

Acres & Acres Supply Chain Consulting
“Annual Report” 2009

Acres & Acres Supply Chain Consulting is approaching 7 years of operation and 2009 was certainly the most economically uncertain since sole proprietor Bill Acres stepped away from the corporate logistics world and senior management positions in favour of providing independent consulting advice to supply chain organisations.

Paradoxically this provided the most varied portfolio of work in project management, training, strategic consulting and practical advice since 2004 and ensured that all those skills developed over 25 years in the logistics industry were well utilised.

The website www.acresandacres.co.uk serves to showcase the core offerings of A&ASCC.

Bill has been working both in the international and local national market this year, by working with fellow consultants in established logistics and general consultancies. This enables him to complement the skills of others on broader jobs whilst also accessing the expertise of specialists to provide best advice on logistics projects.

Examples of 2009 projects carried out are:

Relocating a major fashion brand from its national DC to an in-sourced, single, multi-brand DC operation. Following a number of successful projects for this client, Bill was retained to project manage the relocation of this major UK womenswear brand from a third party UK NDC to their in house multi-brand operation. The move was planned and implemented over a 30 week period and achieved without any negative impact to retail operations. As part of the project new capacity was installed into the in-house DC (through additional mezzanine floors) and process improvements applied to improve volume throughput, accuracy and reporting. A new DC operating layout and business process was created. The move occurred in August 2009 and Bill led the stock transfer to successful completion over one weekend. Despite the challenging trading conditions still facing high street retail, this multi brand DC is now well placed to provide industry leading service and cost performance.

International Supply Chain review in UAE

A&ASCC went international this year with a project in the United Arab Emirates to review the supply chain activities of a major drinks manufacturer. Bill contributed with colleagues to a wider corporate review for a major local manufacturer and supplier to the Middle East market. This project will lead to a number of strategic projects to optimise their operations in the region.

Strategic Review for niche retailer

The economic uncertainties of the first quarter led many companies into major strategic decision making at speed and Acres & Acres were invited to conduct a brief strategic review for a well known niche retailer to determine their future needs in the supply chain. The exercise involved a brief audit of the companies DCs and systems along with current plans for expansion. Given the good quality of the DC and current progress to improve systems, no change was the best option. Recommendations were made as to the system, reporting and process changes required to achieve improved inventory and space control.

Training delivery on supply chain courses

Bill was in 2009 invited to deliver training course materials with partner Learn Logistics to international clients. Both course delivery and training material development remain a significant part of the Acres & Acres portfolio. Bill has bookings in place for 2010 and expects this area to be a growing one in the future. An invitation to lecture at a UK university is another project for early in the New Year.

Supply Chain review and new DC sizing

Acres & Acres were retained by a well known fashion retailer to review their current supply chain and provide advice on best actions to optimise it. Successful trading had resulted in a need to expand DC capacity for their ambitious growth plans. Following a careful review of inbound and outbound warehouse operations, an analysis provided evidence for a new DC acquisition. Project planning was provided for this major development which will occur during 2010.

Warehouse acquisition review for increased capacity

Acres & Acres were asked to review a warehouse for acquisition by a food manufacturer to assist at the interface of production with materials and primary storage. The existing racking was assessed for suitability and recommendations made about reconfiguration for improved capacity and utilisation. This client was also assisted to create and present their credentials as a 3PL provider of warehouse services in their expert area of operations.

E Commerce in-source to client DC

Having outsourced E Commerce fulfilment to a 3rd party on entry into online retailing some years ago, a major fashion client has continued to bring those operations back in-house and save considerable cost. Acres & Acres were asked to support the stock transfer and interface with the 3rd party provider, given experience in similar transfers and start-ups. The transfer was seamless and customer service unaffected.

Management Development Programmes

Canongate Learning Ltd, has been launched to provide structured management development programmes for supply chain managers. Company specific programmes include training, workshops and placements to ensure a results-based practical development experience. All are designed to promote a lifelong Continuing Professional Development ethos for the benefit of individual and employer alike. If this concept is of interest to you, please make contact on the numbers below.

Chartered Institute of Logistics & Transport

Bill also maintains a significant voluntary element to his activities, with his involvement in the Chartered Institute of Logistics & Transport. Bill remains West Midlands Regional Chairman as well as being a national Board member and trustee. Additionally Bill is a director of PTRC Education & Research Services Ltd, the leading organiser of training for the transport profession in the UK.

He has always believed CILT to be an unrivalled way of enhancing knowledge and keeping abreast of industry developments for the benefit of current & future clients.

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