

AVON PRODUCTS INC.

What women want

Avon Products Inc. is the world's leading direct seller of beauty and related products, with global annual sales of around €6.5bn. Founded in America in 1886, years before women had the right to vote, Avon now sells through almost five million independent sales representatives in more than 100 countries. Its vision? To be the company that best understands and satisfies the product, service and self-fulfilment needs of women globally.



The crux of Avon's business is people – people selling to people,” explains Caroline Owen, Avon’s Vice-President Order Fulfilment and Logistics for Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA). “We have very high values – trust, respect, belief, humility and integrity – and try to bring them to everything we do.” And Avon walks the talk: it has been one of Business Ethics magazine’s 100 Best Corporate Citizens six years running. In the EMEA region (turnover: €1.3bn+), Avon takes its “shop” into women’s homes in 31 countries. Caroline Owen is helping organise the company’s tremendous growth in Central and Eastern Europe – such as Russia, Ukraine and Romania – with support from Norbert Dentressangle Group. Here, basic lines (lipcare,



moisturisers, mass fragrance) are big hits, whereas in Western Europe advanced bodycare is the trend driver. "Our New York R&D centre generates hi-tech products that are often first to market," says Owen. They're high-quality too: in the beauty sector, only Avon offers a 100% money-back guarantee.

Close to its customers

Besides its world-class brand and powerful consumer channel, Avon's control over its production and retailing makes it more customer-responsive. Beyond products and service, Avon's dedication to women is expressed in its corporate culture - promoting its employees' life/work balance through flexi-working and childcare subsidies, for instance; and through the Avon Foundation, which has raised more than €380 m for the breast cancer cause - funding education, care and research to help find a cure. "Avon's a very special and very family-orientated company," says Caroline Owen, a 31-year Avon veteran - who, when she's not busy shipping products, naturally enjoys using them. "My favourite's got to be the fabulous Anew anti-ageing range!" she confesses with a laugh.

The drive for cost-efficiency

When Avon EMEA began to regionalise its logistics operation five years ago, the Group was well-placed to extend their partnership. "We were looking for more reliable and cost-effective providers," says Caroline Owen. In addition to its long-standing UK inter-warehouse transport contract, the Norbert Dentressangle Group now provides international haulage to the Polish production plant from Italy, France, Belgium and the UK; and between the UK and the plants in Poland and Germany.

But the logistics chief also has other, more demanding expectations. "A service orientation is number one - my transport partners must understand the dynamics and volatility of Avon's business. And I want them to come to me with opportunities to help my supply chain. Norbert is doing that."



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Transport on a European scale

For Avon, the Norbert Dentressangle Group handles:*

• International transport:

- 852 consignments from Great Britain to factories near Munich and Warsaw and central distribution warehouses in Côme and Madrid;
- 1,578 consignments to Great Britain from Germany, Italy and Poland;
- 250 consignments to Poland from France, and 120 from Belgium.

• Transport in Great Britain:

- 3,369 consignments from the central warehouse in Corby (Northamptonshire) to 8 regional distribution depots.

• New for 2006:

- the Group is making 1,600 extra deliveries between Germany, Italy and Poland.

** 2005 figures.*