



INTERVIEW

CLEAR STRATEGIES FUEL GROWTH IN INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT

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1. What has been your company's dynamic compared to the 4%-5% growth forecast of the Romanian economy in 2018?

What are the main engines of this growth? Is the growth coming more from the internal market or from the international market?

Our company revenue grew by 10% to 15% in 2018 compared with 2017. The main engines of growth have been food logistics business unit (driven by increased domestic consumption) and international transport (driven by increased economical KPIs of Europe). The internal market contributed 40% to this growth while the external market contributed the remainder of 60%.

2. In terms of turnover, where does the growth come from? It is from more merchandise freighted or from higher prices?

The growth comes both from increased price per km and from the higher volumes transported by road. This year's tariffs started to grow due to the increase in fuel price.

3. How do you accommodate the local workforce crisis that tends to push up the price of your services?

First, we have increased our salaries and have started to pay 10% more than the average market salary level. Second, we have added new benefits and bonus schemes which help us retain and motivate employees to be more productive.

4. What are the main trends for the near and the medium future in terms in your industry?

All big fleet companies use new tractors in order to benefit from new technologies, reliable equipment and better conform for drivers

The small and medium-size companies have started to use Transport Management Systems to control and improve the results. At the same time, there is more attention given to the cash management and financial discipline of the company.

5. How does the growth in oil price, in dollars, and in interest rates affect your business and the industry sector in which you operate?

The oil price growth affects dramatically our industry and especially the carrier companies, which, like us, invest in trucks and equipment.

6. We are very curious: for an international activity company, how does the Brexit affect you? Are there more opportunities or more challenges?

We do not know yet what Brexit will really mean to our industry. We have started to plan out activity for the next year with our UK partners in order to minimize any possible border delays which might affect the freight delivery performance.

7. If the consumer wellbeing is growing, so is the automotive market and so is your business. For how long the present growth cycle to you expect to last?

In the domestic business environment, the present growth cycle may last for another 2 or 3 years, throughout the election years. In the international European market, we do not know the answer and the Brexit brings additional risk and stress to all transport operators.

8. Going personal now, how do you prepare yourself to become better as a leader? How do you get out of your comfort zone? How do you find the right work-life balance?

I find myself very comfortable in my current position after the first 3 years of heavy battle to restructure the company. The years 2014, 2015, 2016 have taken me out of my comfort zone of the multinational companies and threw me in the battle of the local entrepreneurial life. After four years, I see great changes and I am proud of my team and our results. These days I have also more time for family and friends.

9. In your opinion, as a CEO, which is the most important question to ask in the investment committee: what can go right or what mistake can we not afford to make? Why? Is there another question that you ask your investment committee for 2019?

In the investment committee, I usually ask how much we can grow in a sustainable way. "Is there more

space to grow and keep the financial and operational performance of our company and our customers?"

10 ■ **What's your "Be careful at..." advice for 2019?**

■ Be careful at your cash position in 2019.

11 ■ **These are all our questions. Please share with us if you have something else to add for our readers**

I would like to encourage young leaders to take on new projects, assume more responsibilities and travel the world to discover their true potential. Knowledge is built through theory and training, plus day by day experience. By the end you will harvest the fruits of your work and get more time for family and friends.