

Pearson Shared Services select Widdowson for *palletised distribution of books*



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Karen Taylor
Operations Support Manager
Pearson Shared Services

Located in Rugby, Pearson Shared Services is the company responsible for the distribution, IT and customer services for both the Penguin UK and Pearson Education brands. In total, the company sends out over 110 million books each year.

Some of the books are collected by the retailers themselves from the Rugby DC, small volumes are sent out by carrier but the bulk orders are now palletised and distributed by the Widdowson Group which won a prestigious three year haulage contract with Pearson Shared Services.

A dedicated team providing quality service

Karen Taylor, Operations Support Manager for Pearson Shared Services comments, “As we went through the tendering process to find a suitable UK haulier it became clear that the Widdowson Group fulfilled our selection criteria of quality service combined with competitive pricing.

“We were looking for a company which was big enough to ensure they had sufficient capacity for the volumes of our deliveries, but not so big that we would be faceless. Personal service is important and we were impressed that Widdowson put together a dedicated project team for the implementation and cutover.”



Environmentally friendly approach

Taylor continues, "For green reasons, we had a preference to use a local company - their fleet wouldn't need to travel far to collect the books from us. As we are a known consigner site, it was also essential that our chosen haulier could adhere to the same security regulations as we do for our deliveries to air freight shippers."

The books are distributed to two very different markets: Penguin books to major retailers including Amazon, Waterstones and W H Smith; Pearson Education deliveries, however, are of a more seasonal nature and go to wholesalers, schools and colleges.

Two way communication equals efficiency

The Widdowson distribution contract has now been running for over 12 months and Karen Taylor highlights the importance of good communication, "We have developed a really strong two way communication system between our companies. This has led to greater efficiencies on both sides, enabling our relationship to grow from strength to strength."

Track and trace technology

The Widdowson Group continues to invest heavily in the latest computerised technology to plan and administrate its modern fleet of more than 120 vehicles. Every lorry is fitted with satellite tracking so that customers can follow the progress of their loads by simply logging on to the internet.

Taylor concludes, "The other major benefit of using Widdowson is their web based routing and tracking systems. This is important because although our customer service staff are located in Harlow, they can access the information directly from the internet. This means they can deal with delivery enquiries by providing real time information at the push of a button.

"I understand that Widdowson constantly looks to update its tracking and routing software so as a company, Pearson Shared Services reaps the benefit from that investment."

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