



Press release  
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## HEPPNER PASSES SYMBOLIC MILESTONE OF 1 BILLION EUROS IN TURNOVER BEFORE ITS 100TH ANNIVERSARY

**At the end of an unprecedentedly complex 2022 for all sectors of the economy, the French family-owned business announced a turnover of 1.029 billion euros. This important milestone corroborates the decisions and track record of the transport and logistics group led by Jean-Thomas Schmitt, the founder's great-grandson and representative of the fourth generation.**



### The strength of a long-term vision and the strategic decisions made by each generation

The Group's story begins in 1925, on the banks of the Rhine, in Alsace, when the current CEO's great-grandfather purchased a horse-drawn carriage business. His son then developed transport flows between France and Germany, before passing on the reins of the business in 1979. This stage marked the beginning of the company's external growth and the development of the Overseas business in 1992.



While Jean-Thomas Schmitt – who has been at the helm of the company since 2015, having joined in 2009 – remains loyal and committed to the company's values, which he has further strengthened by making Heppner the first transport company to adopt a *raison d'être*, he has also chosen to expand Heppner's international presence and create subsidiaries through acquisitions in the Netherlands, Spain, Germany, Belgium, Hungary and Switzerland. At the same time, he has integrated and built new areas of expertise such as pharmaceutical transport (Health & Beauty) and hazardous goods with the acquisition of one of the industry's specialists (SAFRAM) in early 2022. A strong belief in North-South flows convinced him to start operations in Senegal in 2019, with the goal of making the Group's know-how available to customers wishing to reach West African markets.

### **The ability to strengthen local roots while driving sustainable expansion abroad**

*"To foster the enterprising spirit of our employees, partners, customers and suppliers, and citizens of all generations in all the territories where we operate"*; this *raison d'être*, drawn from the company's DNA, clearly expresses the decentralised management model that is the cornerstone of the company's growth, with its local presence – as close as possible to its customers – setting it apart from other companies of the same size. With almost 80 agencies in France and a presence in several other countries, the regional and site teams are the driving forces in their territories and their ecosystem of customers, decision-makers and suppliers.

The region and site managers are the "bosses" in their respective territories, enabling them to remain locally responsive while following the Group's global strategy and to make strategic decisions based on knowledge of their specific environment. They are given an opportunity to try out, innovate, and test new solutions, within the framework of the Group's strategy and with the support of Senior Management, and the most effective ideas may even be deployed at Group level.

Today, all regions have achieved excellent levels of operational performance, making valuable and recognised contributions to the Group's results.

### **Many challenges in an industry undergoing transformation**

Forced to transform at great speed, the transport and logistics industry as a whole faces many challenges. And, in the particular case of the Heppner Group, the international dimension poses an additional challenge for the company as the subsidiaries' integration and commitment, especially of the more recent acquisitions, is one of the keys to collective success.

In a context of reduced activity in many sectors of the economy, Heppner's diversified customer portfolio and its positioning in high-performance business lines such as Health & Beauty and its expertise in hazardous goods (SEVESO Directive) have enabled the Group to



post a net profit, despite the contraction in volume terms, that allows the company to look confidently ahead to its many challenges. Within this spirit, the Group has developed a strategy called GPS (Growth Profitability Sustainability) that rests on 6 pillars.

The goal is to maintain its status as an independent enterprise, enabling the Group to control its service quality and improve its track record with its customers, with *Customer Experience* as one of the keys. The company's differentiating feature is the fact that it operates as a freight forwarder or transport organiser, meaning that most of its business depends on its ability to mobilise carrier partners. This reality lies at the very heart of the *Supplier Experience* principle.

Against a backdrop of business tensions exacerbated by the international context, it is more necessary than ever to offer a differentiating *Employee Experience* that conveys meaning and future prospects to new recruits. *Internationalisation* remains one of the drivers of the Group's growth, while capital-intensive *Digitalisation* is crucial for today's transport industry.

Lastly, *CSR and the Energy transition*, to which Heppner has been committed for the last 15 years, are powerful levers for collective mobilisation, with results that improve year on year and are shared in the Group's CSR Report.

This family-owned business continues to move forward on all fronts, with a long-term vision that preserves its roots and values, as shown by this announcement, marking its final step before its entry in the world of large corporations.

*"It is a symbolic milestone, but important nonetheless, because our turnover has grown from 715 million euros in 2018 to 1.029 billion euros in 2022, equivalent to an annual average growth rate of 9%. Two-thirds of this growth comes from external growth via acquisitions and one-third from organic growth. In just five years, our coverage has grown from two countries to nine, expanding not only geographically but also in terms of business areas, with increased expertise particularly in the transport of hazardous goods,"* as the Heppner Group's Chief Executive Officer, Jean-Thomas Schmitt, explains.

#### **About Heppner**

Heppner is a specialist creator of transport and logistics solutions and an independent leader in international transport from and to France. Our robust, powerful overland transport networks connect more than 40 European countries, with deliveries in 24–72h to the main European cities. With strong international business connections, our exclusive partnership agreements also enable us to handle ocean and air transport to and from 157 countries around the world. With a turnover of 1.029 billion euros in 2022 and almost a century of accumulated business experience, we currently employ more than 3,570 people, 111 of them enrolled on work-study programmes, in close to 80 branches in France and 14 in Germany, with a direct presence in the Netherlands, Spain, Belgium, Switzerland, Hungary, United Kingdom and Senegal, and more than 10,000 customers. Every day, Heppner works to Foster the Enterprising Spirit of its employees, partners, customers and suppliers in all its areas of business.

[www.heppner-group.com](http://www.heppner-group.com)

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