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Jan Buelck, Managing Director, Hong Kong & South China
a.hartrodt

Capturing New Opportunities along the Belt and Road

Century-old German logistics company uses regional headquarters in Hong Kong to capture opportunities in new markets

Founded in 1887, a.hartrodt is one of the oldest shipping companies in Europe, and has remained privately owned by the same founding family until today. Celebrating its 130th anniversary this year, the Hamburg-based company now has 2,000 employees in over 100 offices across 80 countries, providing all-rounded shipping and forwarding services such as sea and air freight, trucking and warehousing for local and international logistics.

In 2002, a.hartrodt set up its office in Hong Kong to be its regional headquarters of Greater China. The office currently oversees local market, as well as business development in Mainland China. In view of the thriving food import and dining business in the region, a.hartrodt also operates a dedicated food and beverage logistics division to meet the growing demand for transporting food products.

According to Jan Buelck, Managing Director, Hong Kong and South China, Hong Kong is an ideal regional headquarters for companies like a.hartrodt from different perspectives. “The infrastructure in Hong Kong is amazing. Also, Hong Kong people have been adapting to create every inch of space in the most efficient way due to space limitations. The connection within and beyond the city is exemplary. Other competitive edges include the flexibility in money transfer and payment terms and the free flow of information,” he said.

“Hong Kong makes business travelling easy and relaxing. One can travel to anywhere in Asia within four hours and there are flights to almost everywhere,” Buelck added.

As Mainland China's Belt and Road Initiative is gaining steam, new opportunities have arisen for a.hartrodt. “The initiative will increase cargo transport between Asia and Europe by rail. It is a perfect alternative solution between air and sea freight,” Buelck said, “we have noticed that there are more and more customers

in both Mainland and Europe asking for this land route to transport their goods.”

Under the Belt and Road infrastructure, more countries will be connected to the new markets in Central Asia such as Kazakhstan, opening up great opportunities for both Asian and European companies.

a.hartrodt's Hong Kong office performs a full range of functions including logistics operations, administration, accounting, sales and business development, and is expected to grow steadily in the near future. The company also offers on-the-job training for students from both Germany and Hong Kong, so as to nurture young talents to join the logistics industry. “There is a high quality of talent in Hong Kong. We really hope to transfer our knowledge and experience to the young talent here, and this is very important to the future development of both our company and the logistics industry as a whole,” Buelck concluded.

a.hartrodt

- Founded in 1887 in Hamburg, Germany
- Hong Kong office, set up in 2002, is the regional headquarters for Greater China, overseeing its 17 offices across 15 cities in Mainland
- It also operates a dedicated division for food and beverage transport

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