Compared to the previous year, around half of them are now more comfortable with the technology and the conditions. The advantages of the new system include the savings on travelling to and from work without traffic jams and roadworks, faster response times and increased acceptance among business contacts. A poor internet connection and the lack of personal communication were sometimes seen as disadvantages. As many employees within Night Star Express now also use mobile working, the increased familiarity with video formats is also a plus point.



Has your satisfaction with video conferencing changed since the last survey?
 ■ Satisfaction has decreased
 ■ Unchanged
 ■ Satisfaction has increased



Do you use video conferencing less now than you did a year ago?
 ■ No
 ■ Unchanged
 ■ Yes



Are you finding your way around the programmes better now than a year ago?
 ■ No
 ■ Unchanged
 ■ Yes

EXPERIENCED NETWORK MANAGER DANIEL HECKEL

Daniel Heckel has been with Night Star Express since September 2023. As a manager and specialist in logistics and operations, he has extensive strategic and operational experience in the areas of supply chain, transport and logistics in logistics services as well as in the warehouse environment of industry and trade. As a network manager in our company, he is responsible for network planning (route and locations). "I have settled in very well here and am delighted with the varied and exciting tasks and the great teamwork. Night Star Express has been a company with an extraordinarily interesting development for 30 years now. I am pleased that I can contribute to the company's further development with my work and expertise."



