

A grayscale photograph of a laboratory setting. In the foreground, a man with a beard and safety glasses is looking upwards and to the right. Behind him, a woman in a lab coat is also looking in the same direction. The background shows laboratory equipment and shelves.

CHEMICAL LOGISTICS: A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

The Agility & Brenntag Collaboration Story

THE CHALLENGE

Brenntag UK & Ireland is the market leader in the distribution of specialty, bulk and packaged chemicals and ingredients. 26 strategic locations, three sea-fed facilities, a dedicated fleet of over 100 vehicles, our dedicated expert teams serve over 20,000 customer accounts nationwide.

Brenntag UK wanted to create efficiencies in the complex transport operations without compromising their client focus or the quality of their customer service.

“Brenntag is the largest supplier of chemicals, both specialty and commodity, bulk and packed, across the life science, material science and environmental industries, including water treatment and AdBlue,” says Fred Worle, VP Supply Chain and Services, Brenntag EMEA. “In the UK, We have a relatively unusual mix of own assets and reliance on third party services which we have developed over a period of time through organic growth and acquisitions. We knew there was scope for some level of refinement to bring efficiencies, but we didn’t necessarily have the time or resources to dedicate to logistics.”

A DIFFERENT WAY OF THINKING

Agility Chemical Logistics focuses on the provision of independent expertise and access to the best-in-class technology.

"One of the first things that came out of the Agility relationship was a slightly different perspective on the way we have been operating," Worle remembers. "For example, we have our own fleet of trucks, but we also employ subcontractors. Having Agility here made us ask questions we didn't ask before: How do you better allocate work? A driver is a precious asset. How can we optimise their time? Agility helped us recognise that we were not using our own assets to their full extent. We needed to apply innovative logistics planning to our business model to get more value from these physical assets. Just having Agility involved led to a fundamental shift in our thinking."

THE COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

The initial fact-finding process allowed Agility Chemical Logistics to become **fully integrated into Brenntag UK's strategic planning process**. Critically, the recommendations put forward by Agility Chemical Logistics were practical and measurable, ensuring any transport efficiencies could be implemented.

"Integrating Agility into the group was fairly critical," Worle says. "It allowed us to be candid and forthright. We have had some challenging, honest discussions. What Agility found is that we were operating our business pretty effectively, but, as is always the case, with a slight reorientation of approach, the application of some known techniques and a focus on certain project areas, there were some opportunities for us to operate more efficiently."

ENABLING SUPPLIER ENGAGEMENT

Many of the recommendations have involved **strategic supply chain modelling** and the integration of Agility's technology and resources into Brenntag UK's operations.

"The power of the consultative approach is that it can also help us in our relationships with our existing client and supplier base," Worle says. "With one particular supplier, we were able to use Agility's software and business intelligence to leverage our position from a volume perspective and create further efficiencies. That was insightful for us - but also insightful for our supplier. Our proposal required them to make a significant investment and open a new terminal to handle the increased volumes, but Agility gave us a tool and a model to put forward a compelling case. In the end, it allowed us to **foster an even stronger relationship with that supplier** going forward. It helped their business as well as ours."

THE VALUE

Agility Chemical Logistics provides organisations like Brenntag a fresh pair of eyes to examine their processes. **Through modelling, quantification and analysis, as well as leading technology and relationships with major suppliers**, they are able to add value to a client's existing products and services, help with procurement, geographical expansion and industry expertise.

"Agility has proven to be a very professional organisation," Worle says. "They understand and recognise the requirements of their customer. The people we have met at Agility have been very straightforward and open. It is a relationship built on good people, good hardware and software tools and industry-leading expertise. And we have seen some significant benefits emanating from that relationship. We've definitely become more efficient - but more importantly we've improved the way our business thinks about its core assets in transportation. That's why companies like Brenntag UK work with companies like Agility Chemicals Logistics."