

# Directions

FROM **PARAGON SOFTWARE SYSTEMS PLC**  
LEADERS IN COMPUTERISED VEHICLE ROUTING AND SCHEDULING

## European partnerships expand Paragon's horizons

Paragon's flexibility is set to guarantee it a place on the global stage. With implementations for major continental companies setting the scene, successful partnerships in Hungary and Sweden will ensure Paragon plays an increasingly active role throughout Europe.

Delivering distribution advantage is something Paragon can achieve wherever a company is based. It has achieved it for Henkel in Spain and Portugal, Whirlpool in France and Benelux and General Motors in Germany. And it's now doing it in Eastern Europe and Scandinavia, working with partners in Hungary and Sweden to complete its European coverage.



Managing Director of Paragon Hungária, Bálint Hirkó (standing) leads a training session

a leading magazine distributor, TNT Logistics and the country's largest oil company. Managing Director, Bálint Hirkó, sees significant potential for the partnership in a country determined to catch up with the rest of Europe: "We are finding that the food industry, pharmaceuticals, the postal service and security firms in particular are interested in the combined benefits of Paragon's leading vehicle routing and scheduling solution and our regional distribution knowledge."

Paragon's Swedish partner, software solutions specialist Unicorn Systems AB, has had similar success following a marketing drive spearheaded by Managing Director Håkan Amnäs.

Systems sold and installed by Unicorn only link with 'best of breed' software to complement the range of software solutions they provide and enable optimal supply chain efficiencies to be achieved. Unicorn's decision to form a strategic partnership with Paragon reflects this ethos, as they see Paragon as the best distribution planning tool available in the marketplace.

In just over a year, a diverse range of companies in Sweden, from supermarkets to glass and office furniture manufacturers have made Paragon their first port of call and one, Tvättman textile services, has already bought the system to streamline its distribution operation.

### Global horizons

"This track record demonstrates that providing the right software, the right support and a means of working with clients so they're confident that buying Paragon is the right decision is possible anywhere in the world," says David Holmes. Which is just as well. Paragon is currently talking to companies in Brazil, China, USA and Asia Pacific.



Paragon's flexibility means that it is playing an increasingly active role throughout Europe

### European partners

Lessons learnt during a decade of European implementations have driven the way Paragon works with its partners. "While today's technology and our multilingual sales and support staff make it possible for us to work with companies anywhere in Europe," explains Paragon's Managing Director David Holmes, "our joint foreign partnerships mean we can add local expertise and support to our UK strengths." It's proving a winning combination.

Paragon Hungária, specialists in implementing distribution management systems, has sold 12 Hungarian-language versions to, among others,

A new broom is sweeping through the distribution operation of Swedish textile cleaners Tvättman - Paragon. The clean-up operation will combine two separate services and improve the efficiency of 700 daily deliveries and collections to 6,000 hotels, shops, businesses and restaurants all within 20 miles of its Malmo depot.

## NEWS briefs

### WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY

Delivering meat to city-centre and rural butchers across Hungary using a fleet of 20 refrigerated vehicles is a task SOLAMI MEAT COMPANY has been undertaking using Paragon for the past three years. But now that sustained success has put the company in a position to take its scheduling system to task it has decided to change – to the latest Paragon for Windows version. 'Paragon provides us with very good routes,' explains Solami's Logistics Manager Zoltan Kaszonyi, 'and with better interactive facilities we'll be able to process our many special limitations and requests even more easily.'

### SUPERMARKET SWEEP

When Austro-Hungarian TRANSPORTA BUDAÖRS LTD found its famed service standards dropping in its food distribution division, Paragon won the contract to help it rise to the challenge of surging demand from supermarkets. Already in use for its bottled gas delivery operation, Paragon was brought in to control an even bigger fleet and address specific issues: issues centring on getting fresh food in store before 7am, late orders on lorries by 11am and ambient food delivered efficiently through the day. 'Paragon is so flexible we can be sure that it will find an acceptable solution to every individual delivery problem,' says General Manager Laszlo Szolga.

Our joint foreign partnerships mean we can add local expertise and support to our UK strengths

# Partnership is the way forward says TDG

**Why has TDG, one of Europe's leading logistics companies, decided to change the way it works with the market leader in scheduling software? For two very good reasons. Meeting present needs and rising to future challenges.**

For a number of years, TDG has successfully used Paragon to deliver distribution efficiency to key clients such as ICI Paints, Delta Crompton Cables, Chloride Motive Power and Whirlpool (France). The decision to standardise on Paragon across Europe reflects TDG's conviction that common use of the system throughout the Group will maximise these efficiencies and support their plans for business growth.

## Early success

'Focusing on one supplier in this way allows us to learn how to maximise the benefits of the system,' explains TDG's IT Director Robert Gorrie. 'We can implement faster and where we need Paragon to link with other applications, the interfacing has already been done. In fact, Paragon's versatility means it has already been possible to link it with our bespoke warehouse management system, Diablo, enabling us to close the information loop throughout the supply chain.'

TDG is also expecting the new partnership to enable it to open more doors. Not just because the detailed business information it provides makes it a strong business development tool. But also because, as Robert Gorrie, says, 'Paragon is able to gain a greater understanding of our business, which means it can respond quickly to any changing operational requirements we might have and develop system innovations to help provide us with that vital competitive edge.' This competitive edge has already resulted in new Paragon implementations for TDG clients Whirlpool (Holland), British Gas and packing product manufacturers, Smurfit.

*'Paragon is able to gain a greater understanding of our business, which means it can respond quickly to any changing operational requirements we might have and develop system innovations to help provide us with that vital competitive edge.'*

Robert Gorrie, TDG IT Director



TDG's IT Director, Robert Gorrie (right) confirms the Group's decision to standardise on Paragon, with David Holmes, Paragon's Managing Director

## Fast forward

Paragon is convinced that this type of partnership is the way forward. 'It's obviously easier,' says Paragon Managing Director David Holmes, 'to get on, implement a system from a supplier that you know and trust and start getting the benefits, than to spend months reassessing the market and negotiating each time you need to install a transport planning system.'

# Shaping the future at Panasonic UK

**Panasonic UK's new £40 million, state-of-the-art distribution centre completes a depot reorganisation programme whose strategic plans were supported by Paragon. But what gave Panasonic the confidence to put its future in Paragon's hands?**

It was the fast and effective implementation of systems at Bracknell and Wakefield that earned Paragon its place in Panasonic's future. For not only were the systems rapidly enhanced to meet exacting requirements, they also quickly secured savings that delivered a very quick payback period of less than nine months.



The use of Paragon helped to reshape Panasonic's distribution strategy

## Smooth operator

'Even at the sales stage, Paragon clearly understood our requirements,' says Panasonic's Simon Kay. 'More than this, they were willing to adapt their system to suit us – rather than the other way round.' Paragon also developed tailored enhancements to facilitate the automatic addition of late orders, the scheduling of wave orders and the progressive uploading of routes.

By the time Panasonic was ready to move on to the next stage, it knew Paragon's capabilities and commitment could help reshape its distribution strategy. A strategy centred on streamlining its nationwide operation to achieve the highest levels of accuracy and efficiency. Paragon's multi-depot scheduling capabilities were used to determine the most efficient transport infrastructure to underpin the operation of the flagship facility that was to lie at the heart of these plans.

## Role model

'Paragon was instrumental in the development of the Northampton depot,' explains Simon Kay. 'It would have been very difficult to optimise its efficiency without the system's modelling capability.' The result is a 400,000 sq. ft. depot occupying 19 acres of a 52-acre site, which can handle up to 100 vehicles a day.

The opening of the distribution centre was



the culmination of a project that called on many of Paragon's strengths and skills, from system enhancement to strategic modelling and software support. As Paragon's Sales and Marketing Director Charles Nockold says, 'We are delighted that Panasonic has achieved such a range of business improvements from the use of Paragon.'

*'It would have been very difficult to optimise the new depot's efficiency without Paragon's modelling capability'* Simon Kay, Panasonic UK Transport Manager

## IN WITH THE NEW

A drive to broaden the range of strategic distribution options devised for clients fuelled WINCANTON TRANSPORT'S exploration of the scheduling software market. Demonstrations by Paragon confirmed that the core product and additional modules such as Integrated Fleets, Compartments and Multi-Period Planner would give it the modelling flexibility it was looking for. After only a few months, Paragon for Windows has shown itself to be an instrumental tool in helping Wincanton to maintain its market leading position as a provider of innovative and cost effective solutions for its clients.

## BEST FOOT FORWARD

When shoe retailer STEAD & SIMPSON recognised that competition and a changing market could wrong foot them, they considered their options. Their 15-vehicle, fixed route delivery operation to 400 shops was already being reviewed periodically by a distribution consultancy using Paragon, taking new clients and volume changes into account. But putting the firm on a better footing was clearly going to involve more frequent fixed route analysis and more flexibility for the future. Buying Paragon and the Multi-Depot option for themselves has given Stead & Simpson the potential to move to dynamic scheduling and transhipping.

## BUILT TO LAST

Paragon has been firmly entrenched in WAVIN BUILDING PRODUCTS' 3-million-mile-a-year distribution operation for a decade – although its use has been anything but static. Ever since Wavin, Europe's largest manufacturer of plastic pipes and fittings, first secured 10-15% transport cost savings using Paragon, the system has been upgraded and enlarged and its role extended. Within the last few months it has been used to cost various theoretical changes to customer service standards. 'The whole order processing system relies on Paragon,' explains Wavin's Phil Tabinor, 'but over the years we've also come to rely on Paragon to steer us down the right path for the future.'



## New aid for fixed routes

Paragon's latest system is yet another example of the company's commitment to provide transport planners with finely-tuned, user-friendly tools to tighten control and maximise benefits. This time the benefits are targeted at managing fixed route operations.

For any distribution operation questioning how to retain the advantages of fixed route planning while avoiding the inefficiencies caused by the inevitable day-to-day variations, Fixed Route Manager could be the answer. By taking the key elements of Paragon's full system and directing them exclusively at the management of stable distribution operations, the module allows the efficiency of the routes to be maintained no matter what the variations.

'In a typical fixed route operation delivering similar orders to the same locations, the full Paragon system would be used as a central planning tool to rationalise the fixed routes and review them periodically,' explains Charles Nockold, Paragon's Sales and Marketing Director. 'With Fixed Route Manager installed in each depot, or centrally, and used to manage the day-to-day route changes, maximising the achievable benefits is sustained on a daily basis.' By enabling modified plans to be uploaded to the warehouse management system, the total operation can be streamlined.

Already in use by Tibbett & Britten on a key contract, Fixed Route Manager clearly has a role to play in operations designed by distribution contractors and



Paragon's new Fixed Route Manager ensures that the efficiency of routes is maintained

operated for their clients. Similarly, retailers and manufacturers with level demand profiles can use it to extend the power of Paragon to their outbases. And small fleet operators can use it to give manual planners a tool to respond rapidly to changes.

These changes in daily orders, downloaded in the usual way from the SOP system, are instantly assessed by Fixed Route Manager on the basis of feasibility, utilisation and cost. Colour-coded summaries and charts highlight where a route breaks capacity, driver hours or time window constraints, giving users the chance to contact customers, swap loads and take control. By using the mouse to drag calls from one route to another and immediately see the impact, they can quickly identify the best way of handling problems that arise.



## Time, gentlemen please

Sunderland brewer VAUX knew the time was right to move away from traditional distribution practices. It also knew it wouldn't be easy. It gave the task to Paragon, already in use by its sister operation Wards Brewery.

Successfully switching from familiar fixed routes to live daily scheduling meant securing the support of everyone involved with this 23-vehicle operation spanning a complex region from Dumfries down to Humberside and across the Pennines. Drivers had to be convinced of the system's ability to balance

work evenly among them. Warehouse staff wanted confirmation that enough vehicles would return during the day to avoid the need for night loading. And publicans and hoteliers needed reassurance that access restrictions and time windows would be taken into account. In practice, Paragon has proved it can satisfy the needs of all those involved.

Interfaced with Vaux's order processing system, Paragon has introduced improved control which, importantly for this particular implementation, is not only directed at securing cost and planning time reductions.

It is also directed at maximising the efficiency of existing work practices. Acceptance of the new system and acknowledgement of the advantages it brings to the current day-after delivery operation have encouraged Vaux to consider moving to next-day planning in the future.

Vaux is successfully using Paragon for live daily scheduling assuring deliveries of its renowned Lambton's beer



next step...  
call Paragon

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RALEIGH is on a fast track to flexible distribution planning as Paragon goes live at its Nottingham depot. And it's set to prove that computerised daily scheduling of deliveries to over 1,500 stores gains efficiency and loses none of the manual operators' knowledge of crucial constraints like lunch-hour closures and market days.

TOSHIBA has decided Paragon's got what it takes to give a clearer picture and facilitate centralised control of its audio-visual and air conditioning distribution operation. With retailers demanding that it operates more like a mobile warehouse, Toshiba's demands on its scheduling system include matching drivers with the right installation skills to the right deliveries.