

# Turning Time into Money

BLACKMER® STX SERIES PUMPS HELP H&S GROUP OPTIMIZE ITS DELIVERY OPERATIONS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

By Hervé de Chambure



Blackmer STX Series Sliding Vane Pump

H&S Transport recently upgraded to Blackmer's STX Series pumps due to their suction and performance capabilities.

The bane of any business that relies on transport vehicles to deliver commodities to the end-user – from molasses to cement to LPG to bottles of milk – is an inefficient use of time. This use of time ranges from the period vehicles are not on the road making deliveries, due to equipment failures or maintenance needs, to the amount of time needed to load or unload a transport trailer. Transport companies that do not make the best use of their time, both on the road and at the loading dock, can be harmed on a number of levels. This harm can occur through elevated equipment costs, excessive maintenance charges, inability to meet promised delivery times and unacceptable transfer times, all of which can lead to a loss of reputation that can hamper future business opportunities.

"In our industry, you have to keep the vehicles moving; time is money. The longer the vehicles sit idle, the quicker the costs can get astronomical," said Mark Allcock, General Manager of Meller Flow Trans Limited., a provider of product-handling solutions for the transport industry. Meller Flow Trans largest facility is in the United Kingdom, with satellite locations in the Netherlands and Germany.

"Everything we do is transport-related: liquids, gases, dry bulk. If it's moved by road, we're involved with it. Therefore, we know the importance of uptime and keeping vehicles moving."

One company that has taken Meller's commitment to maximizing the time of its transport fleet to the next level is the H&S Group, an 80-year-old company based in Barneveld, The Netherlands. H&S has developed from a strictly tank-transport operation into one of Europe's leading multi-modal full-service transport providers for the bulk liquid industry. H&S Group now features two major product-transporting divisions:

1. **H&S Foodtrans** – foodstuff-only fleet that utilizes 1,200 tank containers for intermodal transport throughout Europe and Russia.
2. **H&S Transport** – more than 250 transport trucks in operation in The Netherlands, Germany, Poland, Italy, Belgium and the United Kingdom for the transportation of bulk liquids.

“They’re a big company and a rapidly growing group,” said Allcock. “H&S is the kind of group that is not shy about expansion, with a consistently growing fleet of transport vehicles.”

## Getting To Know You

Wolter Boelema’s relationship with the H&S Group began when they used him as a sub-contractor through his transport company, BTS European Ltd. Because of recent changes in European Union regulations that no longer allow trucks registered in The Netherlands to operate in the United Kingdom, H&S Group has formed H&S Trucking (UK) with Boelema, who has ceased the operations of BTS European, as its Managing Director and part owner. Now, H&S has its products shipped to Great Britain with its H&S Trucking (UK) subsidiary responsible for delivering to end-users throughout the country.

“In Europe, they’re trying to make a level playing field so the drivers have the same earning power, that’s why you can’t run trucks registered in Holland in the U.K. anymore,” explained Boelema. “So, H&S set up H&S Trucking and is running 50 trucks in the U.K. We bring in several hundred loads a week, collect the containers from the docks and do the deliveries. These are huge companies we are delivering to, like Cargill.”

With the amount of liquids that are coming into the U.K. in any given week, Boelema’s fleet requires pumping

equipment that is not only reliable, but also able to supply the flow rates and line-clearing capabilities that optimize a transport’s time at the loading terminal. For the solution he and, by extension, the H&S Group turned to Meller Flow Trans (MFT) Ltd.

Since 1960, MFT has been a “one-stop shop” for transport and discharge solutions for on-the-road product-handling applications. The company prides itself on not only supplying the necessary equipment, but installing it and then servicing it once it has been in operation.

“Basically, you bring your truck to us, tell us what you want to do with it and we take care of the rest. We supply you with the correct discharge equipment, install that equipment and then take ownership of any service & maintenance requirements.” said Allcock. “Many companies will only provide the equipment, but then it’s just a pump in a box. We provide a one-stop shop for the whole package.”

In late 2009, Boelema decided that his transport fleet needed an equipment upgrade. In performing some research, he came upon MFT, which he noticed “supplied the discharge equipment for the operations” he and H&S Group were conducting. In many cases, that equipment was positive displacement sliding vane pumps from Blackmer®, Grand Rapids, MI, USA.



(Left to right) Wolter Boelema, managing director of H&S Trucking; Mark Allcock, general manager of Meller Flow Trans Ltd.; and Hervé de Chambure, Regional Manager in Northern Europe for Energy & Transport for Blackmer®.



H&S Transport has more than 250 transport trucks in operation.

“We’ve been distributing Blackmer equipment for more than 40 years and we like to think that it’s been a very successful relationship in that time,” said Allcock. “The relationship between the manufacturer and distributor is very much a two-way thing, and they treat us as a business partner, not just as distributor and customer. Also, Blackmer quality is second-to-none, with a good market footprint and a great reputation for what they do. We’re also the first port of call for a lot of their new lines of equipment. Blackmer is aware of our position in the U.K. and quite keen to send us equipment to test first.”

With that as a background – and after assessing the needs of Boelema’s fleet – Meller had no trouble recommending Blackmer’s STX Series Sliding Vane Pumps as the answer to his equipment needs.

“The STX3 is quite simply the market leader, a premiere-quality cargo pump for liquid discharge,” said Allcock, who calls the STX pump a BMW in comparison to the cargo pumps H&S had been previously using. “They were definitely taking a step up in quality and efficiency with the STX3 when compared to their old pumps.”

## The Right Answers

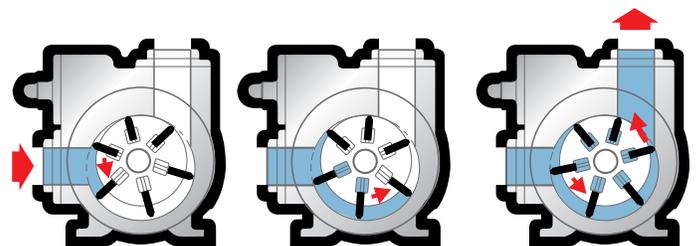
Blackmer’s 3-inch STX3 sliding vane pumps meet the needs of Boelema and the H&S Group because they have been designed for efficiency in liquid handling applications. They are constructed of 316 stainless steel and non-metallic vanes allow them to run dry for short periods of time, while also giving them excellent line-clearing and self-priming capabilities. STX pumps also feature external ball bearings, chemical mechanical seals and PTFE elastomers.

All of these features have Boelema raving about the STX’s performance, which were first installed on his trucks in early 2010.

“It’s a simple piece of equipment that gets mounted on the chassis and you don’t think about it anymore,” he said. “The STX3 can discharge 30,000 liters (7,925 gallons) in 38 to 40 minutes, which is tremendous, and when you need to do that five times a day, you need all the time you can get. One other thing with the STX pump – it clears the lines afterwards. Most pumps, when you discharge and when the tank is empty, don’t clear the line so we had to use extra air lines to remove the product from the lines. The STX will clear 40 to 60 feet of lines.”



Blackmer STX Series Sliding Vane Pump



How Blackmer’s sliding vane action works.



Meller Flow Trans (MFT) UK operation specializes in solutions for all transport-related products such as liquids, gases and dry bulk. In 2009, H&S Transport came to MFT for a recommendation for reliable chemical transfer pumps. MFT recommended the Blackmer STX Series, and H&S Transport has been extremely happy with that decision.

## Conclusion

The foundation of most great business relationships is trust and service; when the needs of one company are met by the products and services provided by another. That definitely appears to be the case when assessing the burgeoning relationship between H&S Group and Blackmer, which has been facilitated by Meller Flow Trans.

If the early returns are any indication, this is a relationship that will continue to grow and prosper in the coming years, fueled by the proven quality, performance and reliability that the STX pumps can offer Boelema and the H&S Group.

“The STX is widely regarded as a premiere-quality cargo pump for transport-related discharge,” said Allcock. “Its pure efficiency, discharge times and line-clearing, coupled

with long service life, make it the common-sense choice of stainless-steel cargo pumps with added value-for-money benefits.”

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