

Efficient, sustainable and extremely reliable

Quarter century night distribution let car companies excel in service

Fast, reliable, efficient and sustainable: The automotive industry has discovered the advantages of night distribution 25 years ago. Items ordered at the end of the day will be ready before the next working day. This enables car companies to provide excellent service to their customers.

It is 25 years since Parts Express started with night distribution in The Netherlands. In the mid-1990s, this innovation was a real success for garage companies. They saw the number of car models and thus the number of parts rapidly increase, but could not afford to put all parts in stock. At the same time they saw the demands of their customers increase: No one wanted to miss his car for more than two days. With the ability to deliver the parts at night, Parts Express enabled garage companies to improve their service and reduce the herd on working capital.

Now in 2019, Night distribution can no longer be thought of in the automotive sector. Dealer companies throughout the Netherlands and Belgium order the missing parts at the end of the day. While the car mechanics enjoy their sleep, the drivers of Parts Express deliver those parts in a safe and reliable way. When the mechanics appear on their work the next morning, they can get started right away. "Waiting for parts is no longer necessary", says Norbert van Lasts, general manager of Parts Express.

Extremely reliable

Van Duuren and his colleague Tom de Vos are convinced that the automotive sector will continue to rely on the many advantages of night distribution. Just look at the increasing crowds on the highways. Night distribution is an efficient, durable and extremely reliable alternative, explains De Vos. "Moreover, night distribution prevents disruption of the work process. No one is required to receive the driver or to help with unloading. "

If companies opt for night distribution, Parts Express picks up the shipments at the end of the day or the beginning of the evening. If all shipments arrive between 21.00 and 22.00 at the central transfer center in Vianen, they are sorted by route. The shipments per route are loaded in a truck, after which the driver sets off. Usually that is around midnight. "On average, every truck has thirty to forty shipments," explains De Vos.

Scan of every operation

As with day distribution, an error-free delivery process is crucial. After all, the receiver is not present at night to check the shipment. Every operation is therefore validated with barcode scanning. "Every shipment is scanned during loading, but also during unloading. When the driver arrives at the location, he scans a special barcode at that location and the dispatch units he delivers. That proves that the goods have arrived at the correct destination, " says De Vos.

Night distribution requires trust in the service provided by a service provider such as Parts Express. After all, the driver comes by when no one is present, often with a key to put the goods in safely. "We work as much as possible with regular drivers and fixed routes. The drivers come back the next day and know the way, even in the dark. Moreover, he receives a detailed location description for each address including instructions and eventual, " says Van Duuren.

Automatic reporting

In addition to companies, Parts Express also delivers in delivery vans of installers and fitters. Even if that bus is unexpectedly not in the familiar place, the driver of Parts Express knows where to find it. De Vos: "We have a system that allows us to follow the bus and record the geographical position when the key is removed from the contact. We can further increase reliability by using electronic locks. Consider a slot for which the driver receives a one-time digital code that is only valid for a specific period of time. "

Of course, customers are extensively informed about the delivery process. They automatically receive a report with the status of the shipments. Which shipments are and which are not delivered? "If there

are incidents, the driver makes pictures on the spot and we link them directly to the shipment. But we hardly know incidents. Our delivery rate is above 99 percent. "

Long and large items

What distinguishes Parts Express from other distribution specialists is the possibility to take long goods and large items. This is particularly useful for electrical and installation companies. If an radiator or sink is urgently needed, Parts Express will take care of it. Many distribution companies set limits on the dimensions of packaging due to the limitations of their sorting systems. Van Duuren: "Because we sort everything manually, we offer maximum flexibility. Even if there are peaks, we can easily scale up by hiring extra people. "

Benefits and trends

The advantages for the automotive sector are numerous. Items that they order at the end of the working day are already available the next morning before the workday starts. The mechanics can get started right away. And it saves operations during the day, because people are not disturbed during their work.

But Night distribution alone is no longer sufficient. Automobile companies are increasingly making use of same-day delivery, so they can still have the right parts on the same day. If a company finds out in the morning that a certain item is not in stock, then Parts Express will deliver it. The drivers depart punctually at 12.00 from Vianen, so that the shipments are still before 15.30 at the destination. They make use of vans, which carry a maximum of three packages per consignment. "Same Day Express is a good addition to our existing processes. Certainly now speed of supply becomes increasingly important.

More about Parts Express

Parts Express specializes in fast-meshed distribution of parts and components. A quarter of a century ago Parts Express introduced an important logistical innovation: night distribution.

This unique service has become commonsense in the automotive sector. In addition to night distribution, Parts Express also offers next-day distribution, same-day distribution and warehousing. With depots in the north, middle and south of the country and in Belgium, the family owned company offers an extremely meshed and reliable network. Parts Express's head office is in Vianen. For more information, visit www.partsexpress.nl.

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