

## Electronic markets in the logistics and transport sector

Interview with Claudia Galindo Pérez,  
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**Lessons learned:** “We began to use electronic markets because they are much faster than traditional markets. Furthermore, it is easier to make contact with companies that also use this medium. It is a showcase for companies that do not appear on lists and e-Marketplaces have provided us with access to them.”

Cold Group ([www.coldgroup.com](http://www.coldgroup.com)) was created from five Spanish companies in the industrial refrigeration sector that joined forces to enter the international markets, allowing them to offer a complementary range. It started as an export consortium in 2004 and since then it has specialized in foreign trade. They export products from the industrial refrigeration industry to Morocco, Algeria, Mauritania, Tunisia, Senegal, Nigeria, Portugal, Switzerland, Poland and Belgium and total sales in 2006 were €1,205,904.

### **What were your first steps when using the e-Marketplace? Did you have any initial concerns or worries about using e-Marketplaces?**

We began using electronic markets in 2004. We were investigating the opportunities that they could provide us with from the outset. We began to use electronic markets because they are much faster than traditional markets. It is also much easier to make contact with companies that also use this medium.

We chose the electronic marketplace Mercatrans ([www.mercatrans.com](http://www.mercatrans.com)) because it appeared to be simple to use and it gave us good results from the outset. It is the only electronic marketplace that we use. We started to use it because when we need to find a company that specializes in a particular type of transport, it is always urgent, and we can locate that company much faster through Mercatrans. We came across Mercatrans by searching the internet and we registered last year for full access. The market allows us to publish our requests for transport offers.

We had no initial reservations about using it and we now use it significantly. When we started they supported us over the telephone because we encountered various technical-IT problems, which they rapidly solved for us.

### **How does Mercatrans work and what sort of commercial functionalities do you use?**

In our case, we request various transport offers for a specific destination. Various companies that specialize in this type of service then send us their offers. We can then choose the one that we consider to be most appropriate and we can even contact the company directly to ask for more information.

### **Which parts of your business are improved by using Mercatrans?**

The ability to offer transport services to our clients at the most competitive price. We can also offer them a quick quote for a specific transport service if it is a normal destination for other users like us. A history of requested offers allows us to quickly obtain an approximate price for a service.

### **What practical aspects do you believe are the most important when using an electronic marketplace?**

Using electronic marketplaces is not difficult. In terms of costs, they are not expensive, taking into account the service they provide you with, especially if you know that you are going to use it frequently as in our case. The actual cost of this service is €120 per year.

As well as using electronic marketplaces we also directly contact companies that our partners or clients recommend to us, or those that we find in listings. There is no conflict from using both markets.

In terms of security, we do not make payments online and we contact the chosen company directly. No electronic payments are made via the internet through mercatrans.com. Once the shipper notifies its interest through one of the offers received via the internet, it is contacted by the transport company and they engage in a direct commercial relationship. At the same time, payment for the transport service to be used takes place directly between the shipper and the transport company using traditional methods.

### **What advantages does the platform provide?**

We have made significant savings in time using this transport search platform. We can quickly obtain information that would require much more time and effort without this online service. Furthermore, it is a showcase for companies that do not appear on lists and we can get access to them through the use of e-Marketplaces. The procedure is highly efficient.

### **Has e-Commerce and electronic marketplaces in particular changed your view about the world of business?**

I believe that they can provide access to the world of business for people that otherwise may not have set up a business.

### **Following on from this experience, will you continue to use electronic marketplaces as a work tool and would you recommend using e-Marketplaces to other companies?**

Yes, of course we will continue to use them. We recommend their use, especially for their speed. They provide services that fully adapt to what we are looking for and they can also provide significant amounts of information about services or products.