

Information hub is confident that its journey database offers something new

Courier Exchange heads for Europe

BY MARTIN ROEBUCK

Nottingham-based information hub Courier Exchange is trying to forge links with the same-day industry in Europe after attracting 150 UK subscribers.

Founder Lyall Cresswell is confident that Courier Exchange offers something different from the many freight auction sites that have sprung up in recent months.

"We concentrate on the same-day courier market and have tried to understand its specific needs," he said. "We are not trying to be all things to all people, but a one-stop shop for the courier community."

The journey database is actively managed through a call centre in an effort to eliminate out-of-date information.



Cresswell (left) and Clarke: confident

"We're not just an Internet site but have an active involvement. If people have a job to move, we don't just let it sit there," explained Cresswell.

A number of overnight parcel

companies are now placing their misroutes on the site daily. And the exchange will soon be open to forwarders who may have only an occasional courier requirement.

"Third-party users will be able to use the directory to find accredited couriers and also place their work out to the market for real-time quotes," said Cresswell.

He sold his previous business, specialist London forwarder Mailpack Worldwide, to Seabourne Express early last year to start developing the concept. The exchange went live in February this year and Cresswell described the first eight months of operation as "in effect an extended beta test, overcoming some of the prejudices which any web-enabled

freight service undoubtedly faces at present".

He claimed around 1,000 core users – substantially more than the number of paid-up subscribers – since it is not compulsory to register at the outset. "There is not point turning people away from their first use. You've got to show them the benefits," he said.

The exchange aims to gain credibility and volume through an accreditation scheme focusing on aspects such as the financial stability, invoice payment record, insurance cover and vehicle age of would-be subscribers.

"Someone can offer you a smashing price, but you may run into problems if you don't know him from Adam," said Cresswell.