

Rudolph Horváth

The agile chick

The spirit of enterprise runs deep across Hungary. Alongside large national transport groups and branches of western transporters, many medium sized companies have taken advantage of a rapidly developing market to lay the foundations for long-term growth. Just like this fragile, yellow-feathered bird, which could yet turn into a formidable cockerel.



Rudolph Horváth is the type of company that has benefited from a rapidly growing market to develop its ambitious plans.

The history of Rudolph Horváth is the same as that of many Central European entrepreneurs. In 1995 he founded his transport company in a country undergoing major reconstruction and soon benefited from Europe's transport market being gradually opened up. Since Hungary joined the European Union, its growth has exploded: + 30% between 2004 and 2005. The company focuses all its efforts on a single sector (automotive suppliers), only operates between the assembly plants and the suppliers in Western Europe, whilst ignoring Central Europe's domestic markets. Its main accounts are Michelin, Lear Corporation, Bosch, Arvin Meritor and Carrier.

An American-style vision

The results of the company's vision, if not spectacular in terms of size (110 vehicles), are all the more evident

"The average age of the fleet has fallen to almost 2.17 years."

when visiting the company. An air of professionalism circulates throughout, from the despatch department to the workshop and to the talks held by



SUMMARY OF RUDOLPH HORVÁTH

Head office: Gyöngyös (Hungary)

Capital: 5 million EUR

Turnover 2005: 17.5 million EUR (+ 30%)

Fleet: 110 units comprised of 80 tractor units (Scania, Mercedes) and 30 rigs (Mercedes).

Trailer fleet: 150 semitrailers (Schmitz, Schwartzmüller, Krone, Kögel), 60% of which are mega trailers and 12 container chassis.

the management team. It is still rare to hear about a transport company, especially one of this size, making agility into a competitive driving force. This idea, which was developed in the USA in the 90s, is used by numerous global leaders however. Without making judgements about the value of 'agility programmes', this says a lot about the vision of the Horváth company.

Since 2003 the company has rounded off its transport operations with a little logistics and a customs service, whilst its main base at Gyöngyös is going to be increased by an extra 2,000 m² in order to meet with demand. Yet this remains a modest service provider, even if the first section of the warehouse has a temperature-controlled climate.

The company's fleet is surprisingly new: its average age has fallen from 2.5 years to 2.18 years when it resolved

to increase the fleet to cope with a big jump in business in 2005. As for its trailer equipment, the average age is just as low at 2.17 years!

Operating as it does over long distances (its main destinations are Italy, Scandinavia and the United Kingdom), one would imagine that the company takes a close interest in the complete liberalisation of cabotage in Europe. It has not had the time yet...

Lajos Nagy Koloszári (technical director) explains this quite simply thus: "We already have enough work on our hands with the development of Hungary-European traffic – cabotage will only present us with a relatively small opportunity." Must we deduce from this that the only transport companies in Central Europe running cabotage operations are those who do not have enough work on the traditional routes?

■ Claude Wenz