

NI-NL BIZ provides readers with an update on Northern Ireland – Netherlands trade relations over the last twelve months.

In this 12th edition of NI-NL BIZ Steve Murnaghan, Founder of NI-NL...

- updates readers on how NI manufacturing exports to Europe are growing
- looks back at key NI-NL events in 2014
- studies the successes of Invest NI's Going Dutch programme
- reports on Lisburn City Council's Trade Development programme
- covers many trade successes achieved over the last months
- shows how exhibitions in the Netherlands pay dividends for NI exporters
- focuses on Dutch horticultural and agricultural technology linkages
- welcomes KLM's decision to reinstate the Amsterdam - Belfast route



Northern Ireland SME manufacturers drive export growth

Manufacturing firms in Northern Ireland had an estimated 3.2% annual increase in sales in 2013/2014 according to recently published figures from the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency.

Sales to Great Britain reached their highest ever level, up by 2.2% and to the Republic of Ireland up almost 10%.

Exports to the rest of the European Union also saw a big rise last year, up 16%. Germany, France and The Netherlands are the main destinations for manufacturing exports accounting for 63% of EU sales figures. The Netherlands alone represents 15% of export sales from Northern Ireland to mainland Europe.

Sales to other world markets rose by 4.8%, with North America representing over 30% of sales outside of the EU.

The shape of manufacturing in NI has changed and is changing again, from the big structures of the past – ships,

cars, planes – to finer, more advanced engineering-based processes. Exports of food and drink remain strong, but NI also has strengths in aerospace, heavy machinery, materials handling and pharmaceuticals.

Processing, manufacturing and engineering is the bedrock of the economy responsible for employing over 80,000 people – 10% of the local labour force – and represents nearly 15% of local GDP.

Northern Ireland manufacturers benefit from an appropriately skilled workforce, competitive wage rates, and offer high quality products within short lead times in comparison to many 'offshore' markets.

Small and medium businesses (up to 250 employees) accounted for nearly 35% of exports, clearly demonstrating that the flexible, 'can do' mentality of SME's is an important factor for customers abroad, as well as an after-service that generates repeat business.



Courtesy of Harland and Wolff

Recent NI-NL Events and Activities



Networking Reception

The Northern Ireland - Netherlands Trade and Export Society's 8th New Year's Trade Dinner was held at Parliament Buildings, Stormont, in February.

Hosted by Minister Arlene Foster and HE Ambassador Laetitia van den Assum of the Royal Netherlands Embassy, the event was attended by 100 Northern Ireland businesses and their Dutch business partners who flew into the province for meetings and the annual dinner.

A networking reception was held in the Great Hall to welcome over 40 Dutch companies prior to dinner. The strong turnout of company executives who have already developed partnerships served to strengthen the linkages between the two countries and the Trade dinner was an ideal platform for New Year's discussions.



NI companies and guests are received at Parliament Buildings by Invest NI European Trade Team colleagues Claire Gadd, Sandra Kelly and Geoff Spence.



Martin McAuley, Managing Director, United Wine Merchants, Conr  Ostrom CEO of Toorank Distilleries and Michael O'Brien Business Manager at Lanchester Wine Cellars arrive at Parliament Buildings for the Networking Reception.



Pat Close (2nd from left) of Lough Neagh Fishermen's Co-op with Dutch guests Koen Dil, Jan Schilder and Andre Sterk



Sebastien Gallois, Commercial Manager of Moypark, welcomes his Dutch poultry partners to the Northern Ireland Parliament.

New Year's Trade Dinner

February 2014



Pieter Klimp, Managing Director of The Wind Factory International, a regular visitor to the province, meets up with Arthur Davidson of Wind Partners at the NI-NL New Year's Dinner.



Garth Young, Managing Director of Powerhouse Sport (l), business partner Hylco Muda of Powerhouse Sport Netherlands (r) and Ambassador Laetitia van den Assum - all attending their first NI-NL Trade Dinner.



Jacqui Walsh of Kitchenmaster and longterm Dutch business partner Frans Marcus of Cleancare, regular attendees at the New Year's Trade Dinner.



Minister Foster welcomes Hans van der Last and Frank de Roon of Aenova back to Northern Ireland again, in the presence of Total Mobile CEO Colin Reid and Head of Alliances and Partnerships Neil Williams.



Frederik Olthof, Head of Economic Department at the Royal Netherlands Embassy in London exchanges business cards with Michael Gould, Assistant Director of the Northern Ireland Department for Education and Learning.



Elaine Curran of Invest NI catches up with hot drink specialists David Holscher, Managing Director of Mr. Jones, and Philip Mills, Group Sales Director of Johnson Brothers.



Conexpo brothers Stephen and Jonathan Mc Cluskey introduce Dutch partner Marco Krijgsmann of BKV Nederland to The Right Worshipful the Mayor of Lisburn Councillor Margaret Tolerton.



Councillors and dignitaries from Lisburn City Council, Founding Member of NI-NL, meet with Minister Arlene Foster, Ambassador to the Netherlands Laetitia van den Assum and Honorary Consul for the Netherlands Carson McMullan prior to the NI-NL Trade Dinner.

Recent NI-NL Events and Activities



In his annual address NI-NL Founder **Steve Murnaghan** looked back at 2013 and informed the audience that over 200 companies had participated in NI-NL events during the previous year and, as is tradition at the New Year's Dinner, toasted the continued success of trade links between Northern Ireland and the Netherlands.

A number of speakers from both private and public sector addressed guests.

Ambassador van den Assum, on her 2nd visit to Northern Ireland, was attending her 1st NI-NL New Year's Trade Dinner and addressed the audience regarding the importance of Dutch British Trade links and developments with the EU.

Cormac Diamond, Managing Director of Bloc Blinds - a young, ambitious and innovative window decor manufacturing company - spoke about how the company had adopted export with both hands; making the Netherlands and Europe their second home and a base from which to launch into Europe.



Frederik Olthof of the Royal Netherlands Embassy toasts Dutch - Northern Ireland Trade links.



Ambassador van den Assum



Cormac Diamond



Minister Foster - Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment welcomed the Dutch industrialists to Northern Ireland and to Parliament Buildings, the heart of the Northern Ireland Assembly and expressed her gratitude to Ambassador **van den Assum**, and the Dutch Embassy in London, for their enthusiastic support over so many years.

Northern Ireland Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, Arlene Foster addresses the 8th NI-NL New Year's Trade Dinner.

Minister Foster updated guests on a busy year for Northern Ireland internationally including the G8 summit, World Police and Fire Games, Londonderry UK City of Culture and the NI Investment Conference, attracting influential business delegations from Europe, the USA and Asia.

Trade figures with the Netherlands were as strong as ever and Minister Foster applauded 'Going Dutch', the Invest NI export programme, for assisting over 100 companies into the Netherlands. "The longstanding and very successful programme, pioneered by Invest Northern Ireland, has become a model for other international trade initiatives," she added.

The Minister also referred to the very important role Lisburn City Council is playing in fostering mutually beneficial relationships with the Netherlands and also NI-NL.

"The Northern Ireland - Netherlands annual trade dinner has become a key event in the local business calendar and makes an important contribution to business relationships between Northern Ireland and the Netherlands."

Minister Foster commented on the strategic approach taken towards the Netherlands by NI-NL stakeholders. "All of the international programmes and activity mentioned are in line with the Northern Ireland Executive's economic strategy to accelerate the growth in sales of manufactured goods and traded services. This strategy has set a target of a 20 per cent rise in manufacturing sales abroad by 2015. The objective is to help drive exports faster to support the creation of 25,000 jobs."

Northern Ireland's internationally focused companies were praised by Mrs. Foster. "Growth in exports is critical to the government's strategic focus on transforming Northern

Ireland into a vibrant private sector led economy and an outwards focus which companies, many of whom were represented at the New Year's Dinner, are helping us to achieve. Over the past year, for example, we've seen companies supplying filled mushrooms to a major Dutch food retailer, in baby products, Moses baskets to mother and baby retailers, confectionery, gourmet fudge also to confectionery specialists, performance sportswear to the Dutch national rowing team and Northern Ireland aggregates for Dutch highways."

Minister Foster expressed her thanks to Invest Northern Ireland, Lisburn City Council and Northern Ireland Trade Consultants for their sterling and successful work to develop business and other relationships with The Netherlands and finished by thanking 'our friends in the Embassy, the Dutch Government and the business community there for their interest in Northern Ireland'.

Recent NI-NL Events and Activities



The final speaker on the evening was **Jasper Spruit, Director of Aviation Marketing at Schiphol airport**, visiting Northern Ireland for the first time.

Jasper explained the role that Schiphol fulfils in terms of passenger numbers and the fact that it is a clear favourite hub for the business passenger from GB and Ireland, not to mention millions of tourists who pass through the award winning airport. The importance of Schiphol in terms of global connections, especially for internationally focused businesses, was second to none as well as short transfer times within the single terminal concept.

Jasper explained, that he was on a fact finding mission and was very keen to hear from NI and NL businesses how the air route between the capital cities of Belfast and Amsterdam could be developed. KLM's hub at Amsterdam Airport Schiphol is consistently voted one of Europe's best business airports and was voted Best Airport in Europe at the 2014 Business Traveller Awards for the 14th consecutive year. Connections to European cities can be made in as little as 40 minutes; to long haul destinations 50 minutes is enough to efficiently transfer at the airport.

Elsewhere in the BIZ magazine you will read that Jaspers reconnaissance has

already paid dividends and KLM has recently announced a new route from Belfast City to Amsterdam Schiphol !

NI-NL is indebted to both The Netherlands Embassy and the Department of Enterprise Trade and Investment for hosting the dinner, and to all companies and their guests for their attendance at the magnificent Parliament Buildings.

The cordial atmosphere throughout the event, and in the Long Gallery in particular, demonstrated that Northern Ireland and the Netherlands continue to engage and work together in economic harmony.



Representatives of SAM Mouldings, bloc Blonds and Keylite discuss the construction market with their Dutch partners.

8th NI-NL Trade Dinner



Chair of Economic Development Councillor at Lisburn City Council Allan Ewart with local companies Decora, Kitchenmaster, Powerhouse and Xpelgum.



Claire Gadd of Invest NI amongst fresh convenience, dessert and dairy specialists from Northern Ireland and The Netherlands.



NI-NL menus on the tables at the Northern Ireland Assembly



Agricultural and environmental technology experts from The Netherlands enjoy the company of their Northern Ireland counterparts in the Long Gallery.

Feedback from the NI-NL Trade Dinner

What the guests said:

“The New Year’s Dinner was well organised at a fantastic venue with interesting businesses in attendance.”

“Congratulations on an immensely successful event in Stormont - our Dutch guests enjoyed the event immensely.”

“The New Year’s dinner went very well – location, attendees, food, speeches all great and very positive feedback from NI companies doing business in Netherlands.”

“Thank you for a wonderful evening during which both I, and my Dutch

guest made some really good contacts.”

“Thanks again for the hospitality last night. I really enjoyed the event, as did my business partners. Please keep me in the loop re future events.”

“Thanks for the great organisation and the opportunity to be part of the evening.”

“Thanks so much for the invitation to Stormont and hospitality.”

“The high profile guest list and especially the speakers were a strong endorsement for Northern Ireland - Dutch relations.”

“A really great evening and the networking opportunities were terrific.”



Fresh Dutch tulips on the tables ensured that the Dutch guests felt very much at home at Stormont and in Northern Ireland.

NI-NL Golf and Summer Networking June 2014



Group photo golfers



The Best Scramblers on the Day



The Summer Networking event, held at Lisburn Golf Club at the end of June was well attended by NI-NL exporters and Founders.

The weather was marginally better than the 2013 event, but still not to the point of being exactly summery!

Following a light lunch the teams were announced for an 18 hole Texas Scramble which was a great way for exporters to get to know each others' strengths (and weaknesses) out on the course.

The winning team was a threeball from Hewitt Meats, Cottage Desserts and Kelly's Flowers, who have two things in common - actively in the Netherlands 52 weeks per year as well as being formidable golfers!

NI-NL would like to thank Invest NI for the branded golf articles as well as SAM Mouldings and NITC for providing for the prize table.

Congratulations to all golfers who participated and those who attended the networking and dinner.

During the dinner a number of speakers availed of the opportunity to talk about their export activities in, and business to, the Netherlands - including Lisburn City Council, Invest NI, PRM, Avondale Foods, SAM Mouldings, Around Noon, Cloughbane Farm Foods, Graham's Bakery, Kelly Flowers and Cottage Catering.

On behalf of NI-NL, thanks to all for the open advice and sharing of export experiences amongst peers, and to Lisburn Golf Club for their hospitality.



Geoff Spence and Vicky Kell of Invest NI's Trade Team with Tim Patton and Gerard Wilson of SAM Mouldings



Councillor Alderman Allan Ewart of Lisburn City Council with Cottage Desserts Founder Phyllis Arnold, Dr. Vicky Kell, Hertford Arnold and Linden Blakely.



Jim Hewitt, a long term exporter of beef to the Dutch provided an insight into the Dutch as loyal business partners.

Going Dutch Continues to Drive New Exports

Going Dutch is widely recognised in Northern Ireland's business community as a key export development programme. It is an excellent first step in improving a company's knowledge, confidence and overall capability to conduct business in overseas export markets.

Dr. Vicky Kell, Director of Trade at Invest NI, explains, "Going Dutch is a tried, tested and effective programme designed for aspiring exporters to increase awareness of the issues involved in exporting and to provide the required skills and competencies for export growth."

The initiative delivers a range of objectives including Skills Development and 'in market' support. All Going Dutch participants highly rate the support provided and view it as a premium program which delivers commercial results such as new sales channels and international partnerships as well as driving strategic export growth.



"From a company's perspective the 10 stage programme, running over three months, delivers on individual objectives tailored to their specific needs. Collectively for the Northern Ireland economy Going Dutch has prepared a new generation of over 70 'new to export' companies, for the European market environment."

"In short, Going Dutch shows our client companies how to prepare for, explore and win first time export business in one of

Europe's most easily accessible, welcoming but competitive markets and secures long term business for Northern Ireland."



Avondale Foods expand into the market garden of Europe

Avondale Foods in Lurgan has been assisted by Invest Northern Ireland to win its first European business with a deal to supply a leading retail chain in the Netherlands.

Early in 2014, the UK leader in packaged salads, soups, sauces and bread snacks, commenced supply of chilled garlic butter dough balls up to five times per week, following its participation in Going Dutch.

The success in the Netherlands was outlined by Philip Conway, Avondale Head of Sales, and welcomed by Dr Vicky Kell, Invest NI Trade Director. Dr Kell said: "Avondale has worked closely with us and taken the necessary actions required to develop a solid

base in the Netherlands, an international market that is becoming increasingly successful for our companies, both large and small, and in particular for those new to Europe."

"The importance of this market to Northern Ireland companies entering the European arena is demonstrated by the integrated provision of support through our Going Dutch initiative. As Avondale has discovered, our in-market advisors have the experience on the ground and a network of business contacts to assist companies win worthwhile contracts. They offer companies easy access to a broad portfolio of professional services including lead generation, logistics, linguistics and guidance on business procedures," added Dr Kell.

Mr Conway said: "We joined the Invest NI programme in the Netherlands last year as part of a strategic decision to explore business opportunities in Europe. What we aimed to do was to build on the success that we are enjoying in the UK and Ireland for our product range. For a company of Avondale's scale it is important to develop a strong base in Europe and the Netherlands is an ideal springboard to neighbouring regions such as Belgium, Germany and Denmark."

"We know that The Netherlands is a main market garden for fresh produce but also has a longstanding awareness of the quality and originality of UK food and drink. Out of the Avondale product range which encompasses 7 categories, our garlic dough balls, one of the most popular chilled bread products with a high-end retailer in Britain, attracted the retailer's interest and they placed a contract with us."

"Invest NI's very practical support in-market in the Netherlands has been invaluable there and has given us the knowledge, experience and confidence to focus resources on this market," Philip Conway adds.





Minister Foster, together with Management of DiskShred and De Graaf Security, on the steps of the Great Hall at Stormont

DiskShred enter Confidential Dutch Deal

Specialist media shredding company DiskShred, based in Mallusk, offers on-site media destruction services; predominantly hard drives and back-up tapes and other forms of media.

DiskShred offers companies whose data needs to be shredded down into fragments (such as banks, law firms, data centres etc) rigorous security and a complete Chain of Custody to ensure compliance with the most stringent global legislation. Their latest purpose built truck provides shredding throughputs three times faster than the industry average for on-site hard drive destruction.

DiskShred announced a partnership with De Graaf Security, Purmerend, in January 2014 and have since completed their first joint contracts in the Netherlands.

De Graaf are one of the leading companies in the Netherlands in file destruction, data destruction and document management services. As a member of the National Association for Information Destruction (NAID), an international association of companies offering confidential data destruction services, they are an ideal match for DiskShred's on site secure destruction services.

DiskShred's contract is the result of a business relationship that was assisted by Invest Northern Ireland through the 'Going Dutch' programme. The contract will provide an important platform for the company to grow export business in the Netherlands as well as other parts of Europe.

Minister Foster was present at the signing of the contract between Philip McMichael, DiskShred, and Frans van der Berge, De Graaf Security Commercial Director at Parliament Buildings Stormont and welcomed the new deal to jointly provide confidential digital data destruction at the NI-NL Trade Dinner.

Commenting on the contract, DiskShred's MD Philip McMichael: "Invest NI's 'Going Dutch' programme is a very practical and supportive initiative which gave us tremendous knowledge of this important European market. It helped us to access expert guidance from Northern Ireland Trade Consultants in Amsterdam and to pinpoint a suitable business partner there."



How to Develop Sales into a Dying market!

Through years of experience in the funeral profession and stainless steel manufacturing industry, William McGuckin set up CPL Funeral Supplies, based in Castlederg, to supply funeral directors, mortuaries and crematoria with a range of coffin handling and transport solutions.

Today, the company designs and produces a range of 30 products such as the patented coffin buggy, CE approved X-lifters as well as trolleys, racks, rests and platforms for customers throughout Ireland, GB and incidentally to Australia. However, Mr. McGuckin was interested in investigating whether high quality solutions were also required in Europe and applied to Invest NI for a place on the programme.



Through Going Dutch, CPL received detailed background information on the funeral trade in the Netherlands. In comparison to the domestic market it was established that there are over 70 crematoria in the Netherlands and literally thousands of funeral directors.

The research not only identified the main competitors for similar products, but also Dutch companies who distribute complementary products to the funeral profession.

Following meetings with around 6 interested parties, CPL appointed Zimex International, suppliers to the coffin industry, as their Dutch partner. Together they rapidly prepared for the



William McGuckin of CPL Funeral Supplies, flanked at the VTU trade show by father and son van Laar of Zimex International.

annual funeral director's trade show, VTU, in early October, where the product range was officially launched...and well received.

William McGuckin, Managing Director, looked back on the programme, "Going Dutch has changed our company's approach export and achieving export sales and shall assist us to diversify into new European markets. All in all it is a great programme, well presented and extremely worthwhile, and has provided CPL Funeral Supplies with an export model to grow the company steadily."



Meet the British Ambassador to the Netherlands

Sir Geoffrey Adams has been the British Ambassador to the Netherlands since September 2013.

Born in 1957, Geoffrey was educated at Eton College and Oxford University, where he studied Islamic History and the politics of the Middle East.

He joined the Diplomatic Service in 1979. His early career included spells in Saudi Arabia and in France (where he attended the Ecole Nationale d'Administration), as well as in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)

in London. He served in South Africa from 1991-4, and was an observer in the first truly democratic elections there.

He subsequently worked in the European Secretariat of the Cabinet Office, and was Deputy Head of Mission in Cairo, Egypt. Thereafter he had his first Head of Mission appointment as Consul-General in Jerusalem, responsible for Britain's relations with the Palestinians.

From 2003 to 2005 Geoffrey was Principal Private Secretary to then Foreign Secretary, the Rt Hon Jack Straw MP. He was then posted to Tehran as Ambassador to Iran. He returned to London in 2009 and served for three years as Political Director at the FCO, responsible for policy in a number of areas including the Middle East, Africa and the United Nations.

He received a knighthood from The Queen in 2008. On the occasion of his appointment when he presented his credentials to King Willem-Alexander, Sir Geoffrey said: "It is a huge honour to be here in The Hague to represent my country. The Netherlands and the United Kingdom are old friends. We have shared values, the product of our common history. We feel at home here. I look forward to injecting as much energy as I can into the modern relationship between our countries; and in particular to supporting the expansion of business, trade and investment between us."

Business Opportunities in the Netherlands

In terms of economic opportunities Sir Geoffrey views the Netherlands as a sophisticated and industrialised modern economy and a strategically positioned logistics gateway to the European market.

The UK and the Netherlands have long standing commercial relations; the Netherlands is the 4th largest trading partner, and Dutch companies are the 2nd largest investors to the UK.

According to the most recent figures, UK exports to the Netherlands in 2013 totalled over £24 billion whilst imports from the Netherlands in 2013 totalled over £34 billion.

The Netherlands is one of Europe's most dynamic centres of trade and industry and home to one of the most open and internationally oriented economies in the world. It is a highly competitive, growing market with opportunities for trade in all sectors, especially for small- and medium-sized businesses.

Barriers to market entry are low and the transparent legal framework and sophisticated financial services system, which combined, make the market an attractive place for UK companies. Geographically close to the UK with excellent transportation links to main and regional UK airports, make exploring the market cost effective.



Lisburn companies at The Island Civic Centre with Alderman Allan Ewart prior to departure to the Netherlands.

Lisburn City Council Supporting Local Companies to Win New Dutch Business

Lisburn City Council recently confirmed the latest phase of its Trade Development Programme to the Netherlands for companies based in the Lisburn City Council area. The Netherlands has proven to be a very lucrative market for Lisburn companies, with a proven track record of success for both first time and experienced exporters. To date the Council has assisted 65 businesses to access this key European marketplace, and has seen over £9 million of new trade develop as a result.

The programme will once again be managed by Northern Ireland Trade Consultants (NITC), based in Amsterdam, and has one key purpose which is to help local businesses to successfully identify and secure new business partnerships and new sales in the Netherlands.

The programme offers businesses a practical and tailored programme of assistance which helps make it as easy as possible for local companies to do business in the Netherlands.

Each participating company will be helped to identify potential new partners, customers or distributors for their business, with an itinerary of face to face meetings with these contacts set up to take place during a market visit to Amsterdam.

Chairman of the Council's Economic Development Committee, Alderman Allan Ewart states: 'The Dutch marketplace has realised many successes for Lisburn companies and the Council is confident that this programme will help to increase the number of local companies doing business in a dynamic, and pro-business international market'



Alderman Allan Ewart

He adds: 'I would strongly encourage any local business keen to develop new sales, develop new business networks which will last for many years to come, and who wants to experience first-hand a professional and

experienced delivery team who understand how to do business in the Netherlands, to contact NITC to find out what opportunities may exist in this market for their company.'

Hazel King the Council's Economic Development Manager adds: 'in this ever changing business environment, local companies can't afford to stand still, they need to be continually innovating and seeking out new market opportunities in order to survive. This programme also offers a perfect opportunity for companies to increase their knowledge of their own particular industry by exploring best practice and the latest products, services and technologies in one of the leading business focused countries in Europe.'

This initiative forms part of the Council's Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan 2012-2015 and forms part of the Council's International Competitiveness Programme. The project is part funded by Lisburn City Council, Invest Northern Ireland and the European Regional Development Fund under the Sustainable Competitiveness Programme for Northern Ireland.

Lisburn companies interested in finding out more or to register for the programme with the market visit to Amsterdam in early June 2015 should call or email NITC's Managing Consultant Steve Murnaghan for details. T + 31 20 4217400, murn@nitc.nl.

Trade Development visit to The Netherlands



LISBURN
CITY COUNCIL

Feedback from Lisburn companies on the 2014 programme



Companies on arrival at Schiphol for Trade Development visit

Andrew Ingredients

Lisburn City Council's Trade Development Programme to The Netherlands allowed us meet with a wide variety of potential trade partners within a short space of time and come away with some serious opportunities. To organise the same trip without the help of the trade development programme would have taken months and cost thousands of pounds.

The market knowledge and organisation provided by the trade programme allowed us



to focus on developing new business which helped achieved outcomes that would not have been possible otherwise. Thanks to Steve, Hazel and all the Lisburn Council team for their support with the programme.

John Graham,
Commercial Director,
Andrew Ingredients



Presto 247

Spending time in market in the hands of industry experts, viewing state of the art premises, getting in front of prospective business contacts and presenting to an audience in mainland Europe. For a small company it is impossible to

put a value on the knowledge gained through participating on Lisburn City Council's Trade Development Programme to The Netherlands. I could not have been more satisfied with the overall programme.

Des Storey,
Director, Presto 247



The Extra Foot

Like most Businesses travelling to a new market place there is a sense of uncertainty and naivety but after a short time you come to realise that most Businesses are very similar to your own.

The organisation of Lisburn City Council's Trade Development Programme to The Netherlands by NITC leaves no doubt in your mind that it is vital to be prepared when visiting new potential Business Partners and the support was second to none. We developed our first export sales to the Netherlands during the visit, all in all a brilliant experience.

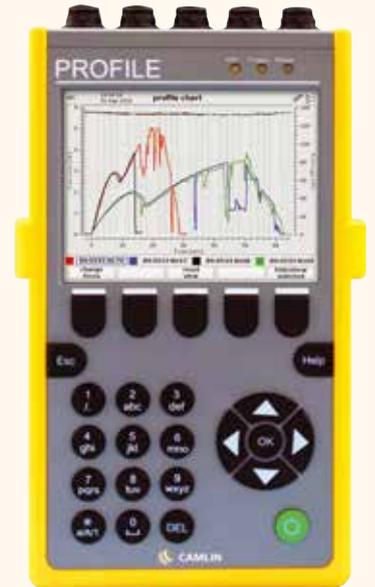
David Monroe,
Transport Supplies NI /
The Extra Foot



CoCo Mojo

Lisburn City Council's Trade Development Programme to The Netherlands offered value for money, market insight and connection with viable partners in a structured, informed and efficient way.

Ronnie Hill,
Director, CoCo Mojo



Dutch utilities receive product training at Camlin Power's Test Centre in Lisburn.

Energising the Dutch and European markets

Camlin Power, based in Lisburn, designs, manufactures and supplies a range of innovative products for the energy sector. They have a long established customer relationship with Dutch utilities in providing leading edge products for both low and medium voltage networks. This is providing a valuable springboard for expanding their business throughout Europe.

Electricity Utilities are increasingly being driven to improving customer service through better network performance. One of the main measures is reducing Customer Minutes Lost (CML) by minimising the impact of faults on the network. An example of how this can be achieved through the use of technology, is the Rezap. It is an auto-recloser that keeps customers on supply during intermittent faults while at the same time providing an online indication of where the fault is.

Alliander, which operates energy networks which distribute gas and electricity to large parts of the Netherlands, has had significant success using this product on their LV underground network. One of their technical experts Marco Zut said "Camlin Power's REZAP Low Voltage auto recloser has become a vital tool which Alliander use in delivering excellent customer service. By working closely with their technical staff, Alliander have fully utilised the REZAP in improving the quality of supply to our customers and reducing the number of repeat faults on our network."

Another major Dutch utility Enexis, responsible for the connection of approximately 2.6 million households, businesses and public sector organisations, have a long relationship with the company and have played a leading role in the development of combined protection relay and circuit breaker testing technology. They use the PROFILE P3 product to capture the critical first trip operation of the circuit breaker. This handheld device is easily connected to a circuit breaker using non-invasive probes and enables a quick test to be carried out which indicates if both the circuit breaker and associated protection relay have operated correctly.

Albert Pondes who was closely involved in introducing the PROFILE P3 to Enexis, said "our experience in working with Camlin Power's technical experts has resulted in a solution that not only meets our business needs but has also delivered a user friendly product for our field staff."





Dutch Pancake Day..... Every Day

It may be less known to Dutch readers of BIZ but Shrove Tuesday precedes Ash Wednesday - the first day of Lent, in the 6 week period leading to Easter.

Shrove Tuesday is the last opportunity to treat oneself with sweet and tasty products, prior to the traditional period of fasting and is widely known in many countries, including the UK and Ireland, as Pancake Day.

De Biederij, the leading Dutch Manufacturer of pancakes, and winner of Golden Bridge

Export Award for outstanding achievements in exporting between the Netherlands and the UK, is currently flat out producing pancakes for the UK and Ireland in the lead up to Pancake Tuesday on 17 February 2015.

Branded as Galberts, distributed across the island of Ireland by PRM of Lisburn, the pancake range is available in up to 4000 retail outlets. The products are delicious with some lemon juice and sugar as well as Nutella for those seeking absolute indulgence.

Ron Holland, Export Manager, gives an insight into the success of Pancake Day to BIZ readers. "It is an enormous challenge for our bakery to deliver 40% of our annual UK and Ireland turnover in a 2 week period. This in terms of production and logistics, but it is a challenge we gladly undertake each year. It is not every company who has their own sales day in the annual calendar."

"Together with our local partner for Ireland, PRM, De Biederij have successfully built the ready to use fresh pancake category over the last 15 years and within the last 5 years have introduced the traditional Dutch poffertjes (mini pancakes) in the Irish market. The products are supported by in store tastings and promotions."

"Most recently De Biederij have launched the Creapan brand of frozen crepes with Tesco meaning that every day can be pancake day!!"



Mr. Jones proudly presents his teas.... in Belfast

Amsterdam based company, Mr. Jones are rolling out their supply of boutique teas in Ireland through Johnson Brothers of Lisburn, offering customers an assortment of 12 packed teas in both bag and leaf.

Very fine teas with attention for the environment as well as respect for the individual form the basis of the company.

Mr. Jones predominantly sells single estate organic teas and, when possible, also purchased on the basis of fair trade principles. Mr. Jones teas contain, without exception, only natural ingredients - no artificial colouring, flavouring nor preservatives are added.



David Holscher of Mr. Jones and Philip Mills of Johnson Brothers raise the brand's profile at the award winning and stylish Apartment Bar and Restaurant.

Local Knowledge and Networks across Europe



NITC Trade Advisors from the Nordics and Central Eastern Europe present Exploring Europe together with Invest Trade Team.

Established in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, in 1993, Northern Ireland Trade Consultants is renowned for its business development consultancy work in the Netherlands.

However, today, NITC offers a pan European service covering 25 European countries through a team of locally engaged consultants in Western Europe, The Nordics and Central and Eastern Europe.

NITC specialises in researching markets, providing business intelligence, developing sales opportunities for clients leading to supply opportunities and longterm strategic

partnerships. NITC delivers distribution partner as well as end user matchmaking, working across a wide range of sectors and markets on both individual projects, trade missions and export development initiatives.

NITC is a proven delivery partner to individual businesses as well as a contracted partner to economic development agencies providing on the ground services in Europe.

2014 was another busy year for Northern Ireland exporters and development agencies.



February 2014 - Czech It Out!

Seven company representatives were assisted by NITC consultants based in Prague to assess and access business opportunities in the Czech market, during an intensive three day visit, as the 1st cohort from Invest NI to Czech It Out. NITC consultants provided the companies with market research, matchmaking services and their local knowledge in preparation for the Market Visit. A further six company representatives participated in the 2nd cohort in November.



May 2014 - Going the Extra 'Nordic' Mile

Northern Ireland companies travelled for (Nordic) miles across the markets of Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Norway as part of Invest NI's Trade Mission. In total 17 companies representing a wide range of industries including oil and energy software, window and interior decor, medical instruments, red meat, craft beer, consumer goods, agricultural equipment, building materials and recycling, participated. Collectively the companies covered more than 13,000 kms in 5 days whilst travelling to meet their business prospects across the prosperous Nordic markets with a population of 25 million consumers.



June 2014 - Well Polish-ed Mission

NITC's Consultants welcome a group of small businesses to Warsaw for a mission which saw many of the companies visiting both the Polish capital as well as other key business centres.



November 2014 - Trade Development Visit to Bratislava

A group of companies completed Lisburn City Council's third Trade Development Programme to Slovakia. NITC set up 32 appointments for 6 participants across a range of industrial sectors – engineering, interiors, ICT, recruitment and flooring.

Accountants Report on Annual Conference in Amsterdam



On the roof terrace of the Heineken Experience (from l to r) Kevin Kingston, Deputy CEO of Danske Bank, guest speaker Steve Murnaghan, Managing Consultant NITC, Ronan Nolan, Chartered Accountants Ireland President, Paul Henry, Director Osborne King and Patrick Gallen, Associate Partner PwC

The Ulster Society of Chartered Accountants held their Annual Conference in Amsterdam in October, with 85 delegates making the journey to the Dutch capital.

The Society brought together a strong programme of speakers to the Heineken Experience conference facility, on present on the theme of **Innovate, Collaborate, and Accelerate** which examined the potential of the Netherlands as a gateway to European export for Northern Ireland companies.

The Conference was opened by an introduction from Ulster Society Chairman Paul Henry, and a welcome from Danske Bank Deputy CEO and MD - Business Banking, Kevin Kingston.

Flemming Jegbjaerg Neilsen, Senior Analyst with Danske Markets used the first speaker slot to update members on global economic trends and outlined some of the key factors which have contributed to the Eurozone's more tentative recovery.

Flemming asked the question "Is the Euro recovery starting to derail?" saying that there seemed to be nervousness in the markets tied to geopolitical uncertainty, before predicting some tough times for European manufacturers, particularly those in Germany.

The biggest positive from Flemming's presentation was his assessment that fiscal winds seemed to be favourable, and he predicted fiscal easing to take place soon, tied to a modest recovery in Europe.

Following Flemming was Steve Murnaghan of Northern Ireland Trade Consultants B.V (NITC) who spoke about "Internationalising Northern Ireland". Steve gave an overview of the Dutch market for Northern Ireland companies and explained why the Netherlands had proved to be a great test, or first-time, export market for NI companies.

He explained the business culture of Holland and gave an insight into the success of Invest NI's 'Going Dutch' programme, with

£20million worth of exports currently delivered.

Steve presented some case studies of companies which have taken the step to export to the Netherlands, highlighting the manageable market size and access, showing why Holland has become, per capita, Northern Ireland's largest export market. Steve's presentation was very well received and provided several talking points through the coffee break and beyond.

Next up was Pablo Pomares, Finance Director with Heineken Ireland. He gave an interesting presentation on Heineken's financial transformation and the finance function. He explained the challenges in how the company successfully set up a new financial shared services centre in Poland.

Pablo was able to put some humour into a presentation which wrangled with some fairly big ethical, legal and logistical issues. The presentation highlighted the benefits of financial transformation and how the challenge of managing and restructuring staff roles can be achieved.

Following Pablo was crowd funding expert Korstiaan Zandvliet, founder and CEO of Symbid Corporation. Symbid enables anyone to become a shareholder in a small or medium enterprise for a minimum investment of €20.

Korstiaan made the case that crowd funding was great for both innovative companies and investors and that platforms such as Symbid were set to challenge traditional forms of funding in the modern, social networked world.

Korstiaan said that a European market leading crowd funding platform would emerge within the next three years, and his presentation certainly gave plenty of food for thought about the future of business funding.

Chartered Accountants Ireland President Ronan Nolan closed the business session with an update for members on the Institute's Strategic Plan and an overview of some of

the key issues facing the Institute and the profession in the months ahead.

A special word of appreciation goes to Ulster Society of Chartered Accountants sponsors Danske Bank whose support has covered 11 Conferences. The Society greatly values the partnership and thanks Danske Bank for their part in this key annual event.

The accountants had the opportunity to take the Heineken Experience Tour and sample some of the local brew before the Conference Gala Dinner. A weekend of activities followed including taking in the main sights of the city (by foot, canal and bicycle) tasting some traditionally made cheese, watching the production of clogs being made, as well as visiting a local windmill.

The weather in the Dutch capital was dry and very pleasant allowing members to see the city at its best. Amsterdam proved to be a fantastic host city, full of friendly people and with plenty to see and do.

The Society also thanks the Conference Committee of Patrick Gallen, Paul Henry, Emma Murray, Jude Fox, Maeve Hunt, Pamela McCreedy, and Ivan McMinn, for the hard work and dedication required to ensure that everything in Amsterdam went to plan.



Clarehill Plastics in export deal in Netherlands

Clarehill Plastics, a leading manufacturer of polyethylene oil, water and waste water storage tanks for the farming, commercial and residential sectors based at its purpose built factory in Moira, has been assisted by Invest Northern Ireland to secure business in the Netherlands which could be worth over £1 million this year.

Invest NI's marketing advisers assisted the company by arranging meetings with leading Dutch petroleum tank installers, which has already lead to advance orders of over €400,000.

Welcoming the new business, Clarehill's first in the Netherlands, Dr Vicky Kell, Invest NI Trade Director, said: "This is a further example of how Invest NI's in-market teams are helping Northern Ireland companies of all sizes and from most industry sectors to develop worthwhile business abroad.

"Our teams are helping companies to identify potential business partners in key global markets such as the Netherlands and are providing relevant information about trading procedures and requirements including product approvals. As the Clarehill business demonstrates, our teams can help in the provision of up-to-date market data, in setting meetings and accompanying a company to an initial meeting especially if translation services are required."

KIWA, the Dutch body which approves fuel storage tanks and installations, recently approved Harlequin, meaning Dutch customers can now avail of the benefits of Harlequin's range of rotationally moulded fuel storage and dispensing tanks.

Traditionally favouring steel storage tanks, the Dutch market welcomes the durability benefits of polyethylene storage tanks.

Having gained the prestigious KIWA certification for their bunded diesel tanks, Harlequin has moved quickly to appoint a number of Dutch distribution partners including the well-respected Mokobouw and Van der Heijden installation firms. The combination of KIWA certified products, with a KIWA approved installer network is a winning feature of Harlequin's Dutch business.

Chris Mackie, Clarehill's Export Sales Manager, outlining the new business, said: "The Netherlands is a market that we've been targeting for some time as part of our export development strategy to accelerate growth in global markets. We already sell our tanks to customers in France, Belgium, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Japan, Singapore and Australia."

"The expert assistance we received from Invest NI's advisors in pinpointing and establishing agreements with our partner installers was crucially important particularly in identifying regional distribution boundaries and explaining local factors within the various provinces in the Netherlands".

Harlequin



Paul Kidd, Commercial Director, Eric van der Heijden, Van der Heijden Milieu- en Installatietechniek and Chris Mackie, Export Sales Manager during a visit to the Van der Heijden tank workshop.

Dutch / Northern Irish cooperation in food safety

EuroProxima B.V. is a Dutch company active in the field of Food Safety control. In cooperation with Scientific Centers they develop, manufacture and market diagnostic kits for the control on the presence of contaminants, residues and fraud in feed and food products.

The skills for the production of high quality immuno assay based test kits goes back to the early 1980s, but since the nineties part of the company focused on the development of kits for Food Safety control. In 1996 EuroProxima started their first project with Professor Chris Elliott of the Institute of Agri-Food and Land Use at Queens University Belfast. During nearly two decades of cooperation they have participated in several European framework projects and a variety of products resulting from these cooperation's have been successfully introduced into the market and sold globally.

Two examples of these "EU" projects are the first Multi-analyte kit in the market for the detection Anti-Bacterial Growth Promoters.



These antibacterial drugs are prohibited as feed additives. The project, within the framework of Feed stuffs-RADIUS, was recognized by the European Commission as a "success story".

A second project that will be finalized in 2015 is the development of kits for detection of Ciguatoxins. These toxins, that are produced by marine algae are an emerging risk in European waters. Each year half a million people are poisoned by consuming Ciguatoxin accumulated in fish worldwide. A major challenge for Chris Elliott's lab is to develop antibodies against these highly toxic compounds.

Another milestone in the Northern Ireland - Netherlands cooperation was the

development and introduction of a kit for the detection of the anti-parasitic compound Ivermectin. Since legislation in the US on the presence of Avermectins in cattle meat has come into force the Ivermectin kit is the test system of choice for meat that is exported from South and Middle America to the US.

The discovery of horse meat in burgers and ready meals in 2013 has been widely publicised in European media. Fraud with meat products has become a hot topic. EuroProxima markets an unique range of test kits for the detection of meat from different species in food products.

According to Drs. Piet van Wichen, Managing Director of EuroProxima, "Food safety is a dynamic field, that puts high pressure on continuous development of new products and technologies. Without the expertise at leading Institutes, such as Queens University Belfast, it would be impossible for the industry to follow up on all threats in food safety. EuroProxima's role is to produce high quality reproducible kits that can be obtained all over the world where control of food products is required. The commercial part of this global cooperation develops a 'win-win' scenario to support partner's research."

Dutch Roads Connected to Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland company **Conexpo** are helping the Dutch to extend Europe's busiest highway.

As all BIZ readers will know, the Port of Rotterdam is Europe's largest Port and that it is rated the sixth busiest port in the world. In 2004 the Central Government for the Netherlands passed an application to extend the Port into the North Sea, by the creation of what is known as Maasvlakte 2.

This major announcement involved the reclamation of 2000 hectares of hinterland formed from sea dredged material, the construction of an 800m wide shipping channel, 4000m of dykes and a huge infrastructure improvement programme. Part of the infrastructure improvements include the expansion of the A15 arterial route connecting The Netherlands to Germany and the rest of Europe.

Locally known as the MAVA project, this new 38km dual 5 lane motorway is the largest civil engineering scheme ever undertaken by the Dutch authorities and will cost €1.5 billion by the time it is completed. The total asphalt volumes, including base layers, amounts to over 1 million tonnes. These materials will be produced by APRR Asphalt Production, Rotterdam. Presently APRR produce 1.3 million tonnes of asphalt per year from two plants sited at Amsterdam and Rotterdam.

Conexpo (NI) Ltd, has established themselves over the past ten years as one of the lead suppliers of high Polished Stone Value (PSV) aggregates in the Dutch market. Operating from the Port of Belfast for more than 20 years, Conexpo is continually evolving with



the dynamics of the marketplace and the challenging demands of new specifications. The Dutch authorities specify these products in only the most demanding situations, either for skid resistance or durability, or both. Conexpo have been the preferred supplier of high PSV aggregates to APRR's Rotterdam plant since 2006.

The MAVA project is a Design, Build, Finance and Manage contract. A joint venture consortium including Ballast Nedam, Strabag and Strukton on the construction side, will design, build and maintain the road network for 25 years. John Laing are managing the financial element.

Central to the design criteria for the surface course was to guarantee a reduction in traffic noise by 5dB below conventional road surface performance.

In 2012 Conexpo was notified by the JV's asphalt design team that the project would require 200,000 tonnes of surface course aggregates over an 18 month programme. 26 aggregate producers across Europe were considered to qualify for the supply of these aggregates.

Further discussions and prequalification interviews took place throughout 2012 and into early 2013. By that stage the asphalt design team had concluded that only Conexpo and one other producer had the correct rock type, production capabilities and quality control to produce the aggregates to the required specification.



Numerous trial consignments were prepared and road-hauled to Rotterdam for extensive trial mixing, laying, compacting and performance testing. In practice, the County Down gritstone aggregate outperformed the alternative and Conexpo was awarded the supply contract in May 2013.

Conexpo Director, Stephen McCluskey, told NI-NL BIZ proudly, "it has been extremely interesting to be involved in such a prestigious project and amazing to witness firsthand how well the Northern Ireland gritstone performs against aggregates from other European sources. We have always believed in our products, but it is very satisfying when international test houses and industry leading companies confirm the excellent qualities the gritstones deliver".

"Conexpo has invested significantly in preparation of the trial consignments and in anticipation of supplying the main contract. The commitment of our own management team and workforce, along with the local industry suppliers, has been very supportive in designing and modifying plant and screening media to meet the very challenging specification at rates of up to 500 tonnes per day."

So remember when driving on the Dutch motorway network, especially around the Maasvlakte, you are actually driving on a piece of Northern Ireland !

Warm Shower for NI-NL Partnership

In September 2013 Hei-Tech BV. and Building Products Distributors Ltd (BPD) joined as equity partners in a restructuring of Hei-Tech BV.

Hei-Tech, based in Emmen, manufacture a range of heat exchangers for extracting the waste energy usually lost down the drain while showering. This innovative, yet simple, technology has been widely adopted in the Netherlands, with in excess of 25,000 new homes now fitted with a Hei-Tech system. The UK, and indeed global market, for this product is significant. In a market where there is increasing pressure on house builders and construction businesses to reduce Co2 emissions and reduce the running costs of new buildings, so there is a requirement for the simple cost effective products Hei-Tech has to offer.

BPD, based in Ballyclare, Co. Antrim, partnered with Hei-Tech to distribute their

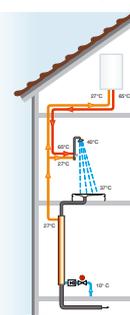
products throughout the UK and Ireland. As the building regulations have tightened in the UK, so the major house builders (such as Taylor Wimpey) have sought cost effective solutions that allow them to meet the new regulations for Co2 emission reductions. In the UK the system is called Showersave (in the Netherlands it is known as the Recoh-Vert).

BPD and Hei-Tech are working together, with new General Management in Emmen, to develop the existing range of systems. They are specifically looking at new applications that use significant quantities of hot water that is then thrown away down the drain, notably commercial dish washers and sterilization machines. A new system has been developed, with assistance from Invest Northern Ireland and the University of Ulster, which recovers significant amounts of wasted energy from commercial dish washers. This system has been marketed throughout Europe during 2014.

The NI-NL partnership between the two businesses is designed to make the most

of BPD's commercial and sales expertise, while using the hugely successful R&D and innovation culture within Hei-Tech to access a larger market with an increased portfolio of products.

In the Netherlands the 'warm shower' has positive connotations where TV viewers can nominate companies for this award based on their positive customer service experiences. Hei-Tech BV. and Building Products Distributors also clearly deserve this accolade for their blossoming international 'samenwerking'.



Telestack's sustained success in the Netherlands

Telestack Limited was formed in 1999 and operates from a modern 32000 square metre site in Northern Ireland. They have combined the experience and knowledge of Loughside Engineering and Telestack to develop a range of mobile Bulk Material Handling Solutions.

Telestack's mobile solutions offer significant operating cost savings compared to traditional methods of material handling (wheel loaders, haul trucks, static conveyors), as well as providing Environmental, Health and Safety and other benefits.



2 x Telestack Mobile Hopper Feeders & 2 x Telestack Mobile Telescopic Shiploading

Telestack have a range of installations throughout the Netherlands within Ports & Inland Terminals, Quarrying and Recycling industries. Their current customers include Van Oord, Beelen, Martens en Van Oord, Kuypers Kessel, Damsteegt, Smink and Saggro.

The customised nature of Telestack's Mobile Bulk Material Handling equipment makes it a perfect solution for the Dutch market. Telestack's representatives in the Netherlands are Van der Spek and Marijs who provide critical sales and after sales support by utilising their intensive infrastructure within the market.



Telestack Mobile Truck Unloader loading a barge directly from wheel loaders



Electrical firm's experience in Netherlands is 'premier'

Premier Electrics is a market-leading commercial electrical fit-out company with an increasing footprint throughout Europe.

The company was founded 21 years ago by current Managing Director Mark Scullion. From humble beginnings in mid-Ulster, Northern Ireland Premier is now regarded as one of the best in the business.

Mark Scullion attributes Premier's growth in recent years to a key decision made by his highly experienced senior management team as the UK and Ireland stared recession in the face.

"We knew we were going to have to expand our horizons if we were going to survive and meet our growth targets," he reveals.

"At that time Ireland represented a big part of our turnover and when we began to consider the impact the predicted recession could have on that market we knew it was time to target Europe."

Since its first European job in Romania what to Mark seems like a lifetime ago Premier has completed an impressive portfolio of work in Germany, Austria, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, France and more latterly The Netherlands.

"In the past year we have been involved in seven new-build or refurbishment projects across Europe with two of the most significant being in Eindhoven and Zoetermeer."

While Europe represents a huge opportunity for this ambitious business there are many challenges that need to be overcome for a Northern Irish company working in Europe.

Mark Scullion continues: "It's amazing that, although we operate within the European union each individual jurisdiction throws up its own unique set of challenges whether that be in local employment laws, tax certifications, VAT or building regulations. However, with thorough research, a strong network of relevant partners and a very talented internal team we've been able to overcome these and

are now comfortable working in any European environment."

Key to Premier's European success in the past few years has been its investment in people and infrastructure as well as its unwavering commitment to quality and service.

"Consistent quality and exemplary service are the cornerstones of this business. We are totally committed to the delivery of excellent work every time. Our can-do attitude and strong work ethic coupled with our reputation for consistently delivering projects on time and within budget have fuelled our growth and enabled us to build strong strategic relationships with retailers and main contractors," says the Premier founder.

"Our experience working in The Netherlands has been very positive indeed. In fact there are many similarities between the Dutch and the Irish. We've found them to be hospitable, workmanlike, responsive and a delight to work with."



premierElectrics

As easy as MDF

Established in 1990 SAM has been a major player in the MDF sector since, enjoying consistent growth and through unrivalled customer service and product innovation they have established themselves as market leaders.

As with their product innovation SAM realise that to stay at the leading edge of the industry they needed to communicate clearly and consistently with their customers both in the UK, Europe and the US. This was the catalyst to develop a more contemporary and global

brand identity which could raise awareness of SAM in existing and new markets.

"As the company has been growing and developing new markets we recognised the need to refresh our brand identity and have something which reflects the dynamic, global nature of the business," commented Richard Holmes Managing Director. "Our new branding is contemporary and visually full of impact but yet remains true to who we are as a company by its direct simplicity."

SAM looks ahead with confidence in continuing its growth both with its existing customers and beyond to new markets.



Showing Off Dutch Properties

RentPro Ltd, based in Warrenpoint, Northern Ireland, has launched a new version of their property management solution which is already used by letting agents and property professionals across the British Isles and beyond. Rebranded as ShowHouse the software now caters for residential sales and block management, in addition to lettings.

The company was assisted by Invest NI in the rebranding process, which also helped in sourcing expertise from The University of Ulster in developing a class leading user experience for their web based product.

RentPro director, Brian Murphy says, "Our team has acquired detailed knowledge of the property sector over the last ten years and we've channelled this into ShowHouse. There is no other solution available which combines

our comprehensive feature set, ease-of-use and friendly, responsive support. We're looking forward to targeting additional market sectors and new geographic markets."

Brian added, "Although the property market is now showing signs of recovery in terms of sales, it is my view that there has been a fundamental shift in people's mind-sets, in that they are now much more willing to consider renting a property on a long term basis rather than buying. This means that agents have to be more flexible in the range of services they provide. The feedback that we've been receiving from our clients is that they now combine property / rental management and sales activities and need a solution that encompasses all of these services. These requirements formed the drivers for the ShowHouse developments."

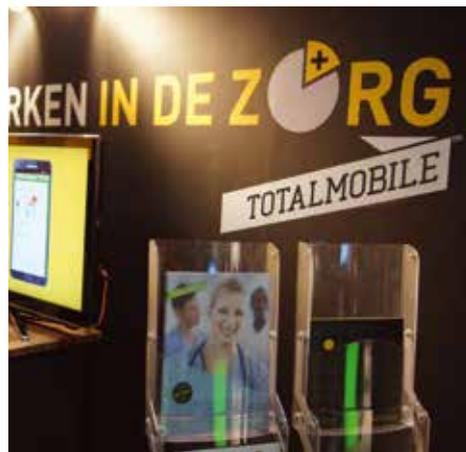
Whilst their client base is primarily based in the UK and Republic of Ireland, the company have already acquired clients in Spain, Portugal, The Netherlands and Malta. Traditional barriers to overseas sales have

been overcome by allowing clients to create trial accounts via the ShowHouse website (www.showhousesoftware.com).

A number of Dutch companies have subscribed to, or are currently trialling, ShowHouse and, based on their feedback, Rentpro will customise the application further for the Dutch property market.



ShowHouse 



Dutch Healthcare Professionals Adopt Total Mobile

TotalMobile partner in the Netherlands, Aevova recently announced that they had converted 560 care professionals at psychiatric care organisation RIBW Brabant to the TotalMobile solution.

Managing Director of Aevova, Hans van der Last and his 20 enthusiastic colleagues provide software solutions to 400 companies and 300,000 people per day in the Netherlands.

Hans explains, "In the care sector TotalMobile provides healthcare professionals more time to focus on delivering quality patient care whilst saving money for their organisation. TotalMobile can save hours per day in administration, form-filling and travel per user. It works for any healthcare organisation with teams working at a central location, but is especially suited to teams out and about in the community, which is the case with RIBW."

Aevova expect more Dutch healthcare and government organisations to adopt TotalMobile, which perfectly suits their adage of 'Smart Software, More Than Time'.

Dutch parents give Shnuggle baby bath the thumbs up

Newtownards-based baby company Shnuggle has won an innovation award from Dutch parents and nursery industry experts.

The Shnuggle bath was awarded the BabyStuf Innovation Award. The judges and parents praised the bath's design which ensures the baby is kept upright and comfortable, and the material which insulates the water.

A record 15,000 votes for the 44 Innovation Award entrants were received from Dutch parents who – like parents everywhere – value baby products that are safe and innovative. The winners were announced at the Nine Months Consumer Fair in Amsterdam.

Adam Murphy, Shnuggle co-founder and managing director, said: "We're incredibly

proud to have received this award. We've been working hard to ensure that our baby bath brings something new to the baby bath market. As parents ourselves, my wife and I set out to design a bath that keeps the baby comfy, secure and warm. This award shows that our bath is doing its job and making life easier for parents."

Shnuggle have developed a soft, light and strong baby-safe foam material. It is textured to allow for easy grip and to ensure the baby is secure while bathing. The supportive 'Bum Bump' and sloping back supports babies from birth up to six months.

The Shnuggle bath comes in a range of colours, ensuring that it stands out from traditional plastic white baby baths.

Shnuggle have been supported by the Invest NI R&D Program. The company have also designed a Moses basket which sells throughout the UK, ROI and Europe.

So keep an eye out for Shnuggle as they launch more new products in the coming year!



Trade Show News

Trade Shows

Northern Ireland exporters have participated at various sectoral trade shows in the Netherlands in 2014 and they keep paying dividends.

DiskShred



The DiskShred team launched their confidential shredding service in the Netherlands at Infosecurity.nl - a leading show for IT managers and IT professionals in the field of IT security - at the Utrecht Jaarbeurs.

Bedeck



Bedeck, an independent bed and bath company with its roots in Northern Ireland is regarded as one of the leading luxury bed linen brands. Their product range includes towels, sheets, curtains, bedspreads, bath accessories and bed linen of all styles, shapes and sizes. Bedeck visited the new luxury bedroom textiles trade show Hollandsch Slapen in the unique location of Klooster Bethlehem Haren to meet with Dutch trade partners.

Fluent Technology

Fluent Technology, based in Belfast, develops market leading software to record and manage grant applications and grant funding for not for profit organisations and the public sector. Overheid & ICT is the platform for ICT applications and services in the government sector and was the perfect opportunity for Fluent's Business Development manager Noel Lynch (pictured right) to meet a number of Dutch Trade partners and potential clients under the one roof.



TKD - Technical Contact Days



Mac Trailers representatives Geert-Jan de Kok and Eddy van de Wal



Telestack's Carl Donnelly with Hans Janssen of Dutch dealer Marijs Recyclingtechniek BV



Hans van der Last and his team are pictured at the Utrecht Jaarbeurs

Total Mobile

Award winning Belfast based TotalMobile, mobile solution provider to healthcare, government and industry was represented at Zorg & ICT by Dutch partner Aenova. Zorg & ICT is the Dutch 'sister' Trade show for ICT innovation in Healthcare sector.

TKD, or Technical Contact Days, is a biannual trade show for heavy machinery, materials handling and earthmoving equipment held on a 10 hectare outdoor site in Almere the Netherlands. The show offers exhibitors, whether manufacturers or importers, an opportunity to show and demo their equipment to over 20,000 trade visitors over a three day period. Northern Ireland companies and their local Dutch partners exhibited at this key event in the earthmoving calendar.



Clarehill Plastics launch their Harlequin range of diesel storage tanks at TKD

Trade Shows in 2015

Northern Ireland companies will be exhibiting at the following Trade Shows in Amsterdam and Utrecht in the 1st 6 months of 2015.

SAM Mouldings @ Bouwbeurs



SAM Mouldings will support their Dutch trade partners by promoting their full range of branded MDF profiles - SAM Stock, SAM Wrap, SAM Zero, SAM Trimax and SAM Xtra

The BouwBeurs takes place from 9 till 13 February in the Jaarbeurs in Utrecht, and is the largest meeting place for building firms in de Netherlands.

Linwoods @ Huishoudbeurs



Linwoods Health Foods continues to grow its business in the Netherlands with their premium range of Milled Seeds, Nuts & Berries now available in health and organic stores. Linwoods currently have five products currently available the Netherlands, in their organic range, and this is set to increase with some exciting releases coming soon.

Linwoods continue to invest in the market and will exhibit at the Huishoudbeurs consumer show in Amsterdam from 21st February until 1st March to promote the range.

Cottage Desserts @ PLMA



Cottage Desserts, supplier of branded and private label fresh desserts to supermarkets in UK, Ireland and mainland Europe, shall exhibit at the Private Label Manufacturer's Association Fair on 19th and 20th May in Amsterdam.

Already having exhibited on 2 previous occasions Cottage Desserts has generated sales of cheesecakes, trifles and other chilled desserts across Europe based on the retail focused show.

Growing Dutch Agricultural, Food Technology and Horticultural Links

The Netherlands is renowned for innovation in Food and Agricultural Technologies and stand above most nations when it comes to Horticulture. NI-NL BIZ reports on bilateral exchanges which have taken place between Northern Ireland and The Netherlands in terms of

Agriculture and Horticulture. It also reports on a number of Dutch companies who are making a difference to Northern Ireland's agri food industry both in terms of animal welfare, dairy production and bespoke solutions for the food production sector.

Engineers Mix Factory and Farm Visits in the Netherlands

Trioliet, based in Oldenzaal, The Netherlands, is a family owned company founded in 1950 by three brothers (a trio) with the surname Liet. Today Trioliet has become a world leading manufacturer of feeding machines for dairy cows exporting well over 80% of its machines to more than 40 countries worldwide.

With more than 230 employees and a strongly represented Research and Development department, Trioliet is unique as a complete provider of feeding machines for dairy and beef farms such as silage cutters, diet feeders, self-loading or self-propelled mixer feeders and complete automatic feeding systems.

All machines are geared toward helping the modern livestock farmer manage a farm efficiently. Designing new solutions and developing existing technologies are their highest priorities. Trioliet are confident that



Agricultural Engineers with Robin Hansen, export manager and Pdraig O'Kane, Branch Member, and Trioliet representative in Ireland.

they can provide a suitable mechanical or automatic feeding solution for beef and dairy farms worldwide.

In order to grow with the increased export demand Trioliet is expanding their business premises by adding a new assembly area and logistics centre.

Fifteen years ago Trioliet started in Northern-Ireland with an importer, but for the last five years they have their own area sales

manager Pdraig O'Kane. Northern Ireland is an interesting market for Trioliet because there is strong demand for premium large capacity machines with low maintenance requirements.

A group representing the Northern Ireland Branch of Agricultural Engineers visited Trioliet to view the state of the art production facilities and to visit a local farm where the Triomatic Auto Mix Feeder system was in action.

Green Groen Exchange

A group of eleven Horticulture and Design students enjoyed a three week work placement and cultural exchange programme at CAFRE's Greenmount Campus.

The visit was funded through the EU Leonardo programme and builds on the very successful partnership established between CAFRE and Groenhorst College, Velp.

Students from Groenhorst took part in practical sessions with Greenmount horticulture students and worked with local businesses and in Antrim Borough Council's Castle Gardens.

The similarities between the 2 organisations do not just lie in their names (Green meaning Groen in Dutch) but also in terms of the curriculum and facilities they both offer.

Greenmount Campus is the centre of all things green – agricultural, horticultural and

environmental. The 200 hectares campus - situated in beautiful countryside, just outside Antrim town - is used for arable, dairying and lowland beef farming. A recently built a state-of-the art dairy unit for 180 cows with a 32 point parlour incorporates the newest technologies in comfort housing and cow handling, waste management and parlour systems.

Another 1,100 hectares of hill land, with 1,100 ewes and 100 suckler cows, is managed in an environmentally sustainable manner to promote wildlife and protect habitats. Both farms are used by CAFRE technologists and advisers to demonstrate and promote the latest advances in agriculture and land use.

Groenhorst is a leading agricultural training centre with ten campuses in the Netherlands. For decades they have provided excellent professional education in the field of agriculture, horticulture, livestock, equine studies and veterinary nursing. Theoretical knowledge is always paired with practical applications.

Besides modern school buildings, Groenhorst also has top facilities such as agricultural and horticultural businesses, a veterinary training centre, dairy barns, greenhouses and full equine facilities.

Fortunately the exchange wasn't all hard work as the students also had time to visit several of Northern Ireland's top tourist attractions including Parliament Buildings, the Titanic Experience and the Giant's Causeway.



Mrs Meri Loeffen, Director of Groenhorst College, Velp, (far left), with Mr Paul Mooney, Head of Horticulture Education, CAFRE, with Dutch students on the grounds of Greenmount Campus.

News from the Lowlands

Dutch Treat for Drumlina Holsteins

The Vink Hoofcare SprayMat has been launched in the UK by Agrihealth of Craigavon.

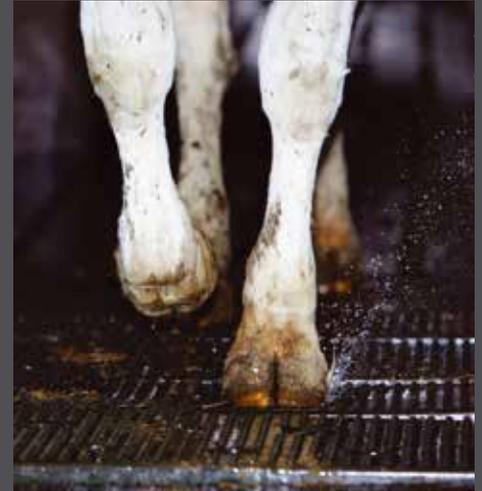
Developed in the Netherlands by dairy farmer turned inventor Gert-Jan Vink the Hoofcare Spray Mat hits all the right spots to keep dairy cows fit on their feet.

The pressure of the cow walking over the mat ensures her hooves are automatically sprayed. There is no easily dirtied trough of water, the mat does not present an obstacle to animal movement, is permanently in place and can be switched on as required.

Sandy Moore and son Andrew were the first milk producers in the British Isles to install a Vink Hoofcare Spray Mat, for their Drumlina Pedigree Holstein Herd.

“Lameness is a key animal welfare issue impacting on milk margins with lost income per lame cow averaging £180 a year. A problem our Vink Hoofcare Spray Mat plays a key part in keeping at bay as every hoof is sprayed as many as 14 times over a three day period,” Andrew noted.

Based in Northern Ireland Agrihealth has worked closely with the innovative Dutch equipment manufacturer to grow their market share across the UK.



Dutch Ag Tech Concentrating on Northern Ireland Dairy Farmers

Jochem Tolkamp, left, Hanskamp AgroTech met with James Pollock from Castlerock, Co Londonderry during the Balmoral Show to discuss the PipeFeeder system developed in the Netherlands. Now in use on NI farms the Pipefeeder controls concentrate usage in the parlour, keeps cows content and speeds up milking. Andy Murray near Rathfriland, is the first farm on the island of Ireland to install the PipeFeeder system from Hanskamp.



Creative Media are delighted to be working in partnership with NI-NL on the design and production of the BIZ newsletter. This is the 12th edition and is testimony to the adaptability of award winning Creative Media to work with international partners. This working relationship is an excellent example of Dutch based NI-NL working with SME's in Northern Ireland.



Background to NI-NL

The Northern Ireland Netherlands Trade and Export Society (NI-NL) was founded in 2006 to encourage and stimulate export trade between Northern Ireland and The Netherlands. NI-NL's Mission is “to proactively assist in developing Partnerships in Trade, Enterprise & Investment between Northern Ireland and The Netherlands” NI-NL is a forum and platform for companies and professionals active, or who wish to be active, in trade between Northern Ireland and the Netherlands. NI-NL is a not for profit foundation and plays an active role by organising a number of business network events and activities per year and keeping businesses abreast of activity between the 2 regions



Founding Partners NI-NL

NI-NL welcomes



as Airline of Choice for NI-NL in 2015



Customised Dutch Solutions for Food Processing

Murre Techniek, located in Krabbendijke, is an innovative company operating in the field of potato, fruit, vegetable, shellfish and crustacean processing. The company's mission is to design and construct fully automated processing lines aimed at lower processing costs and a higher and more stable quality of the final products.

'For almost 15 years Murre Techniek has been developing solutions for fruit, shellfish and crustacean processing in Northern Ireland', Managing Director Jan Murre told BIZ.

Looking back to 2000, Murre Techniek successfully automated Benburb Bramleys Ltd apple processing plant in Dungannon. The whole process starts with the sorting of fresh apples, which are then distributed among the peeling machines fitted with a conveyor system for the peeling waste. The peeling process is followed by the cutting process during which various cutting systems cut the apples in cubes, chunks, slices or segments. After this the apple products are processed in an immersion machine to guarantee their long life/freshness.

Furthermore they have supplied a size sorter and an optical sorter enabling an optimum and constant quality of fruit mix salads and specific final products intended for bakeries. Today, they are still making improvements installing 2 new Italian PND peeling machines which have been specially developed in association with Murre Techniek for peeling

Bramley apples. Fitted with 8 rows, a quiet peeling process is guaranteed, resulting in a high quality product.

Based in the province of Zeeland, at the heart of Dutch aquaculture it is no surprise that Murre Techniek also develop shellfish and crustacean processing lines. In 2013, they developed a completely new processing line for cleaning and sorting whelks and periwinkles for Rooney Fish in Kilkeel. This client-specific line, designed and developed in conjunction with Rooney Fish as a bespoke solution includes various processes such as emptying crates in water (to prevent damage to shellfish), a high-pressure washing system (ensuring the cleanest possible product) and an advanced sorting machine that can sort the fresh product to a maximum of 5 sizes (fully continuously variable adjustment). It was not long before Rooney outgrew the washer/grader and Murre had to add more capacity to handle increased volumes.

Murre Techniek's Northern Ireland relations also have a Dutch link. For Emerald Mussels Ltd's fine mussel vessel, the Dutch built "Emerald Gratia", Murre Techniek supplied a post-rinsing system for cleaning freshly harvested mussels.

More recently, they successfully performed a test for Dougold Mussels on their Dutch mussel vessel "Still Ostrea" near Warrenpoint, pumping seed mussels directly from ship to ship during harvesting, saving a lot of time during the harvesting of seed mussels.

It is clear that Murre Techniek can combine their knowledge of machines and processing lines (and other suppliers' expertise on specific machines) with their client's knowledge of the product.





KLM Arrival in Belfast welcomed

KLM Royal Dutch Airlines has recently announced that they will operate an Amsterdam route from 18th May 2015, marking Belfast the airline's 17th UK destination.

The news has been warmly welcomed by Northern Ireland's export community who for nearly 20 years depended on the KLM connection to Amsterdam as a lifeline into Europe, until the service ended in 1999. As many exporters already know, it is often quicker to be in the centre of Amsterdam than the centre of London, but now KLM can link the business community to other European and global markets on a direct connecting flight from the province.

Not only does the KLM Cityhopper flight offer direct access to The Netherlands and surrounding markets, but it also provides connectivity through Schiphol, recognised as one of the best airports in Europe by the Business Traveller, through KLM and Skyteam partners.

All flights will be operated by KLM Cityhopper, using Fokker 70 jet aircraft, carrying up to 80 passengers. The schedule has been devised to fit together with KLM's long-haul network, offering passengers easy connections to destinations such as New York, Beijing and Accra.

Flight number	Origin	Destination	Departure (local time)	Arrival (local time)
KL947	Amsterdam	Belfast	10:00	10:40
KL948	Belfast	Amsterdam	11:15	13:50

KLM's decision to introduce services out of Belfast City airport follows extensive research amongst the local community, local businesses and key travel trade partners. The research showed significant support from all quarters for the commencement of services.

Warner Rootliep, General Manager of Air France-KLM UK & Ireland said: "Demand for efficient, seamless and convenient schedules to long-haul destinations from the UK continues to grow, particularly to emerging markets such as Latin America, Africa and China – all markets where KLM has strong networks. Our experience of being the UK's largest regional long-haul carrier means we are best placed to understand the needs of local communities and regional businesses and we're confident that the services we provide out of Belfast will fit the requirements of the people of Northern Ireland and the plans of local businesses."

Boet Kreiken, Managing Director of KLM Cityhopper added: "KLM Cityhopper, as one of Europe's largest operating airline for regional carriers, is proud to serve the Air France-KLM group customer base in Belfast once more as well! Belfast is now the 54th KLM Cityhopper

destination in Europe and we are delighted to be back in Belfast and eager to start very soon with our operations"

Leading the campaign for the business community for KLM's return to the province, **NI-NL Founder and Managing Consultant of the Amsterdam headquartered Northern Ireland Trade Consultants, Steve Murnaghan**, commented, "KLM's return to the province will enable exporters to make more regular visits between Northern Ireland and the Netherlands, reducing travel time as well as transferring to connecting flights through Schiphol's unique single terminal concept. Following an absence of 15 years on the route, KLM will hopefully re-engage with the business community and, with their support, develop a multi - day service as previously scheduled, providing point to point as well as global connections for Northern Ireland."

Exporters from across the province have also welcomed the KLM announcement.

Gerard Wilson, Commercial Director, SAM Mouldings, a regular visitor to the Netherlands said, "The introduction by KLM of a daily service from George Best Belfast City to Schiphol is fantastic news not only for SAM Mouldings, but for the wider business community."

"As our own business interests have been expanding in the Netherlands, there has been an ever increasing need to be able to travel on a 1 or 2 day basis to meet up with the existing client base or to have the ability to react quicker to new commercial opportunities and be able to travel there on short notice. The frequent access to Schiphol will also provide valuable connections onto other export markets for SAM in northern Europe and beyond."

The new route has been welcomed by **Mark Scullion, founder and MD of Premier Electrics**, an award-winning and market-leading commercial electrical installation company which does extensive business throughout Europe from its Northern Ireland headquarters.

"Our international work has grown considerably in recent years. Our teams are regularly active throughout Germany and the Netherlands especially, so ease of access to key European cities is vital for us. Obviously, the less time we can spend travelling by air or road the better," said Mark.

"Schiphol is a genuine superhub which opens up quick access to hundreds of destinations. I believe the link with Belfast will be a major success and anything that increases connectivity from Northern Ireland can only be good."





Dutch Cuisine with Local Flavour and Charm

The menu at the Boathouse changes on a regular basis, depending on the seasonal availability of local ingredients, but one thing is sure....there will always be a strong seafood offering.

When you know some facts about the background of the Dutch Castel brothers who have run the restaurant for the last six years, this does not come as a surprise. Born and bred in the Zeeland port town of Vlissingen (or Flushing) with its medieval fishermen's harbour, today they find themselves 'home from home' in the seaside town of Bangor, Northern Ireland.

Overlooking Bangor Marina and Belfast Lough, the restaurant, with dining for 36 guests downstairs, is situated in an 1840s stone building which was coincidentally once the Harbour Master's house and lifeboat building and has loads of historic charm.



Joery and Jasper Castel

Chef Joery Castel and his brother Jasper who takes care of front of house have won numerous accolades for their creative food and wine list, including most recently the Ulster Regional Final of the Irish Restaurant Awards where they picked up no fewer than 3 awards for County Down - Best Restaurant, Best Chef, and the Best Wine Experience.

Inspired by their mother, a keen home cook, Joery did a 5-year apprenticeship in the Netherlands before working in France and London with Alistair Little. He then took a job in Ireland at Castle Leslie, which made headlines when it was the venue for the marriage of Sir Paul McCartney and Heather Mills. After a stint with a highly successful catering company, during which time he had the honour of cooking for Queen Elizabeth II during a royal visit, he and Jasper opened The Boat House in 2008.

Joery serves an inspired menu of seafood, meat, poultry, game and vegetarian dishes,

using quality ingredients that are sourced locally and even homegrown wherever possible. The brothers have their own herb and vegetable garden as well as a community plot close by in Bangor.

What Joery does in his tiny kitchen with just-caught Irish Sea lobster, Mourne lamb, samphire collected from the rocks of Strangford's shore, beetroot, parsnip and cabbage from the Ards Peninsula, yoghurts from Clondeboy Estate and all the rest, is magnificent, occasionally magical, always delicious and ever changing with the seasons.

Joery delights in being creative with colour and texture, yet not at the expense of flavour. His food is modern and beautifully plated, and occasionally he'll introduce a dish that is a tribute to his Dutch heritage.

Jasper runs the front of house and does a great job of keeping everything running smoothly and engaging with the customers. The restaurant has a great wine list with cracking wines from all over the world and a gin list with around 15 different choices!

The brothers genuinely believe that good food and wine should be accessible to all, regardless of budget, and it is refreshing to see such attention to detail given the very reasonable prices charged.

All in all, with a perfect combination of Dutch cuisine and local ingredients, You'll be sure to have a lovely time the day you go to Bangor - at the Boathouse!

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