



Adding Turkish logic to logistics

With an impressive 16% savings in logistics cost AND an improved carbon footprint over the past year, no wonder Öner Tank, (checkered shirt, middle) Supply Chain Director at Alimex, is proud of his team.

Öners team manages logistics, production planning, purchasing and stock at Alimex and their work is critical to ensuring operational excellence across the entire supply chain. “Our products are 100% custom-made and made-to-order. And most of our products travel more than 2500 kilometers before they reach the end customer. The race starts two weeks before delivery date to be delivered just-in-time. That puts a lot of pressure on a robust, fast and effective supply chain” says Öner.

The improvements started by taking a different view. Rather than starting in the factory, Öner and his team started from a customer perspective. What were the needs of the customer? It turned out that cost and delivery accuracy was important, but that reliable information of the order status and delivery was even more important for the customer.

Another critical factor for the customers was quality. “We already knew that we had a lot of homework to do on the quality front, but looking closer at the root cause of some quality issues, we discovered a lot of damage, up to 15% of all claims, occurred in transit.

As a result of the customer needs analysis, Öner and his team reviewed the contracts (or as it turned out in many cases, lack of contracts) with the different logistics suppliers. They decided to consolidate the business with fewer and bigger suppliers who were able to provide a reliable tracking system. One of the companies that now handle all Alimex shipping to the Nordics and to the UK was Ekol, a Turkish logistics company. Alimex is using Ekol’s Intermodal system which means Ekol ship trailers by sea and train and only uses trucks when absolutely necessary.

It means that the environmental impact is minimised, and, perhaps more surprising, that costs are kept down. “Although Ekol is our preferred supplier, we have contracts with other suppliers as well, to ensure we get a competitive price from all our supplier” says Öner with a wry smile.

Alimex also reviewed how they packed the goods. They developed a new returnable steel crate for Sunparadise-products, to better protect the goods in transit. The steel crate did not just protect the product better, but made it possible to load and unload the goods much quicker, reducing loading and unloading time by up to 80%.

All in all, delivery accuracy is now reaching 96%, costs are down by 16%, express costs reduced 95% and in transit damages down from 15% to virtually nil. And as an added bonus, the changes have reduced Alimex environmental impact. Comparing Ekols intermodal shipping (boat/train/truck) with the traditional trucking model, Alimex have reduced CO₂ emissions by 38% and diesel consumption by 70%, counting February to July this year alone.

But Öner and his team do not rest. They are testing the new steel crates also for Windoor re-sellers, where volumes tend to be smaller, and the ambition is to be able to use the steel crates for all shipments. “And our own internal processes need to improve, to ensure we have control across our entire supply chain. Step by step we are getting there”, concludes Öner before he takes off for another meeting. No doubt to convince another supplier to do it the Alimex way.