

Total Logistics Upgrades Distribution Network For Oxford University Press

Strategic review to deliver 21st Century distribution platform for UK's oldest publisher and world's largest university press

Oxford University Press (OUP) has today announced that Wokingham-based supply chain consultancy Total Logistics has completed a strategic review of the OUP distribution network. OUP – the world-renowned publishing arm of the University of Oxford – has been furthering the University's objective of excellence in research, scholarship and education through the written word since before the seventeenth century.

Publishing in over 50 countries, OUP needs to ensure that its distribution operations are well planned in order to cope with significant forecast growth. UK distribution is currently managed from OUP's two distribution centres in Corby, Northamptonshire. A key issue for OUP is its very high introduction rate of new titles - currently over 4,500 a year - plus the seasonality of the business adds to the complexity of optimal stock placement within each distribution centre (DC). The complex issues associated with handling around 36,000 titles will be familiar to any company distributing a similarly sized product range, particularly when spread across printed media as well as in CD-ROM and online formats.

Total Logistics assessed and developed OUP's distribution requirements in the light of growth plans and generated a number of strategic options. The consultancy ran a series of detailed resource and cost models to define the right solution that would deliver the required levels of service and flexibility: key requirements included reduced capital costs, more efficient application of labour, optimised warehouse layouts, improved space management, lower operating costs and enhanced payback on investment.

The project has provided OUP with a solid foundation for consolidating the two existing logistics operations onto a single site and the freedom to expand in the future. With the new framework agreed, the Phase Two tendering and Phase Three implementation will now take place, project managed by Total Logistics.

Elwyn Roberts is the Infrastructure Manager for Oxford University Press: "We're upgrading our distribution network to make our existing space work harder for the business, moving all operations under one roof at our Corby DC. Typically we work at close to capacity anyway but we want to improve efficiency to meet ambitious future growth demands – making our supply chain tolerances finer and reducing costs without compromising performance. Total Logistics' input has given us confidence that we can develop a practical solution combining the sites. We will work with them through the implementation stages to produce the right DC operation to take OUP forward and cement our position as the premier university press in the world."