

# Directions

From The Leaders in Vehicle Routing and Scheduling Technology

## Engineering efficiencies for PCServiceCall

**P**roving as powerful in the service management sector as in its more familiar logistics field, Paragon is helping PCServiceCall to increase service engineer efficiency and improve route planning. In managing a fleet of over two hundred home-based service engineers as one integrated resource, Paragon is saving PCServiceCall planning time, money and miles.

Through The Link, PC World, Currys, Partmaster Direct, Mastercare and PC City, the Dixons Group has an unrivalled position as the UK's leading provider of PCs, printers and software. It also has an ongoing installation and service commitment to its home-user and retail customers – a service that is fulfilled by PCServiceCall. With over 200 home-based engineers committed to fulfilling 1,200 or more visits each day, Paragon was faced with the challenge of scheduling a dispersed fleet of service engineers whilst maintaining the transport and vehicle routing efficiencies synonymous with the Paragon software brand.

The highly developed algorithms refined by Paragon have, in this instance, been configured

to automatically match a service engineer's capability to individual call-out problems and schedule timings accordingly. In addition, the system enables the central planners to deselect engineers that are unavailable on a particular day or at a particular time to ensure planned schedules match actual availability. These plans, which were previously produced regionally by five people over a 4-hour period, are now produced in just five minutes with only two people required to oversee the whole process for the UK.

Since its installation, Paragon's multi-site routing and scheduling system has streamlined what was previously a manually planned and regionally controlled service operation – a change that is resulting in mileage savings and reduced administration costs. "We are pleased with the way that the Paragon system has transformed our routing and scheduling operation," comments Mike Williams, Regional Manager. "The system's versatility and the team's understanding of our needs has resulted in a software implementation that can handle the complexities of our service management operation whilst still saving us time, money and miles."

## Real Time planning profits home delivery

**H**ome shopping may have revolutionised the way we buy everything from electrical goods to gifts and groceries, but there hasn't been a corresponding revolution in transport planning. Until now. New software from Paragon enables home delivery operators and e-tailers to overcome one of the biggest obstacles to transport profitability. With Paragon Real Time, higher service no longer means higher costs.

Designed for time-dependent delivery schedules requiring a customer delivery window promise at the time of order placement, Paragon Real Time enables tight delivery windows to be offered without squeezing out operational profits. The new software can be interfaced with a company's internet-based home shopping or online booking system, and automatically assesses the proximity of each new order with already-routed deliveries.

By offering customers a choice of time window options that add minimal transport cost, the software accommodates individual customer preferences whilst maintaining a cost-effective transport operation. It also gives operators the flexibility to offer tighter or less efficient time windows at extra cost to the customer when their delivery demands don't fit easily within the part-built schedule. Initial results from trials of the new system indicate potential cost savings of up to 30%.

## Safeway selects Multi User Paragon for use nationwide



**S**afeway's 500 stores sell up to 22,000 products to over 8 million shoppers a week and are spread challengingly from Lerwick in the Shetland Islands to Gibraltar in the south and from the west of Northern Ireland to Lowestoft in East Anglia. As if this wasn't enough of a logistical test, the 750-vehicle grocery distribution operation is also required to help the retailer rise to its strategic challenge to be the 'best at fresh' and the 'best at availability'. As a result Safeway has brought in Paragon's 'best-of-breed' routing and scheduling system to plan its entire national operation on a daily basis. Paragon Integrated Fleets systems networked to depot-based Multi User terminals will be used across six regions. In total 36 systems will be used to plan and monitor the delivery of 11 million cases a week from Safeway's 19 regional distribution centres, including 15 Fleet Controller systems to enable the real-time monitoring of the transport operation.

### ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

- ➔ **TNT Corporate Logistics purchases Paragon for worldwide use**
- ➔ **Norbert Dentressangle chooses Paragon**

## Dairy saves 10%

Getting fresh milk from farm to creamery can be a complex business, as Northern Ireland's largest dairy company, United Dairy Farmers, knows. Over 3,000 farms, 70 vehicles, 13 creameries, five depots, three driver sources and one crucial factor – time – are involved in its 960,000,000

litre-a-year operation. Bringing Paragon with Multi Depot and Integrated Fleets on board to view and plan all these elements as one has overcome this complexity – and put an end to vehicle under use. By rationalising fixed routes, factoring in farmyard and vehicle size compatibility as well as a significant



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*Stephen Cameron, Transport Manager.*



peak-season shift to daily collections, Paragon has produced revised transport plans generating operational efficiencies. “As a direct result of Paragon we are now saving time and miles,” says Stephen Cameron, Transport Manager. “Overall the system has enabled us to increase tanker utilisation by 10% as a result of more efficient routing.”

## Norbert Dentressangle chooses Paragon

As one of the best-known names in pan-European distribution, operating from 190 sites, employing 10,500 people and making 600 English Channel crossings a day, logistics solutions specialist, Norbert

Group's head office near Lyon as well as five demanding test evaluations. Won over by the quality of Paragon's results, its European maps and its responsive support team, Norbert Dentressangle chose Paragon and will initially be using



Dentressangle, has added Paragon to its array of commercial advantages, using the system's strategic planning capabilities to improve the quality of its transport service. Faced with competition from France's leading supplier of vehicle routing and scheduling solutions, Paragon was put to the test in an assessment process that included a semi-operational pilot at the

the software to model new distribution operations, calculate transport resource requirements, cost alternative strategies and present solutions to prospective clients all over Europe.

As part of the Group's long-term vision, there are also plans for Paragon to be implemented operationally at a number of key continental sites within 12 months.

## Central solution for Laura Ashley

Home furnishings have played a major part in building the internationally recognised Laura Ashley brand, and a premium home delivery operation for custom-made orders has been created to support its customer service values. To underpin this national home delivery service – which not only delivers furniture and soft furnishings on time but also employs specially trained staff to assemble the made to order goods – Laura Ashley has installed Paragon's routing and scheduling system.

Laura Ashley's decision to service its Premier Home Delivery operation with its own fleet of vehicles owes much to its concentration on customer service and cost-effective quality. The search for a routing and scheduling system able to embed these values into the distribution operation, through centrally planned and reliable routes, brought the firm to Paragon.

Paragon's Multi Depot application now plans up to 400 home deliveries a day made by a fleet of over 40 vehicles operating out of a network of six nationwide depots. The system takes two minutes to produce routes and schedules that meet agreed time

greater control of this specialist operation, customer service could not be compromised in any way. Paragon provides us with a simple and effective way of sorting complex information and generating delivery schedules that we, and our customers, can rely on.”

**“Paragon provides delivery schedules that we and our customers can rely on”** Neil Lawther, Transport Manager.

windows, automatically accounting for vehicle capacity and availability as well as the delivery and assembly requirements of each order. Once reviewed and signed off by a member of the transport planning team the routed calls are passed to the call centre operators who contact customers to confirm their delivery details. The whole process is completed in under two hours.

Paragon's planning speed and trustworthy timings are proving fundamental to the success of this customer-focused process. As Transport Manager Neil Lawther says, “While we were keen to benefit from



## Raleigh rallies to cycle challenge

With growing numbers of foreign competitors in the UK market, many using overnight carriers to meet increasing customer demands, Raleigh recognised the need to respond rapidly and radically. By using Paragon to shift distribution efficiency up a gear, it has been able to reduce the order cycle while capitalising on the value of its experienced drivers and liveried fleet. But Paragon has contributed to top gear performance in other areas too, with related cost savings yielding a payback period of less than 12 months.

Making the move from manual to computerised planning involved the integration of Paragon with Raleigh's existing order processing and warehouse management systems to streamline the daily planning and loading of 150-200 deliveries from two depots to over 1,000 retail outlets. With planning time dramatically reduced, orders are processed more quickly and the overall delivery cycle has been cut from three days to two. A significant customer service improvement this might be, but it is also proving to have a number of knock-on benefits. The traditional two-day pre-weekend peak is,

for example, now spread across an extra day, which means less warehouse overtime and less use of costly emergency carriers.

and the shorter order cycle have also led to a whole series of additional improvements. We hold a day's less



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*Steve Wigley, Distribution Centre Manager.*

“Paragon was the only system that could produce more efficient routes than our manual ones,” says Distribution Centre Manager Steve Wigley. “As a direct result of its implementation our delivery operation is now more efficient than ever before. Better vehicle utilisation

stock and on average we can invoice a day earlier – both of which give us a cash flow benefit. Our planners are happier too because there is less tedious administration activity – the Paragon implementation has been a resounding success!”



## NEWS Briefs

### GOING GLOBAL WITH TNT LOGISTICS

TNT Corporate Logistics has selected Paragon as its strategic routing and scheduling system supporting new business development in Europe, Australia, Asia and Latin America. Having bought 18 Paragon systems in total, complete with Integrated Fleets and Multi Depot, as well as Paragon maps for over 20 countries, TNT Logistics is setting about adding to its 1,100 worldwide contracts. Supporting TNT Logistics' reputation for state-of-the-art solutions, Paragon will analyse operations, evaluate scenarios and calculate transport costs. With the capability for 10,000 calls, 200 depots and 1,000 routes, the system will enable TNT Logistics to target just about every sector everywhere from Sweden to Singapore and South Korea, and India to Italy and Indonesia.

### EFFICIENCY GAINS FOR ACCO UK

Needing to streamline its warehouse operation from a pick-by-zone to a pick-by-route regime meant that for ACCO, one of the UK's largest manufacturers of office products, faster route scheduling was a must. This key business goal has been achieved with the installation of Paragon's Multi Depot system, which is now used in the early evening to calculate routes and schedules for nationwide next day deliveries. This faster scheduling has enabled the integration of pick, pack and despatch operations into a single smooth process, providing increased warehouse efficiency as orders are picked and loaded overnight in reverse drop sequence ready for despatch early the next morning.

“Paragon enables us to improve customer service by automatically scheduling deliveries to meet increasing numbers of customer time windows”, comments Kevin Carr, Distribution Centre Manager. “Combine this with warehouse cost savings of 5.6% per year, increased vehicle efficiency, reduced sub-contractor costs and a dramatic cut in planning administration makes Paragon pivotal to our distribution operation. We couldn't plan without it!”

# Paragon welcomes...



## Pets At Home

Pets At Home, the out of town pet superstore chain with over 140 outlets located throughout the UK, has bought standard Paragon for use at its brand new purpose-built distribution centre situated at Stoke. The system will be used for both strategic analysis of delivery routes and operational daily planning of pet supply deliveries to stores.

## Cardale Group

The Cardale Group, the largest manufacturer of domestic garage doors in the UK, has chosen Multi Depot Paragon for both operational and strategic use in its multi-site operation to control its wholly owned distribution fleet for nationwide door and electric opener deliveries. Major growth in Cardale's supply base, including an increasing requirement for site and home deliveries, requires a system to support

the expanding day to day operation and also to remodel the delivery activities throughout the entire Cardale Group.

## Fine Lady Bakeries



Fine Lady Bakeries, the Banbury-based producer of bread and rolls

has installed Single Depot Paragon to schedule routes for its 40-vehicle fleet making deliveries to supermarkets, convenience stores and other retail outlets throughout England.

## Christian Salvesen Goodyear Dunlop

Christian Salvesen, specialist suppliers of outsourced supply chain services, has chosen Multi User Paragon to schedule the deliveries of Goodyear and Dunlop products throughout the UK in an operation involving 1,400 deliveries a day using a fleet of over 80 vehicles

spread across nine depots. One central system will be used to create the day's transport plans for all depots, whilst additional networked systems will enable local adjustments to be made.



## Washing away routing inefficiencies



Faced with an influx of new business and rising transport costs, Clean Linen Services decided to flush out inefficiencies in its fixed route network by using Paragon to purge the distribution operation of under utilised routes and surplus vehicles. Used by logistics consultants Midland Fleet Management to freshen up the 14-vehicle operation making daily, once and twice weekly deliveries to 2,000 customers in southern

England, the system has reduced the fleet by 14%, with additional cuts in associated costs such as vehicle leasing and fuel. Paragon will now be used periodically to ensure that these high standards are maintained as the operation evolves. "Although we only introduced Paragon-produced routes two months ago we are already looking at a transport saving of up to £90,000 each year," says General Manager Ken Ballinger.

## Enhancing haulier routes

When an operation's workload becomes heavy enough to warrant sub-contracting additional vehicles, the load can be lightened thanks to a new feature from Paragon.

With Paragon customers reporting the need to hire externally located sub-

contractors to fulfil excess delivery requirements, the development team was challenged with extending the efficiencies of the system to deliver smarter haulier routes within the transport plan. By developing the software to handle the differences between externally located

and depot-based vehicles, such as different driver duty time allocations and 'outbound' rather than 'petal-shaped' routing, the team has achieved its goal. So, now Paragon can plan cost effective routes wherever the vehicles start or finish their journeys.

to find out more...

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