

# KEEPING PACE WITH CHANGE

Maikel Van Nijnatten from Tradebe explains how evolving product demand is making diversification essential



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**IN OCTOBER** 2020, Spanish hydrocarbon storage company Tradebe Port Services, a division of the Tradebe group, bought TWG Tanklager Wilhelmsburg, a chemicals storage provider in the Seaport of Hamburg, Germany, from BDH Biodiesel Hamburg.

The TWG site comprises 14 storage tanks with a capacity to store 34,500 m<sup>3</sup> of class B hydrocarbons, chemicals and speciality chemical products, with tank sizes from 500-6,000 m<sup>3</sup>. Its jetty, which has a 9 m draught, can accommodate seagoing vessels up to 230 m in length, and it is well-connected to road and rail networks.

The now renamed Tradebe Hamburg is Tradebe Port Services' second terminal. Its first, in Barcelona, has a total capacity of 453,000 m<sup>3</sup> in 29 tanks, ranging in size from 5,000-24,000 m<sup>3</sup>.

*Tank Storage Magazine* was keen to find out why Tradebe Port Services had invested in a second terminal, and its plans for the facility, and spoke to Maikel van Nijnatten, the commercial and business development director of Tradebe.

## TRADEBE HAMBURG

'Located in Hamburg, the third largest port in Europe, the opportunity to acquire the TWG (now renamed Tradebe Hamburg) facility formed a perfect fit with our core competencies and our strategic

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plan to increase our footprint in North West Europe,' says van Nijnatten.

The company has further plans for its new terminal.

'In line with Tradebe's eagerness to grow, Tradebe Hamburg has a permit in place to expand the existing tank capacity by an additional 40,000 m<sup>3</sup> for hydrocarbons and biofuels. Furthermore, we see interesting opportunities to develop another 100,000 m<sup>3</sup> for speciality chemicals and biofuels being connected to all modalities including trucks, trains and vessels,' says van Nijnatten.

## OFFERING A SERVICE

The potential development work at Hamburg will not pose a problem for Tradebe's experienced team. Van Nijnatten says that one of the core competencies of the company is developing storage and processing assets, resulting in the company completing the construction of its first liquid bulk terminal in Barcelona on time and below budget.

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'Safety always comes first, after which Tradebe's main focus is to offer the highest standards in terms of customer service, flexibility and efficiency. In this way we distinguish ourselves from other tank terminal facilities. Our customer service team is available 24/7 and in case of exceptional requests, our highly motivated team will not rest before having



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deeply investigated in which way we can make it work for our clients,' he says.

The wider group, with its Chemical Distillation division, has extensive knowledge of chemical processing. As many of its customers are major energy and chemical customers, van Nijnatten says that this offers useful added value.

**CHANGING TRENDS**

The other strategic reason for Tradebe's acquisition of the TWG facility was to diversify the company's product portfolio towards biofuels, chemicals and speciality chemicals. The Barcelona terminal currently focuses on light distillates and fuel oil, although Tradebe also has plans to diversify the portfolio there to include chemicals and biofuels.

'We foresee an increasing need for chemical storage capacity due to the continuous growing worldwide population and its increasing need for speciality chemical-related products, such as speciality polymers. For that reason, diversifying our product array into chemicals is high on our agenda going forward,' explains van Nijnatten.

In the bulk liquid storage sector, Tradebe is seeing an increasing need for operational and infrastructural flexibility, as customers want to align their product trading strategies with the rapidly changing market dynamics. The company anticipate this change and designed the Barcelona terminal to be able to perform complex blending operations.

'Our tanks can be switched from gasoline or Jet-A1 to [ultra low sulphur diesel] ULSD and back in just a couple of days as the tanks can be emptied completely. This is offering an interesting value to our customers as they can use the tanks for different trading desks,' says van Nijnatten.

He adds that market experts are forecasting increasing product throughputs in strategic hub locations. If companies are to be competitive in such a market, it is crucial that terminal facilities have the ability to segregate the increasing number of cleaner products and offer flexible best-in-class storage and blending services.

As Tradebe Port Services continues in its ambitions to meet customer needs in flexibility and product diversification, and grow its footprint, the Hamburg site is unlikely to be the company's last acquisition.

'Our main interest is developing, owning and operating assets which offer sustainable long-term value in the supply chains of our customers. Therefore, Tradebe has the ambition to further expand our terminal network in Europe for which we are actively investigating greenfield and brownfield opportunities in prime locations,' says van Nijnatten.

**For more information:**

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**TRADEBE**

Tradebe is an industrial group headquartered in Barcelona, in Spain. It began life as a waste management company in 1984 and now has three divisions.

**Environmental Services** – specialises in the prevention, reduction, remediation, collection, treatment, recovery, recycling and/or disposal of industrial waste, mainly hazardous waste, as well as in the commercialisation and sale of by-products from the recycling of the waste.

**Tradebe Chemicals** – offers bespoke small- and large-scale distillation services of chemical products including bulk aromatic hydrocarbons and intermediate active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) in the pharma industry.

**Tradebe Port Services** – launched in 2013 with the creation of the first Tradebe terminal in the Port of Barcelona. Tradebe Port Services offers tank storage services in the ports of Barcelona and Hamburg for hydrocarbon light distillates, fuel oil and (in Hamburg) speciality chemical products such as latex.

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