

NI NL BIZ

THE NEWSLETTER WHICH KEEPS NORTHERN IRELAND IN TOUCH WITH THE DUTCH.

ISSUE 14



NI STRONG IN EUROPE

SEE PAGES 20 AND 21

Hello

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



In this 14th edition of NI-NL BIZ Steve Murnaghan, Founder of NI-NL...

- looks back at NI-NL's 10th Annual Dinner at Titanic Belfast
- describes how Invest NI's export programmes can transform your business
- reports on Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council's Netherlands programme and City Business Awards
- announces NITC's expansion into Europe
- analyses how NI's Strong Performance in Europe pays dividends
- covers many trade successes between NI & NL achieved over the last months
- profiles a local company, still blooming in their 35th year of business
- shows how exhibitions in the Netherlands pay dividends for NI exporters

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 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's Mission is to "proactively assist in developing Partnerships in Trade, Enterprise & Investment 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 networking events and activities per year and keeping businesses abreast of activity between the 2 regions.

The NI-NL BIZ magazine is published twice per year and has a circulation of 2350 export businesses and public sector organisations in Northern Ireland and the Netherlands.

Founding Partners

Invest Northern Ireland
Building Locally
Competing Globally

LCCC
Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

NITC
Northern Ireland Trade Consultants

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- you have any articles or news stories of interest to NI-NL BIZ readers

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GENERATING JOBS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH A TOP PRIORITY FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

“If we are to be successful and competitive in the global economy we must have the right policies in place to enhance Northern Ireland's competitiveness internationally.”

The number of Northern Ireland government departments has been reduced from 12 to 9 and the new Department for the Economy (DfE) has recently come into effect. Simon Hamilton MLA, previously Health Minister and Minister of Finance and Personnel, was appointed as Minister for the Economy on 25 May 2016. Educated at Queen's University, Belfast, Simon began his career at a leading accountancy firm in Belfast.

Minister Hamilton has a wide range of responsibilities including economic policy, enterprise, innovation, energy, telecoms, tourism, skills training, promoting good employment practice, consumer affairs, health and safety at work, Insolvency Service, and labour market and economic statistics services.

Minister Simon Hamilton has said generating quality jobs and economic growth is a top priority for the new Department.

Outlining his priorities for the new Department for the Economy, the Minister said: "I will take every opportunity I can to create more and better jobs and raise people's incomes.

"If we are to be successful and competitive in the global economy we must have the right policies in place to enhance Northern Ireland's competitiveness

internationally. This means working closely with employers to ensure we create a highly skilled workforce that meets business needs and underpins economic growth.

"Skills are a crucial ingredient in improving economic prosperity for all and will help build social inclusion by providing opportunities for people of all abilities and from all backgrounds to contribute to and benefit from our economic success. We must continue to support and develop local business as well as attracting inward investment.

"Central to this will also be our commitment to reduce the rate of Corporation Tax to 12.5% from 2018. This is undoubtedly a powerful lever that can stimulate economic prosperity. It is important that we continue at pace with the work to prepare the way for this important change, work that can ensure that we can maximise the opportunity that a lower Corporation Tax rate brings in securing new Foreign Direct Investment and encouraging local businesses to invest and grow. Having a workforce with economically relevant skills will be key."

Turning to tourism the Minister said: "Tourism performance remains positive as the momentum created over the last few years continues to build. We have hosted many successful events in recent years

among them the Irish Open which will return here next year. As well as that we can look forward to hosting The Open in 2019. We also continue to work towards a successful bid to play our part in hosting the Rugby World Cup in 2023. Our tourism offering will be enhanced with the new HMS Caroline heritage visitor museum in the Titanic Quarter.

"This is an important sector for our economy and I intend to bring forward a new Tourism Strategy to work with the industry to build an internationally competitive and inspiring destination of which we are all proud."

Concluding the Minister said: "Undoubtedly we are facing many challenges. I am however assured that we will continue to build upon the excellent work already underway to generate jobs and economic growth. Northern Ireland is a fantastic place to live and work and I will do my best to promote this message ensuring that others see the benefits of Northern Ireland and know that we are open for business."

The Northern Ireland - Netherlands Trade & Export Society welcomes Minister Hamilton and hopes that his Department will work as tirelessly for the export community as his predecessors.



TITANIC CELEBRATION FOR DUTCH TRADE RELATIONS

The Northern Ireland - Netherlands Trade & Export Society (NI-NL) celebrated the strong and ever growing trade relations the province has with the Dutch during its 10th Annual Trade Dinner.

Representatives of more than 50 Dutch businesses who trade with Northern Ireland flew into the province for the anniversary dinner at Titanic Belfast.

Guest speakers from both regions addressed the 125 strong audience of international companies who were praised for their continuous efforts in developing sustainable and mutually beneficial business together.

NI-NL Founder Steve Murnaghan, Managing Consultant of Amsterdam headquartered Northern Ireland Trade Consultants, welcomed the largest group of Dutch businesses ever to visit the province.

He explained how The Northern Ireland - Netherlands Trade and Export Society was formed in 2006 as a not for profit

platform for developing trade, enterprise and investment links between NI and NL. The idea of NI-NL was hatched with the founders (Invest NI, Lisburn City Council and NITC) based on the model of a Dutch export club and still 10 years later NI-NL is the only bilateral Export Society between Northern Ireland and Europe.

The Trade Dinner, which rotates each year between Northern Ireland and the Netherlands, had been made welcome over the last 10 years in many unique and historic buildings both in the Netherlands - Industriële Grote Club, Kasteel de Wittenburg, De West Indisch Huis and in Northern Ireland - Hillsborough Castle, The Great Hall at Queen's University, and Parliament Building Stormont and were proud to be at Titanic Belfast, one of Europe's best visitor attractions, for the celebration of the second lustrum.

From the 1st NI-NL Trade Dinner held in 2007 in Amsterdam, over 1000 Dutch and

Northern Ireland trading partners have attended the annual event.

As well as its Trade Dinner, Summer Networking and Autumn Lunches, NI-NL has played a role in assisting incoming and outgoing Trade Missions, visits from Ambassadors, Dutch Ministers and even facilitating a tour of the province by the Dutch Ferrari club members.

Murnaghan also explained how through NI-NL and the IFA 120 NI-NL companies were at the Amsterdam Arena in 2012 to send off the Dutch football team as they headed off to the Ukraine to play in the last European Championship, when Northern Ireland was staying at home. However, he did not dwell on the subject of football, adding that he should be careful not to antagonise our football mad business partners as NI-NL is more about building relationships, and as is tradition at the Trade Dinner all present raised a toast to sustainable and ongoing NI-NL relations.

GUEST SPEAKERS

During the evening Murnaghan introduced a number of speakers between courses including Warner Rootliep, General Manager UK & Ireland, KLM AirFrance, Matthew Dobson, Managing Director of Dunbia (NI & Scotland), and Norbert van Twist, Managing Director Royal Kemper en Van Twist who explained their relations between NI & NL.

During his speech, Matthew Dobson said: "I am delighted to have the opportunity to speak at the NI-NL Trade Dinner which is very important to Dunbia. Dunbia trades in 36 countries worldwide and has a well established relationship with the Netherlands. It stands as our 2nd largest export market which was consolidated further last year

with the announcement of a joint venture between Dunbia and Shannon Meats whose networks and infrastructures are allowing us to access new customers in the retail and wholesale trade in Holland and Benelux countries."

Keynote guest speaker at the Trade Dinner was Mervyn Storey, Minister of Finance and Personnel (at that time) who focused on the longstanding friendship with the Netherlands and its importance as a strategic partner for NI businesses - the 4th most important European market for NI exporters and still growing.

"Growth in exports is critical to our strategic focus on transforming Northern Ireland into a vibrant private sector led economy and the companies attending the Trade Dinner are helping to achieve this", he affirmed.

"Growth in exports is critical to our strategic focus on transforming Northern Ireland into a vibrant private sector led economy and the companies attending the Trade Dinner are helping to achieve this"

The backbone of SME exporters were represented at the event from a wide range of industries and business sectors - engineering, construction materials, rubber and plastics, chemicals, decor, software, vehicles, food and drink and tourism - all of whom contribute to this overall success enjoyed with the Netherlands.

Minister Storey congratulated the Founders (Invest NI, Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council and NITC) on the 10 year anniversary of NI-NL - the only organisation of its kind between Northern Ireland and other trading partners. He explained how Invest NI's Going Dutch programme has assisted in developing valuable and longstanding business relationships and that Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council was rolling out their European Outlook Programme in the new council area following their successes over the last 10 years. Companies who have participated in these well managed programmes have not only succeeded in the Netherlands but have gone on to sell their products into multiple export markets.

Minister Storey welcomed KLM's recently launched service from George Best Belfast City Airport to Amsterdam Schiphol which provides access to important business and tourism markets, and make Northern Ireland more accessible to Europe, North America, Asia and the Middle East.

The success of NI-NL over the last decade due to a joined up strategic approach from the public and private sector in Northern Ireland and the Netherlands, and assisted by increased air connectivity, has led to an overall increase in exports, despite an economic downturn and the challenges of currency fluctuations.

The number of companies active between Northern Ireland and the Netherlands continues to grow day by day, ensuring that the two countries will remain trading partners for many more decades to come, supported in their efforts by the NI-NL Trade & Export Society.



Host and Speakers. Tim Husbands - Titanic Belfast, Warner Rootliep - KLM, Norbert van Twist - Royal Kemper en Van Twist, Minister Mervyn Storey, Matthew Dobson - Dunbia, Steve Murnaghan - NITC.



Fred Olthof, Steve Murnaghan, Melissa Hartal and Jeroen Coesmans.



Anthony, Jeanette and Anton Stoffer.



Nora Cunningham and Jenny Mullan.



Diane Risk and Paul Moffett.



John Martin, Frank de Roon, Colin Reid and Hans van der Last.



Richard Massara, Jeroen Eeuwijk, Norbert van Twist and David Craig.



Karin Verbist, Gemma Doran and Michelle McNeill.



Bart Jasperse, Natasha Mitchell and Jacqui Walsh.



NI AND NL COMPANIES AVAIL OF THE OCCASION TO BE PHOTOGRAPHED ON THE STUNNING TITANIC REPLICA STAIRCASE



Shannon Meats with Dunbia colleagues.



Alison Gowdy, Director of Trade at Invest NI (3rd from right) and former Minister Storey with exporters to the Netherlands.



Conexpo Directors with guests.



David Craig of Craigs, Steve Murnaghan and Aidan Strain of ASEE.



Alison Gowdy, Director of Trade at Invest NI (3rd from right) and former Minister Storey with exporters to the Netherlands.



Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council companies with Alderman Allan Ewart and former Minister Storey.



SAM Mouldings with Benelux partners.

WHITE STAR LINE CATERING EXCELLENCE @ TITANIC BELFAST



ECONOLISER TESTS THE WATER IN EUROPE - AT 82°C !



Econoliser® is a unique, CE approved and patented system, designed to save energy and water at the same time as sterilising knives in abattoirs.

Developed by Robin Adair of AirTech Distribution, based in Dundonald, Northern Ireland, Econoliser has been introduced to mainland European export markets following the company's participation in October 2015 on the Going Dutch programme.

AirTech has studied the Benelux and Nordic markets to identify the main meat groups and has appointed specialist distribution partners who have organised trials for the innovative, cost saving units with leading players in The Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden.

In the domestic market the Econoliser has been mainly developed for companies in the beef sector such as ABP, Foyle Food Group and 2Sisters. Whilst few of these groups have slaughter plants on the European mainland AirTech's UK and Irish references are well recognised by European players in beef, veal and pork such as the Vion Group, Compaxo, Gosschalk, Danish Crown, De Coster and HK Scan.

To date, just six months after entering the European market AirTech have received initial orders for eight units from four slaughterhouses which are now



Robin Adair with Dutch partner Peter Comello.

installed and operational and has provided quotations for another 50 units.

Commercial clients of the slaughterhouses such as leading retailers and fastfood chains are wholly supportive of the Econoliser which dramatically reduces the possibility of the food safety scares which have arisen in recent years, by ensuring that knives are always sterilised with clean hot water at 82°C.

Robin Adair, MD, comments, "As well as food safety the slaughterhouses are interested in saving costs on fresh water intake, the heating of water and the disposal of waste water. At one of the abattoirs we visited they were using 200 tons of water per day for their sterilisers. We calculated that replacing their current sterilisation units with the Econoliser daily usage would be reduced to less than

15 tons. Despite any language barriers the figures speak for themselves, so not only QA, production and engineering managers have shown an interest, but also the CFOs."

When NI-NL BIZ enquired whether the crusade into Europe was plain sailing, Robin Adair provided an insight into the challenges of expansion into export markets. "Despite mainland European plants being very similar to abattoirs in the UK and Ireland we noticed certain differences such as longer knives, wider handles and some lesser known equipment is in use. However with some minor design changes, and due to our flexible local suppliers, we have made some small product changes to accommodate the majority of abattoir equipment in use in Europe."

Robin Adair feels that the company is well prepared for European expansion as he participated in the Going Dutch programme. Looking back he says, "Twelve months ago we were not exporting. The journey (or journeys!) I have been on since October have been fantastic and the timing of the programme for Econoliser has been perfect. Invest NI's Going Dutch programme delivered 100%, exactly as described at the outset".

NOTHING TO BLOC GLOBAL EXPANSION

Developments in Magherafelt due to make a World of Difference to the global window décor market.

Bloc Blinds specialises in the design and manufacture of window blinds and recently moved into its renovated and extended new premises in Magherafelt, Northern Ireland. The increased size of the premises means that Bloc Blinds can now increase the number of staff, with the aim of recruiting nearly 100 new staff members over the next 3 years.

This significant investment in new premises, the recruitment of the new staff

and increased marketing and development activities will continue to position Bloc Blinds as a global player in the window covering market.

Cormac Diamond, Managing Director of Bloc Blinds, said: "The exciting move follows encouraging business growth in recent years and underpins our ambition to increase sales particularly in Europe, with the Netherlands being the gateway to this market. Our new manufacturing facility brings the current Bloc Blind product lines under one roof which will help increase production and operating efficiencies.

"Our leading innovation remains our swappable blinds, which allows the user to swap the fabric of their blind without re-measuring or even removing the system from the window, but with this move we have increased our Research and Development Department in order to continue to develop new, innovative and award winning products. We are currently refining a new control system which will eliminate the need for chains on all our blinds and will ultimately set a new precedence for child safety in the blinds industry, not only in Europe but also globally."



Edel McCooe, Regional Director, First Trust Bank, former Enterprise, Trade and Investment Minister Jonathan Bell and Cormac Diamond, Managing Director, Bloc Blinds, pictured in March.

EXPORTING CAN TRANSFORM YOUR BUSINESS

Earlier this year Invest Northern Ireland published its new trade development brochure 'Exporting can Transform your Business'. If you are company already receiving support from Invest NI, this brochure brings together the range of support available to help you break into, and develop new export markets.

For small companies, our Export Development Service can help you develop an export strategy, and our Export workshops will help you build company capabilities. For larger, export experienced companies opening up new emerging markets, our market research and translation services, plus our extensive programme of trade missions, can provide help with breaking into a new market. All of these services are available to Invest NI clients providing a cost effective way to explore new opportunities and markets.

The Invest NI Trade Division is split into four territories: Europe & Russia, The Americas, Middle East, India & Africa and Asia Pacific; plus a dedicated Food team that assists companies in this sector to develop exports globally. With staff based both in Northern Ireland and in market, the team can provide guidance and assistance regardless of your level of export experience or activity.

Europe & Russia is often the starting point for new 'first time' exporters and the Netherlands is an ideal starter market for the

smaller company seeking to establish initial exporting business.

Many companies access the Netherlands through the Going Dutch Programme which provides a structured and well proven path to prepare for, research and visit the market. A full range of advice, research and support into the market is also available at any time depending on client needs. [More information on this programme is available on www.investni.com](#) or from the Europe & Russia Trade team.

The first export market is often the most daunting and takes up most time as companies seek to 'gear up' for the new export activities. It is important to commit long term to any export market as sales are rarely achieved quickly. Once you are successfully established with exports sales in your first market the logical question is where next?

One of the key ingredients in any market development is the access to in-market experience and expertise. We have in-market advisors in 17 countries throughout Europe providing valuable market research, advice and in-market visit support for companies looking at a new market for the first time. The Trade Advisory Service (TAS) can be accessed at any time and is usually part of a wider range of activities. Our Trade team can assist and advise you on a structured plan for export development and provide a tailored range of support to help make things happen.

If you are thinking about new export markets, speak to your Invest NI Client Executive or contact Trade Division directly to see what assistance is available to help you on your way.

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Europe & Russia In-Market Trade Advisor coverage:
Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, France, Russia, Spain, Portugal, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Turkey, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary & Luxembourg
** Further Trade Advisory services are also available in other key markets.*

ROYAL PHILIPS ACQUIRES PATHXL

Philips expands its Digital Pathology Solutions portfolio with the acquisition of PathXL

Royal Philips recently announced that it has acquired PathXL, a Northern Ireland-based leader in digital pathology image analysis, workflow software and educational tools. PathXL's image analysis and tissue pathology software will complement Philips' Digital Pathology Solutions offering, and help expand the business' leadership in this fast-growing field.

Pathology involves the examination of patient tissue samples and plays a crucial role in the diagnosis and treatment of a wide variety of diseases, including cancer. Philips is a pioneer and leader in the digitization of pathology, a fast-growing area in healthcare as pathology labs are under pressure to improve throughput and efficiency, enhance quality and to deliver new diagnostic tests for precision medicine.

"With this acquisition, we are accelerating our drive to support global medical institutions in their transition to digitized pathology workflows," said Russ Granzow, General Manager of Philips Digital Pathology Solutions. "Together with PathXL we see a unique opportunity to amplify our combined leadership positions. We will be able to offer an intelligent and integrated solution



that fulfills many needs in computational pathology, education, workflow solutions and image analytics. These important and growing disciplines within pathology will enable a high-quality quantitative analysis of digital whole slide images."

Digital pathology will enable pathologists to review and share large sets of clinical data using image analytics with the aim to help improve the quality of diagnosis and has the potential to enable new therapies and ultimately improve patient outcomes. Philips' IntelliSite Pathology Solution is an automated digital pathology image creation, management and viewing system comprised

of an ultra-fast pathology slide scanner, an image management system and dedicated software tools.

PathXL, founded in 2004 and headquartered in Belfast, Northern Ireland, offers a range of digital pathology software applications to research and education segments of pathology and bio-pharma markets. The company has approximately 30 employees, offices in the UK and USA and distributors across three continents.

Alastair Hamilton, CEO of Invest Northern Ireland commented: "The announcement that multinational health technology company Philips is to purchase PathXL is great news for the life sciences sector in Northern Ireland.

"We have had the opportunity to work with PathXL throughout its growth, with significant investments being made as part of our Access to Finance initiative. We have also helped the company invest in R&D.

"Today's announcement is testament to the hard work and commitment of this business and recognition of its achievements. We wish it every success in the next stage of its growth as part of the Philips group."

Exporting can transform your business



Find new markets

Find export markets, develop practical know-how, and join trade visits and exhibitions – all with Invest Northern Ireland's help.

If you want to export to international markets, we can offer access to Trade Advisers based around the world, and a range of specially developed export programmes.

Our expert advice and guidance will provide everything you need to know to export, from assessing your level of readiness, to devising the best export strategy.

Our support is subject to eligibility criteria and approval following completion of the appropriate application form. Where applicable, costs and financial assistance limits will apply.

To find out more visit:
www.investni.com/exportsupport



Group Arrival at Amsterdam Schiphol.

A DOZEN DUTCH PROGRAMMES DELIVERED FOR LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

The former Mayor of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council (LCCC), Cllr Thomas Beckett led the Council's 12th trade visit to the Netherlands with representatives from a group of internationally focused local companies. The Council once again initiated and funded this annual trade programme to the Netherlands, which was delivered by their in market consultant, NITC. A cross section of industries was represented including telecommunications, ICT, security, engineering and art. Meetings with OEM's, buyers, retailers, potential suppliers, intermediaries and partners were held throughout the Netherlands and also at NITC's new office in the Zuidas.

Former Mayor of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council (LCCC), Cllr Thomas Beckett said: "The aim of the Netherlands Trade Programme is to assist local companies to source export opportunities and to provide companies with the chance to gain exposure to a new European market to do business and share best practice and knowledge.

"These markets have previously realised many successes for Lisburn companies and I am delighted to see such a range of businesses sectors take part this year again, I would strongly encourage any local business keen to develop new sales and business networks to get in contact with the Council."



Launch at The Island Civic Centre.

Photo by Aaron McCracken/Harrisons



Barbara Allen (left) pictured with Jeanine Aalfs of the National Maritime Museum in Amsterdam. The ship moored alongside the museum is an exact copy of the famous East Indiaman lost on her maiden voyage in 1749.

FISH AND SHIPS

Barbara Allen is a local artist who uses mostly watercolours, pencil drawings, coloured pencil and charcoal. Inspired by Ireland's coastline, Barbara is well known for watercolour renderings of fish, sailing boats and architecture, including historic buildings and shopfronts. Her work has been used for educational and promotional purposes (fish species) and sells through gift shops and websites.

With the Dutch being a seafaring nation Barbara focused on fish companies, gift shops in the sailing regions as well as leading maritime museums, during her visit to the Netherlands.

According to Barbara, "Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council's Trade Development Programme to the Netherlands has introduced me to export potential, something I could never have achieved alone."



Former Mayor of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council Cllr Thomas Beckett (centre) and Alderman Jim Dillon availed of the opportunity to meet with the Mayor of Enschede, Onno van Veldhuizen.

A delegation of Elected Representatives and Officers from Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council attended the EuroCities Economic Development Forum in Enschede which focused on Innovative ways to create economic added value through cooperation between city administration, businesses and the research community.

Enschede is a city of knowledge and education in the east of the Netherlands, close to the German border. With the University of Twente and 'Kennispark Twente' (Knowledge Park Twente), internationally acclaimed for their ability to transfer theoretical knowledge into high end practical applications.

A SAFE PAIR OF HANDS

Barrington Security, based in Carryduff, is a family owned and run business which is one of Northern Ireland's leading safe and security equipment supplier and installers.

Their clients including retailers, petrol stations, pubs, clubs and those handling cash who rely on Barrington's products, services and knowledge for safely transferring and storing cash, valuables and documents.

As a forward thinking company, Barrington Security availed of the visit to the Netherlands to establish what is leading in terms of future solutions and technologies in Europe.

Mark assessed the programme on his return with, "LCCC and NITC provide a fantastic service and do their utmost best to find what you're looking for, they open the door and it's up to you to do the rest."

• Mark Barrington, MD, meets expert Dutch suppliers of security systems and barriers.

SENTEL CALLS IN WITH THE DUTCH

Sentel, based in Carryduff, gives network providers unified communications analytics to enhance their customer's business intelligence.

Webbased software solutions UC Hosted Analytics is used to analyse and cut call costs, enhance performance, detect fraud and report real time inbound and outbound statistics. Sentel's solutions, specially developed for SMEs, provide services for unlimited users, unlimited support, needs no updating as it is community based, and can interact with CRM systems.

Gery Connery, Managing Director of Sentel, participated in the Council's Programme in order to meet with and pitch Unified Communications services providers in the Netherlands with Sentel's suite of solutions.

Looking back on the programme Ger Connery stated, "Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council's Trade Development Programme to the Netherlands was an excellent experience with great business opportunities identified and a well-planned and organised visit by NITC".



Ger Connery shows how the Dutch celebrate their birthday ... by treating everyone to delicious cakes!

STRICTLY CELEBRATIONS FOR BEST OF LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH'S BUSINESSES

16 WINNERS SHOWCASE THE VERY BEST OF LOCAL BUSINESS

The winners of the first ever Lisburn & Castlereagh City Business Awards in association with Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council and Hanna Thompson Chartered Accountants were announced at a glittering gala awards ceremony at the La Mon Hotel & Country Club on 11th March.

Awards were presented across 16 diverse categories, demonstrating business excellence in areas such as customer service, marketing, innovation and export.

First Minister Arlene Foster, who addressed the 300-strong audience at the event, said: "I welcome this opportunity to celebrate the success of Lisburn and Castlereagh based businesses.

"The business community of Lisburn & Castlereagh deserves recognition for its hard work and commitment to business excellence in Northern Ireland. The important contribution that local businesses make to the Northern Ireland economy cannot be underestimated.



Alderman Allan Ewart and NITC's Steve Murnaghan at the launch of the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Business Awards.

Local companies including AB Pneumatics, Raltus Software and Smiley Monroe are driving growth and success through a commitment to exports, innovation and market development.

"I congratulate all tonight's nominees and winners who are all part of Northern Ireland's good news story."

Alderman Allan Ewart, Chairman of the Council's Development Committee, said: "What an amazing first year as the new Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council, and no better way to end such a year than to celebrate with the best of our local companies. I am truly delighted at the success of these awards and with over 100 entries across the 16 categories, far exceeding our expectations, this is testament to the City's business sector.

"On behalf of the Council I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate each of our finalists, and of course this year's worthy winners. Every year it is clear to see that new standards of business excellence and innovation are being achieved, and this event is the perfect platform to give much deserved recognition. I was particularly pleased to see the high number of new start-up businesses enter the new business category this year, which I will take as a sign that the new council area is offering a great environment and location for a new business to flourish.

"Now is the time to invest in Lisburn & Castlereagh City, Northern Ireland's best connected, business friendly City, with an entrepreneurial and outward looking Council committed to business growth."

The sold out black-tie ceremony, which was hosted by Q Radio favourite Stephen Clements, also featured a sensational after dinner performance by Strictly Come Dancing professional dance duo James and Ola Jordan.



Alderman Allan Ewart and First Minister Foster

HONOURS

Amongst those honoured were Business Person of the Year, Paula Jennings of Stepping Stones NI, who also took the Best Social Enterprise Business award, and Trailblazer BBQ Ltd, who received the Best New Business accolade.

Prof Lester Manley, Founder and MD of Trailblazer BBQ Ltd, the world's first fully functional, towable BBQs, said: "We are blown away and feel incredibly lucky to have won this award after a couple of years of hard work. Our strapline at the moment is 'now you can' and now we have!"



Best New Business Award presented to Lester and Warren Manley of Trailblazer BBQ Ltd by Lisburn Enterprise Organisation.

The Best Exporting Business Award was sponsored by Northern Ireland Trade Consultants and was awarded to Unicorn Mouldings trading as Flexi-Tile.

The judging panel commented that the winner, Flexi-Tile, demonstrated that they have been successful in developing a 98% export market with 90% of products exported to mainland Europe and further afield. "A local company who is making brilliant progress in Europe and beyond."



Best Exporting Business Award presented to Mark Robinson, Julie Russell and Natasha Mitchell of Flexi-Tile by Steve Murnaghan of NITC.



Business Growth Award presented to Decora Blind Systems Ltd by Danske Bank.

THE FULL LIST OF WINNERS IS AS FOLLOWS:

BUSINESS PERSON OF THE YEAR AWARD

(sponsored by Hanna Thompson Chartered Accountants)

Paula Jennings, Stepping Stones NI

YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR AWARD

(sponsored by First Trust Bank)

Katie Stevenson, La Bella Vita

BEST TOURISM AMENITY

(sponsored by Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council)

Streamvale Open Farm

EXCELLENCE IN CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARD (NON RETAIL)

(sponsored by Ulster Bank)

4Beauty Group

EXCELLENCE IN CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARD (RETAIL)

Cordners Spar

EXCELLENCE IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT ACHIEVEMENT

Ashvale Farm Shop

BEST MARKETING INITIATIVE AWARD

(sponsored by Bank of Ireland)

Safety Solutions NI Ltd

BEST NEW BUSINESS AWARD

(sponsored by Lisburn Enterprise Organisation)

Trailblazer BBQ Ltd

EXCELLENCE IN MANUFACTURING AWARD

(sponsored by Montupet UK Ltd)

Fabrite

BEST EXPORTING BUSINESS AWARD

(sponsored by Northern Ireland Trade Consultants)

Unicorn Mouldings Trading as Flexi-Tile

BUSINESS GROWTH AWARD

(sponsored by Danske Bank)

Decora Blind Systems Ltd

BEST SOCIAL ENTERPRISE BUSINESS AWARD

(sponsored by Social Enterprise NI)

Stepping Stones NI

BEST LICENSED EATING ESTABLISHMENT

The Speckled Hen

BEST NON-LICENSED EATING ESTABLISHMENT

(sponsored by Andrew Ingredients)

The Secret Garden at Dundonald Nurseries

INNOVATION AWARD

(sponsored by Xperience Group)

Hughes Craft Distillery T/A RubyBlue Spirits

INVESTMENT IN HEALTH AWARD

(sponsored by Public Health Agency)

GE Energy



Carson McMullan, Honorary Consul, First Minister Arlene Foster and Ambassador of the Netherlands to the UK, HE Mr Simon Smits.



BELFAST VISIT BY DUTCH AMBASSADOR

As part of the Dutch EU Presidency, HE Ambassador Smits made an official visit to Belfast in June. The Ambassador had the privilege of meeting First Minister Arlene Foster who received him at Stormont Castle. He enjoyed a tour of the Stormont Parliament Buildings and met with the newly elected Speaker of the Northern Ireland Assembly, Robin Newton MLA and Assembly members on the committee of the Executive Office, discussing the highlights of the Dutch EU Presidency.

The visit was officially concluded with meetings and a reception at the EU Commission Representation which was a great opportunity to exchange views on Northern Ireland, the EU referendum and of course the brilliant performance of the Northern Ireland football team at EURO2016!

Prior to the departure of The Ambassador and his Political Attaché Eeke Dix toured Belfast in a black taxi to view Belfast's famous murals.

NITC ANNOUNCES EUROPEAN EXPANSION



Established in Amsterdam in 1993, NITC specialises in researching markets, providing business intelligence, developing sales opportunities for clients leading to supply opportunities and longterm strategic partnerships - both distribution partners as well as end user matchmaking.

NITC has been working in the Benelux for over 20 years and added the Nordics and Central Eastern Europe to its portfolio of countries over the last 10 years.

NITC recently announced partnerships with locally engaged consultants in more Western and Central European countries. Clients can now enjoy access to a pan European service covering more than 15 markets with the quality service to which they are accustomed from NITC.

In the first six months of 2016 NITC has undertaken group and individual projects in France, Germany, Spain and will deliver Invest NI's recently announced Trade Missions to Finland as well as Hungary, Czech and Slovakia in October.

Details of these missions as well as Invest NI's full calendar of Export Events can be found at: www.investni.com/trade-mission/export-events.html

NEW MARKETS

Western Europe	The Nordics	Central and Eastern Europe
Netherlands 	Sweden 	Czech Republic 
Belgium 	Denmark 	Poland 
France 	Finland 	Slovakia 
Germany 	Norway 	Hungary 
Spain 		Romania 
Portugal 		Bulgaria 

LIMES INTERNATIONAL – WE THINK INTERNATIONAL

LIMES international (www.limesint.com) is an organisation with more than 25 years of experience. With a team of over 50 professionals they are a major player in the Netherlands and Belgium providing integrated tax and related services for cross border business issues. LIMES professionals are experts in corporate and individual tax, legal, payroll, immigration + relocation, pension + insurance, human resources and vat + customs.

At LIMES they are dedicated to help clients achieve success by using their experiences in international business. LIMES can assist with the fiscal and related issues when developing partnerships in trade, enterprise and investment between Northern Ireland, Ireland, the United Kingdom and The Netherlands.

LIMES academy in Valkenburg, close to Leiden, (pictured) organises seminars and workshops for enterprises and organisations with crossborder activities. LIMES academy curricula are intended to share their knowledge with directors, HR managers, accountants and lawyers.

LIMES looks forward to participating at upcoming NI-NL events, but in the meantime don't hesitate to make contact with any specific questions to

T+31 88 089 90 00 or info@limesint.com.

LIMES Academy



NITC RELOCATES TO AMSTERDAM ZUIDAS

NITC has recently opened its new office in a rapidly developing business district in the city of Amsterdam called the Zuidas (literally Southern Axis in Dutch).

Zuidas is today THE international and economic location in Amsterdam and currently 650,000 m2 gross leasable area has been delivered for over 30,000 people who work for over 400 companies - 50% of which are internationally focused.

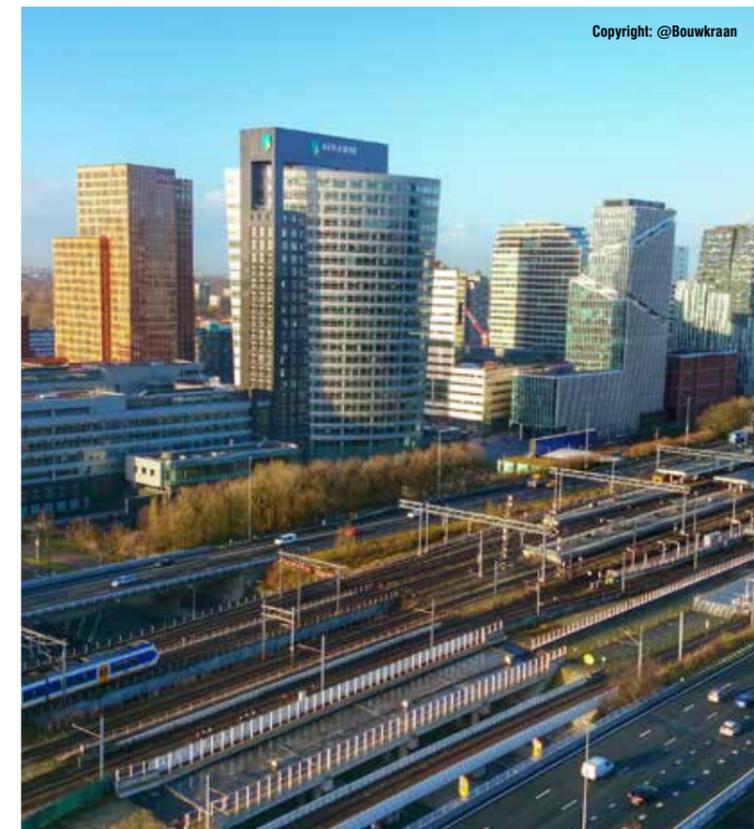
Large multinationals such as ABN-Amro and Akzo Nobel have their headquarters in this new area which is home to The World Trade Center Amsterdam and can be compared to, or is influenced by, La Défense in Paris or Canary Wharf in London.

Next door is the RAI Amsterdam Convention Centre the No.1 location for conferences, exhibitions, meetings, functions, theatre shows etc. The RAI boasts eleven multifunctional halls and a total exhibition area of 108,300 m², attracting 2 million visitors per year.

In the future the railway station, Amsterdam Zuid, will become the 2nd main station of Amsterdam. It is expected to be 5th busiest passenger station in the Netherlands, with connections to Schiphol Airport, Rotterdam, Antwerp, Brussels, and Paris by high-speed rail, the Thalys.

One of the reasons NITC chose for the Zuidas is its proximity to Amsterdam Schiphol with the train taking just 7 minutes directly into the single terminal airport. So for clients travelling in and out of the Netherlands and to support NITC's expansion into other markets the Zuidas is the perfect location for a European head office.

But luckily it's not 'all work and no play' in the Zuidas area which has 5 hotels, 28 cafes and restaurants and numerous gyms and sports facilities.



Copyright: @Bouwkraan

NI STRONG IN EUROPE, WHILE EXPORT GROWTH CONTINUES



You might think this headline refers to the Northern Ireland Football team's performance in the recent European Championship. You would be right, partly. The European Championship finals is a significant sporting event for Northern Ireland, firstly qualifying and then making history with its first UEFA Championship win against Ukraine at the Stade de Lyon, and qualifying for the round of 16. Michael O'Neill and his team of national heroes and history-makers, reminded those old

enough to remember of 1982 when Gerry Armstrong netted an iconic winner against Spain in Valencia in the World Cup finals. Northern Ireland fans have been waiting for decades to participate in another major championship and to celebrate success. The Green and White Army (as the NI supporters are known) played a massive part in a successful campaign and were widely praised for their all round behaviour as Ambassadors for the province. As the Northern Ireland manager Michael

“THE BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATING AT EUROPEAN LEVEL WILL PAY DIVIDENDS FOR NORTHERN IRELAND FOR MANY YEARS TO COME.”

O'Neill explained after the Ukraine match, "It's a hugely proud day for me, I think for the country as well. The level of the performance is what I'm most proud of, I thought that today every one of the players was magnificent." The feel good factor was not only present in Nice, Lyons and Paris but the Northern Ireland economy was due to benefit by an estimated £8.5m due to NI's qualification in Euro 2016, according to an Ulster University survey. Researchers categorised the impact in several ways

Direct effect - primarily through retail expenditure from people staying at home to watch on TV or at fan zones as well as additional spending in pubs, supermarkets, internal travel, etc. It also includes money spent by fans preparing to travel to France.

Indirect effect - As retailers benefit from additional expenditure, there will be an increase in demand on their suppliers and so on down the supply chain.

Induced effect - As a result of the direct and indirect effects, the level of household income throughout the economy will rise as a result of increased employment. A proportion of this increased income will be re-spent on goods and services.

Unquantifiable effects - A range of wider benefits which would likely flow from NI's participation at Euro 2016, such as increased participation in local football and better attendance at local matches.

Andrew Webb, senior advisor at the Ulster University's economic policy centre, said the figure of £8.5m was "most likely conservative". "There are, of course, a range of wider additional benefits which we can't quantify such as extra advertising and publicity for Northern Ireland as a result of the Euro 2016 qualification as well as sponsorship deals and television rights packages that may come later."

EXPORT MARKETS

Likewise when Northern Ireland businesses focus on export markets the rewards for good performance are clearly identifiable.

Direct effect - increased sales generated from external markets. With only 1.7 million people in Northern Ireland all external markets are important for NI whether locally or internationally - both short haul and long haul.

Indirect effect - the movement of pallets and containers of local products leaving via road, sea or air

benefits the transporters but also the financial institutions who fund and finance international trade and the affiliated services required to market abroad.

Induced effect - business success and growth will increase household income throughout the economy, employment levels will increase and a country does not become overly reliant on certain territories or markets.

Unquantifiable effects - exporters tend to become sharper, more competitive, and more innovative due to exposure to international best practices. However one of the main unquantifiable effects of export success is the visible pride of the employees involved in international multilingual markets - especially SMEs.

MANUFACTURING EXPORT GROWTH CONTINUES

The latest official trade figures for Northern Ireland show an increase in manufacturing exports. The figures, from HM Revenue and Customs, compared the 12 months to March 2016 with the same spell in 2015. The total value of goods exported in the period was £6.6bn, up by 9% on 2015.

On a quarterly basis, export sales to the EU in the first quarter of 2016 were worth an estimated £852m.

The majority of exports, 52%, are to the EU although these were down slightly (by 3.6%), whilst non-EU exports were up by 27.5%. The largest value increases were to the USA, up £604m or 81%, followed by South Korea, up £78m, a four-fold increase.

The majority of Northern Ireland's exports continue to be within the single market with the Irish Republic, Germany and France hugely important export markets for the local NI economy, and North America, like Germany, in the last reported quarter, providing export growth.

Northern Ireland has earned its place in Europe based on its desire and best efforts. Being able to compete at the highest level, punch above one's weight and to create a 'buzz' in sporting and economic terms will positively affect trade, create jobs and improve living standards.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN 'DUTCH' AND EURO AUCTIONS



EuroAuctions Dormagen

Euro Auctions, headquartered in Dromore, Co. Tyrone, Northern Ireland specialises in conducting unreserved auctions of industrial plant and construction equipment.

Today, Euro Auctions conducts over 30 major auctions every year and is the market leader in the UK and Ireland and one of the leading industrial auctioneers in Europe.

Euro Auctions has six permanent auction sites in the UK, Germany, Spain, Australia and the US. All sites are fully operational at all times, with permanent offices, yards and staff. The company also specializes in off-site auctions for reasons such as cessation of trading or retirement sales. Euro Auctions is a truly international company with buyers and sellers from nearly every country in the world.

Bram van der Enden is Euro Auction's Sales Manager in the Netherlands and Germany. With more than 10 year's experience in the auction industry, he has built an international customer base of equipment and plant buyers across the world and together with his multilingual team in continental Europe assists customers in buying and selling equipment through Euro Auctions.

Bram explained to NI-NL BIZ, "When we launched the Dormagen site in 2006, Germany didn't have an auction culture, preferring to buy via the established dealer network. Customers were also highly sceptical of a sale being hosted by a UK operator. With the hard work, effort and time we have put in over the years, perception

has totally changed - the auction is now firmly established and attracts great interest from our global community database of regular bidders".

Van der Enden continues, "The real success in the last 10 years at Dormagen has been in creating a 'step change' in the way business is contracted. The volume and quality of the stock being sold has also constantly improved and the German plant and equipment community now have increased trust in Euro Auctions, regarding it as a full service German auction company

selling quality equipment to a global marketplace. There is now a strong local team based on the Dormagen auctions site and its sales are well established in the calendar, regularly attracting around 800 bidders from across Europe at each event; either in person or via the internet."

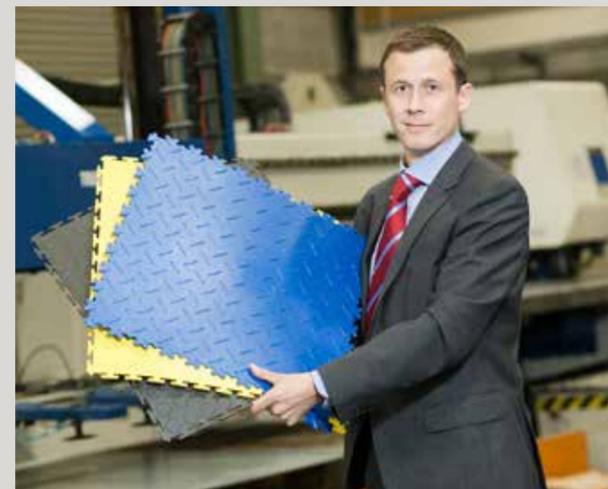
Today large dealerships, hire operators and manufacturers are all using Euro Auctions to dispose of consignments of equipment. Zeppelin, the large German CAT dealer consigned a large quantity of equipment to the last sale and is now booking equipment for future sales. Others consigning on a regular basis include New Holland, agricultural machinery specialists, Cramo, the leading equipment rental company, Bomag, the specialist German road roller company, and Nagel, the Liebherr dealership.

Anno 2016, over 2,500 quality lots were consigned to the Dormagen sale and with buoyant market demand for industrial equipment and over 500 bidders the total hammer price exceeded €12 million with high interest and brisk bidding via the internet as well as local interest in the sale.

Not resting on their laurels, Euro Auctions recently exhibited at TKD in Almere, the Dutch show which brings earth moving-, recycling equipment and related specialties together. TKD visitors could view and test a wide range of equipment at the show which also offered an outdoor area of 10 hectares for active demonstrations and a track for testing trucks and dumpers. The perfect show and opportunity for the team to explain the difference between Dutch and Euro Auctions!



Derek Keys (MD) and Bram van der Enden with colleagues at TKD.



CORNER PIECE ADDED TO FLEXI-TILE'S BENELUX JIGSAW

Unicorn Mouldings, a manufacturer of industrial, commercial and domestic flooring recently acquired Belgian based Ecoloc flooring.

The company currently operates from two production facilities in Lisburn and Markethill, Northern Ireland, manufacturing Flexi-Tile, a revolutionary loose-lay interlocking PVC floor tile. The acquisition of Belgian based company Ecoloc, who pioneered interlocking flooring in 1983 with their Lock-Tile brand, will see production transfer from their facility in Spain to Markethill.

Unicorn Mouldings forms part of the FHS Group, a privately owned company with a diverse portfolio of businesses currently exporting to over 40 countries, employing 75 people.

The deal is set to treble the size of Unicorn Mouldings Flexi-Tile business where they currently distribute tiles to Germany, Austria, France, Spain, Belgium, the Netherlands, Lithuania, Denmark, Switzerland and many more. The tiles are injection moulded in a range of finishes suitable for factories, warehouses, gyms, airports, offices and domestic use. The tiles cut down on labour costs and reduce disruption due to quick and easy installation.

Roger Pannell, Managing Director of Unicorn Mouldings said, "In acquiring the successful Ecoloc brand Lock-Tile, we are now able to offer customers across Europe an unrivalled product offering. The acquisition strengthens the company's distribution network and affirms the position as Europe's largest manufacturer of PVC interlocking floor tiles. The market in this sector is growing, not just in Europe but also worldwide.

Stephen Kelly, Chief Executive of Manufacturing NI commented, "We would like to congratulate Roger and the team on this exciting acquisition. This is great news for the company and indeed for manufacturing in Northern Ireland. It opens up new export markets but also increases our production capability at home. This big, brave investment, backing themselves and indeed the NI workforce to be successful is just the type of investment that we should be encouraging. We can, and frequently do, beat the world with our manufacturing, innovation and market development expertise and we are sure that Unicorn Mouldings will be the latest high profile success for Northern Ireland's manufacturing base."



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DUTCH GARANT-EE TO KEEP YOUR INVESTMENT TURNING



There are few investments in this day and age which are risk free nor offer any sort of guarantee. However, Dutch wind specialist Bettink Service Team offer a contract which takes responsibility for the continuity of operation of wind turbines.

The costs for maintenance, damage, wear or technical problems on wind turbines are covered by the Garant Contract, not only for the ones Bettink install themselves, but any wind turbine, irrespective of make or age (assuming it is a reasonable condition).

This was one of the messages from Bettink Service Team's exhibition stand in the Sustainable Village at Northern Ireland's biggest agriculture show, Balmoral, in May.

The Dutch company has gone from strength to strength in the Northern Ireland market opening a local company, employing and training staff and putting new service crews and vehicles onto the road in recent months. Today, the Bettink Service Team is responsible for the purchase, refurbishment, installation, commissioning, service and maintenance of 50 turbines in the province.

Readers may not know that Big Brother was originally a Dutch reality show, before going global, and Bettink has developed their own version by being able to continually monitor wind turbines 24/7 in their Barneveld control centre. Just like the TV programme, all important parameters can be monitored real-time and alarm situations are automatically recorded.



Ensuring that contracted turbines get the fastest response (operational again within 48 hours) means that Bettink needs men on the ground, or rather up the turbine mast.

Bettink Service Team are not only impressive in their swift reaction to breakdowns but also in planning, preparing and erecting turnkey projects. After the total refurbishment and transportation to site in Downpatrick the local team made sure that all required parts were on site and erected a Micon M700 225kW turbine in less than a day!

Having blown into the market a few years ago, Bettink's products, service levels and crews are making a positive impact on clients in the knowledge that their turbine investments are in a safe pair of hands.

BURGERS ARE 'HOT'

The Netherlands has experienced strong growth in the sales of (ham) burgers in recent years. Burgers are now commonplace on menus in the better restaurants and brasseries, especially focusing on handmade and healthy products using traceable meat sources - in many cases replacing steak cuts.

Outdoor cooking and quality meat trends have not been lost on Shannon Meats, which has 25 years experience in the supply of premium hand-selected beef and lamb to the Dutch retail and foodservice sectors. The company has recently launched Ballyshannon premium quality Dry Aged burgers via HoReCa wholesaler Sligro into the Dutch market.

Hans Balfort, Manager of Shannon Meats, explains, "There has been a strong trend towards pure, top quality burgers in the Netherlands, so together with our suppliers in Northern Ireland we have developed a natural, authentic, hand made 150 gram burger with a

coarse meat structure. We use 92% pure Irish beef, including 10 % dry aged beef which differentiates the product from others on the market. The end result is an exceptionally tender and succulent product full of flavour and natural juiciness, beautifully seasoned with sea salt and crushed black pepper."

Shannon Meats have clearly done their homework on this subject. The Dutch market is estimated at 400 million burgers per year, with each citizen consuming 25 burgers, 50% out of home and 50% at home.

Hans adds, "We hope to supply a percentage of this growing premium burger market, where the discerning customer has a preference for a quality, meaty, melt in the mouth eating experience. With the BBQ and Food Truck season starting to heat up in the Netherlands we are experiencing strong demand for the handmade dry aged burgers this summer."

High quality Dry Aged Ballyshannon burgers presented in a premium box containing 8 burgers.



Taking Business Development in their stride: Casper Vermeulen and Arjen van Elk adopt local customs and dress to impress!

FULL STEAM AHEAD FOR DAMEN

It's nearly half a century since Damen first sold a vessel in the UK, and since then the group has become a leading supplier to the UK maritime industry with over 300 new vessels sold since 1969, plus many more used boats via Damen's Trading Department.

Today, two men are responsible for the company's sales activities in the UK and Ireland; Casper Vermeulen and Arjen van Elk, with 18 and 4 years' experience respectively in the role.

Arjen van Elk, a speaker at the NI-NL New Year's Dinner in 2015 explains, "For Damen the UK is a special market, and one that feels familiar in many ways to natives of the Netherlands. Both share a long tradition of global seafaring, and many maritime companies in both countries operate vessels all over the world. The Dutch and British also have the same down-to-earth approach to doing business, which is an important factor in developing long-term business relationships."

In recent years the British Isles have become Damen's biggest export destination helped, in part, by Damen's principle of standardisation. Another important factor has been the arrival of the offshore renewables sector, in which the UK is currently the world leader. The growth of the fish farming industry has been another driver of demand in the UK and even the UK naval sector, traditionally an all-British affair, is

becoming more open to commercial off-the-shelf vessels. The UK market is open to new ideas and designs, which is why many of Damen's standardised vessel designs have made their debut in the UK, including in recent years various Multi Cats, Stan tugs, ASD tugs and Fast Crew Suppliers.

However the Damen team don't rest on their laurels. In June Casper and Arjen dropped anchor at Seawork in Southampton, Europe's largest commercial marine and workboat exhibition, to discover what new opportunities are on the horizon.

ASD TUG FOR FOYLE

The Londonderry Port and Harbour Commissioners (LPHC) in Northern Ireland have placed an order for a Damen ASD 2310 tug, following a European tendering process. The UK's most westerly port, Londonderry Port is a vibrant and rapidly developing harbour located on the banks of the River Foyle. There has been a port at that location for at least 400 years and today it is a modern deep water facility capable of handling a wide range of customers' requirements. In addition, it has a specialist capability in handling bulk cargo. The acquisition of this tug is part of an expansion programme to take advantage of the port's strategic position. Delivery is due at the end of this year.

23-metres in length and with a maximum bollard pull of 50 tonnes, she will be the most powerful vessel in the four-strong LPHC fleet, another of which is a Damen Stan Tug 1605 named Otterbank. As well as having the manoeuvrability and durability for which the ASD range is well known, this example will also be fitted with an optional aft towing winch and a hydraulic deck crane to equip it for general harbour and terminal assistance duties, as well as towing. The ASD 2310 is one of Damen's best-selling tugs and they can be found all over the world. Compact, powerful and highly manoeuvrable, it is ideal for handling a wide range of vessels in coastal and harbour towage operations as well as push-pull.

"IN RECENT YEARS THE BRITISH ISLES HAVE BECOME DAMEN'S BIGGEST EXPORT DESTINATION HELPED, IN PART, BY DAMEN'S PRINCIPLE OF STANDARDISATION."



Damen's best-selling tug heading for Londonderry Port.



BLAZING A TRAIL IN BBQING!

Holland is claimed to be in the top 10 globally, for BBQing. Along with a significant trend towards outdoor living and the desire for authentic charcoal BBQ experience, TRAILBLAZER BBQ is ahead of the game by choosing the Netherlands to set up its first European region of resellers for its impressive range of highly unique and eye catching Towable BBQs.

Trailblazer is working with The Food Truck Company in the Netherlands as their

distributor in setting up this exciting network that will cover the whole of the Netherlands.

The TRAILBLAZER range with six models covers everyone from the outdoor orientated family with their 120 MINI which can cook for the whole family at one time to the 1200 FESTIVAL which has an amazing capacity of 1200 burgers per hour (BPH) for the very large events.

TRAILBLAZER typically serves the outdoor catering industry, butchers, hotels

and restaurants, and the catering hire sector.

Trailblazer launched its range in Horecava in January 2016 which saw the first Trailblazers arrive into Holland. Trailblazer will use this blueprint to roll out a reseller network throughout Europe and other locations.

Trailblazer is currently in negotiations with a group from the US planning to bring it to America.

FREEDOM !

The 4th annual 'Free From' exhibition and conference was held in June in the Amsterdam RAI.

The exhibition focusses on gluten-free, lactose-free, sugar-free and much more 'Free From' and 'Functional Food'.

Some 3,000 visitors - Multiple Retail Groups, Food Industry, Food Service, Health Foods, Reform and Organic - from 43 different countries visited over 200 international exhibitors.

Northern Ireland company BFree specialise in gluten free breads, bagels, wraps and pittas. Not only are all of the products gluten free, but they are also wheat, dairy, egg, nut and soy free,



making them free from all major allergens and suitable for vegans! The company, represented by Alex Best and David Waldron, hope to announce deals with major European retail groups following their show presence.

New Found Joy promotes good clean wholesome food free from preservatives but with a healthy shelflife. Established in 2014, the premium artisan bakery creates gluten free versions of tray bakes, such as Rocky Road, Caramel Squares, and Chocolate Brownies. The award winning company, set up by Carol Little (left) exhibited in Amsterdam and sampled visitors to prove that the products are not free from flavour!

KEEP IT QUIET MAN

Since 1983 Niche Drinks has been producing Cream Liqueurs, Irish Coffee and Ready to Drink Cocktails of the highest quality for retail clients and partners in Ireland, the UK, the USA and Europe. Today, Niche own a large and very special inventory of mature whiskey in cask.

MD, Ciaran Mulgrew's father was a bartender who worked for over 50 years in bars around Belfast. As a bartender he saw a lot of things and heard a lot of stories, but like all good bartenders, he was true to his code and told no tales. He was known locally as "The Quiet Man", so, no surprises regarding the choice of name for the two new whiskey brands!

The Quiet Man 8 Year Old Single Malt - the best Irish Single Malt Whiskey has been re casked in first fill Bourbon barrels to let the whiskey soak up wonderful sweet and citrus

spicy oak flavours. The malt offers sweet and crisp floral fragrances with notes of vanilla and oak.

The Quiet Man Traditional Blended Irish Whiskey - the best Grain and Single Malt Irish Whiskies matured in bourbon casks to create a perfect balance of spice and oak with sweet vanilla for a mellow, warm finish.

Work has now started building The Quiet Man distillery in Derry and Ciaran and his team hope to complete the work and commission the stills in 2017, bottling Irish Whiskey in Derry, for the first time in over 100 years.

Meanwhile Michael Morris, Director of Export Sales, has been busy building a network of key European distribution partners starting with the Netherlands. Van Wees in Amersfoort were the first distributor appointed in mainland Europe due to their renowned reputation as whiskey specialists. The success of the brand in Holland has provided The Quiet Man with a springboard to attract distributors across Europe. After seven months they are now active in Germany, Italy, France, Poland, the Nordic and Baltic countries.

Sales have been given additional impetus since the brands won double gold at this year's San Francisco World Spirit competition - an unprecedented feat, and something that the company does not plan to remain Quiet about as they roll out global distribution!



Team Van Wees promote The Quiet Man at the Groningen Whiskey Festival in March

PON CONVEY MCCLOSKEY NEWS AT TKD

Pon Equipment, one of Europe's largest Caterpillar dealers, has joined the ranks of McCloskey International's dealer network to increase their presence in the Netherlands.

"Having Pon Equipment on board will further strengthen our distribution network globally. Working with trusted Cat dealers who have the resources, service and support expected by McCloskey customers is of paramount importance. We anticipate Pon Equipment will contribute significantly to our growth in the marketplace," said Seamus Doyle, international sales manager for McCloskey International. "Pon Equipment has excellent relationships with customers in the mining and construction industries, and working together will benefit not only our companies but - more importantly - their customers."

Jörgen van der Voorden, segment manager industry & recycling at Pon Equipment added, "We project significant growth in the construction and waste industries in the next five years, and are

aligning our product offerings to these emerging opportunities."

Pon Equipment customers across all industries with the Caterpillar brand. McCloskey products will be offered for the Industry and Waste markets, complementing other globally recognised brands such as

Komptech. When asked why Pon Equipment chose to become a McCloskey dealer, Jörgen noted that: "the addition of McCloskey's product range secures our strategic position as a full solutions company. We can now offer a total product portfolio to current and potential new customers."





Kelly European operate a fleet of fully maintained Scania, DAF, Volvo and Iveco tractor units. The new Scania V8 520 decorated in the celebratory livery is ready to drive the business into its 35th year.

KELLY EUROPEAN FREIGHT BUSINESS IS BLOOMING

Eamonn and Ita Kelly probably could never have imagined that the business seeds they planted back in their wholesale flower business in 1980 would grow into the healthy operation it is in 2016.

Today the Kelly family's global business operates from a 5,000 sq m custom built, temperature controlled building in Lisburn, Northern Ireland. Based on best practices viewed over the years in the Netherlands the site houses every aspect of cut flower and pot plant processing, storage and delivery as well as a well stocked and hugely impressive floral sundries department.

Kelly Flowers is renowned amongst flower professionals in Northern Ireland for cut flowers and pot plants moved freshly from source to Northern Ireland on a daily basis. Making this happen seamlessly is a 24/7 global operation in which the Netherlands plays a central role in the commercial and logistical challenge. Kelly's Dutch depot and transport hub is sited at the Rijnsburg flower auction, less than an hour drive from the main Dutch seaports.

Kelly European Freight was established to support the flower business by sons Adrian and Patrick Kelly in 1997. Their thriving flower business needed a reliable method of transportation from suppliers in Holland to their warehouse in Northern Ireland delivering perishable stock directly without losing valuable time. Having been frustrated by the unreliability of external transport companies they decided that the only way to get it right was to do it themselves. In the beginning the company started with one unit, one trailer and three members of staff dedicated to the transport business. The rest, you could say, is history !!

Anno 2016, the road transport leg, operates 30 driver accompanied temperature controlled articulated lorries into the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany and Sweden, with a major focus on groupage departures to and from the Benelux on a daily basis. Kelly European Freight collect and deliver over 50 return loads per week from single pallets up to full trucks.

Kelly specialises in refrigerated transport with dual temperature control trailers allowing a combination of chilled,

frozen or ambient goods to be transported on the same trailer. The facilities at the new purpose built headquarters permit up to the minute loading and unloading with short term temperature controlled storage facilities. Having four custom built loading bays at their disposal enables a quick and easy loading and un-loading of goods for dispatch across Ireland, mainland UK and Europe.

In striving to provide that reliable service that they required for their own business, they found that other businesses, especially those involved in fresh and perishable goods both in Ireland and Europe, also had a requirement for attention to detail and a 'no-nonsense' attitude.

So whether it be, for example, meat, fruit and veg, dairy, seafood, petfood in bulk, wholesale or retail packs, and it requires reliable, efficient and cost effective palletised delivery in and out of European depots then Kelly has developed the experience, knowledge and daily routes to break down physical and psychological distance barriers to satisfy local and European partners.

A Northern Ireland client who recently started supplying a major retailer in the Netherlands increased their delivery performance to 99.9% when they transferred their deliveries from containerised shipping to Kelly's driver accompanied service!

Kelly European Freight also works with selected Dutch transport specialists to provide services further into the hinterland of Europe with same day departures ensuring that goods can be delivered into Austria, Italy, Poland, Czech Republic, and Hungary for example, within 72 hours of leaving the province.

However, perhaps the greatest strength of the Kelly business is the strong family connection, nurtured from father and mother to sons and daughters, short lines of communication, and their family values imparted to their loyal, hardworking and knowledgeable staff to achieve highest standard of products and services.

The family business continues to grow based on the 'can do' mentality which has been germinated from those initial seedlings all those years ago.