



Ready to launch

//// Paré à lancer

For car makers, launching new vehicles is both a major challenge and a complex undertaking - with success largely hinging on the choice of an efficient logistics provider.

//// Pour les constructeurs automobiles, le lancement de nouveaux véhicules est à la fois un enjeu majeur et une opération complexe. Son succès repose largement sur le choix d'un prestataire logistique performant.

► Each vehicle is identified by CAT before being loaded onto the transporters.
Chaque véhicule est identifié par CAT avant d'être chargé sur les camions.



THE CUSTOMER'S VIEW L'AVIS DU CLIENT

"Our aim during a launch is to standardise our procedures so that we attain the same level of exactitude and quality as is achieved during the various phases of managing a Vehicle project. Standardising also means being realistic, assessing risks and potential delays. Our logistics provider must take these into account, and we obviously work in close partnership with them. As their customer, we appreciate how every new launch demonstrates the CAT group's real expertise in this field."

« Notre but lors d'un lancement est de standardiser notre démarche afin d'atteindre le même niveau de rigueur et de qualité que lors des différentes phases de pilotage d'un projet Véhicule. Standardiser, cela veut aussi dire estimer sainement la réalité, les risques, les décalages. Leur prise en compte est du ressort de notre partenaire logistique, avec lequel nous avons forcément un véritable partenariat. En tant que client, nous constatons à chaque lancement qu'il y a un véritable savoir-faire du groupe CAT dans ce domaine. »

Thierry Prats,
Head of Renault Vehicle Distribution
Responsable de la distribution véhicules de Renault

"One of our aims is to contain costs wherever possible by incorporating launch flows into our usual delivery flows. We currently manage this for 60 to 70% of our operations. Of course, it isn't always possible, especially since we must be able to satisfy all the needs of the VW, Audi and Skoda brand networks. We call upon specialists for specific operations, selecting them via an invitation to tender with very specific requirements."

« Un de nos objectifs, c'est de contenir les coûts en intégrant, lorsque c'est possible, les flux de lancement à nos flux habituels. A l'heure actuelle, c'est le cas pour 60 à 70 % de nos opérations. Evidemment, cela n'est pas toujours possible, d'autant que nous devons être capables de satisfaire tous les besoins des réseaux des marques VW, Audi et Skoda. Pour les opérations spécifiques, nous avons recours à des spécialistes, que nous choisissons sur appel d'offres, avec un cahier des charges très précis. »

Laurent Granet,
Director of VW Logistics France
Directeur de la succursale VW Logistics France

Renault has 26 new models planned for launch between 2006 and 2009, Audi has 10 in 2008, and PSA Peugeot Citroen 53 between now and 2010. Both specialist and volume car manufacturers are constantly bringing out new models at ever increasing speed and shortening the lifecycle of those already on offer. A strategy which makes new launches a real challenge. "Only 10 years or so ago, one or two models a year was a good average. But today, what was an outstanding event has now become almost commonplace," Laurent Granet stresses, Director of VW Logistics France, which handles logistics for Audi, Skoda and Volkswagen. Commonplace, but not routine because every new launch is a milestone that must be overcome successfully. Firstly by ensuring vehicles are supplied on time and secondly with a superlative quality of service.

Two years in preparation

"Launches are more frequent, and we are becoming more demanding," Thierry Prats warns, Head of Vehicle Distribution for Renault. "On 12 October, we launched Laguna III simultaneously across our 8 major European markets. The networks needed their demonstration vehicles on that day - there was no question of even a few hours delay!" As these are new models which are not yet in full production, the operation is even more complex requiring extreme advanced planning. Antoine Namand, CAT Group Sales and Marketing Director, explains: "We have done a lot of launches for Renault, but also for Kia, Nissan, Volvo, Jaguar and others. Work usually starts 8 to 9 months before the launch date, but in the case of Laguna III, we started planning the operation with Renault two years ahead! We worked together on developing a number of unique processes, particularly in terms of quality."

The demand for quality

Quality is a real watchword, since the brand's network must have impeccable cars available from day one. At Audi, Aymeric Jobelot recalls that "Our vehicles are now protected by plastic film, except the R8 which is tarpaulined. Whilst in storage, our logistics provider must follow a very precise maintenance plan. Furthermore, we carry out real "trial