

A SINGLE VIEW



In this exclusive interview with Logistics 100 member **Kathryn Lewis**, operations director at Advanced Supply Chain, we discuss e-commerce, thoughts from the coal face and a new single view. Kirsty Adams reports.

Kirsty Adams (KA): What trends are influencing logistics in 2017?

Kathryn Lewis (KL): *Customers have become more educated on choice in delivery options; no longer can retailers send products however they want, customers want the option to pick which delivery method suits them. This has had a major impact in 2016 and will continue to do so in 2017. A major trend is the use of technology to increase delivery speeds. On a larger scale we have seen the first wave of drones being utilised for delivery by Amazon; it will be interesting to see how this develops as public awareness increases. The drones are a symptom of the continuing trend of people wanting products more immediately. E-commerce's rate of growth has slowed down and the next arena for retailers to compete is the speed at which they get the product to the consumer.*

KA: What challenges does the logistics industry face in 2017? How are you tackling them?

KL: *Where the consumer is demanding faster delivery that they can track, retailers need and expect a transparent end-to-end supply chain which gives them agility to monitor all aspects of the product life cycle from supplier to customer. At ASCG we have developed our own software and systems which allow for visibility at all stages of the supply chain. We provide integrated solutions to run alongside the retailers' own systems allowing them to deliver what the customer wants. A driving force behind the developments at ASCG is our business solutions Director, Will Robinson, who has overseen the implementation of our in-house systems from conception through to award-winning offerings. Some of the more recent projects include improvements to the system straddling driver app, customer kiosks and databases which link supplier, retailer, logistics provider and customer for a single view of the supply chain world.*

KA: It was recently reported that ASCG is launching a new European road freight division. How will this change your

operating model and improve your supply chain?

KL: *The new division has grown out of a demand from customers for a high-quality road freight service to complement ASCG's existing offering with a wide range on fast moving consumer goods products. The service fills in the last gap in our operating model, to create a complete end-to-end service right across Europe which gives our customers more visibility and control which improves the service we offer.*

KA: When in your career have you had to challenge traditional or outdated ways of thinking?

KL: *I think sometimes we get caught up on calling processes and ways of thinking traditional or outdated implying they don't have a place in business. These processes and ideas had a place at the time they were implemented, and still do in the right situation. It's more about continually looking at why and how we do what we do, assessing what the benefits and challenges are of that way of working or if changes are needed to improve, not only one person's results but the businesses as a whole. I believe the people working at the coal face are the people who understand what is going on and can suggest changes to improve things at a faster pace and provide some of the bigger savings. Whilst there will always be times you have to do things just to get them done, it's important to take opportunities to educate the full team to understand what the goal is and involve them in the journey. I don't believe anyone comes in to do a bad job or cause problems, it is a lack of understanding of how that work impacts the wider business – that is why people do things in what could be seen as an outdated way.*

Using my abilities as a qualified trainer and coach, I have worked with the management teams in multiple roles to adapt their way of communicating with both the general workforce and their management peers to drive change in culture and embed company values.

KA: What did you want to be when you



were growing up? Did you plan to work in logistics?

KL: *My dream job when I was a child would have been a show jumper. That was despite the fact I hadn't even been on a horse – that didn't seem important to me at the time. After giving up that pipe dream my first job within logistics was a temporary job at Business Express (Littlewoods's transport arm at the time which would eventually become Shop Direct and Yodel) manually keying in delivery notes. After developing within this role I moved into the distribution management side in the returns centre and the rest is history.*

KA: What do you consider your greatest achievement?

SD: *Personally for me it's seeing my son grow into an amazing young man and knowing that as a single mum I've done a good job. Professionally this year it has been receiving the recognition of my peers within the logistics industry both with the inclusion on this list and in winning the Leader of the Year award given by the FTA Everywoman in Transport and Logistics. ■*

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