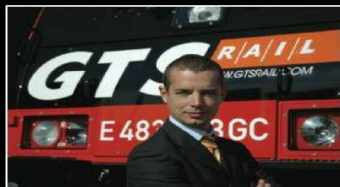


# TRACKING DOWN FURTHER SUCCESS



CEO, Mr Alessio Muciaccia



*Two years may seem quite short, but in such a brief space of time, GTS Group has continued to establish itself as a leader in intermodal transport. Filomena Nardi once again had the pleasure of speaking with CEO Mr Alessio Muciaccia to find out about the latest developments in this very successful company.*

Since an article appeared in Inside Industry two years ago, GTS Group has achieved a great deal. "Things are going well for us; especially because there is a growing recognition that the intermodal transport system is a crucial factor in the cost of environmental degradation and social damage," affirmed CEO, Mr Alessio Muciaccia. "Rail transport consumes much less energy than road transport and has maximum advantage in respect of freight traffic, promoting overall sustainability and sustainable transport.

"Over the last two years, we have managed to increase our brand awareness across Europe; we have boosted our customer portfolio and we have continued to make significant investments to guarantee our growth."

The company has recently purchased 130 wagons and 300 containers, and has added two new locomotives to the existing fleet of six. "Thanks to our recent

investments, this year alone we will be moving about 3,400 trains for a total of about 90,000 full load shipments; we have reached 700 accounts in Europe and our target is set at around €95 million, compared to the €74 million achieved at the end of 2014," continued Mr Muciaccia.

"Without a doubt, our success goes hand in hand with investing in new equipment but mainly in people. I'd like to describe GTS Group not so much as a company, but as a community; a place where people have the opportunity to work in a very family friendly environment which motivates them to give their best. People are indeed the heart and soul of our business."

## Building Connections

As part of its investment strategy, GTS continues to build new connections to strengthen its railway network. Beside the launch of new offices in England and the

Netherlands, GTS has also established a new service between Rotterdam Rail Service Centre and Milan Melzo in conjunction with Dutch company BAS Group BV.

"This new tri-weekly service was introduced at the end of January this year and is additional to the five pairs/week services already operated between Piacenza and Rotterdam," stated Mr Muciaccia. "With a grand total of eight weekly services, we have now significantly reinforced our presence towards Holland and Northern Europe."

Whilst reinforcing its position in Northern Europe, GTS is also planning to build new connections in Germany and Eastern European countries such as Poland and Romania, as well as taking care of the local market.

"We want to increase our network in Europe without forgetting our domestic market," declared Mr Muciaccia. "This is why we have intensified the service on the ever so important Tyrrhenian Italian route, through the introduction of a sixth weekly

circulation which connects Piacenza-Pomezia-Marcianise and vice versa.

"Additionally, in conjunction with the new Rotterdam RSC-Milan Melzo service, we have introduced a new service on a three pairs/week basis between Milan and Bari to provide a better connection between Northern Europe and the South of Italy.

"Many international players consider Italy as an attractive place for business; unfortunately they only take in to account the northern part of our country. Therefore,



our strategy is to create a comprehensive high-quality and high frequency railway network throughout Italy but with great focus in the central and southern part of it."

### The New Gioia Tauro/Bari Service

The good news for the southern Italian market didn't take long to arrive. After leaving the port in 2011 due to the economic crisis, Maersk, the first shipping company in the world, decided this year to reactivate its services in the port of Gioia Tauro, situated at the 'toe' of the Italian Peninsula.

The return of Maersk last February has seen the Gioia Tauro-Bari rail link restored with the help of GTS Group and its companies. In fact, GTS Rail is the official rail operator and GTS SpA is the main provider of terminal services and transportation services for this specific connection.

"These links need fully dedicated trains and their departures will be scheduled to ensure the best inbound-outbound connections, by essentially connecting trains

to ships cycles and considering Bari as an inland loading/discharging terminal," affirmed Mr Muciaccia.

According to the two companies, this new link will consent removing 400 trucks/week from the road. Each train will provide a 64TEU capacity and will be able to host high cube containers and hazardous substances; freights will be travelling with a T1 document to go through customs clearing procedures.

"This new service between Gioia Tauro and Bari will ensure a wider global cov-

erage, allowing companies of Southern Italy to access intercontinental transport services of the highest level. It will basically help to shorten the distance between South Italy and the rest of the world whilst benefiting the economy of our territory."

### A Plethora of Growth Opportunities

According to the White Paper of Transport issued by the European Commission, 30 per cent of goods that need to reach a distance over 300 km should be shifted by rail by 2030. "If you take into account that the European average currently stands at a low 12 per cent, and in Italy only reaches 4 per cent, it's easy to see the growth potential of a combined rail-road-sea transport system company like GTS Group is massive.

"What motivates me to move forward and continue to create a successful company is the knowledge that growth opportunities within our business are endless," stated Mr Muciaccia. "Rail transport and intermodal services are

expected to massively grow in the future. Now our development depends on our ability to invest."

Considering the untapped potential of the industry, GTS requires a substantial amount of capital to reach the desired objectives.

"Up until now, banks have believed in us and helped our company to expand by making large financial resources available. But to reach the objectives we have in mind, we need a lot more, so our company is now looking for new sources to expand our financial capacity and continue our exponential growth," explained Mr Muciaccia.

"My dream is to bring this company to a much larger size than at present. I would like to see our turnover reach €500 million within the next five years and double up to one billion by the end of the next decade. I know that this may sound like a very ambitious dream, but it's achievable. We have the opportunity to make it happen and this is why we continue to work hard." ■

