



HARRY HALPERT

Cold Storage is Hot Topic for MTC Logistics

Standing on the rooftop of his company's brand new headquarters in Baltimore, Harry Halpert can see the container cranes at the Seagirt Marine Terminal, the busy interstate highway system and the tracks of two Class 1 railroads. He can also see the East Baltimore neighborhood that has long been a home to Merchants Terminal Corporation and many of its employees.

Halpert knows the value of a global vision and a community connection. Under his leadership, Merchants embraces both, supplying a platform for exciting growth at the nearly century-old company.

"My family has been providing Baltimoreans with utilitarian goods and services that they need since the turn of the 20th century," said Halpert, who represents the fifth generation in his family business, which grew to become Maryland's largest refrigerated warehouse and has three locations in Maryland along with one in Delaware.

As the technologies for transporting and storing perishables have evolved, so has the business, which now

offers not only warehousing but full logistics management. With the new warehouse and expanded capabilities comes a new name for the company, MTC Logistics (standing for Merchants Temperature Controlled).

"It has been a natural evolution," said Halpert, Merchants' President. "The cold chain has expanded to an international scale. Local grocers and national grocery chains are able to purchase foodstuffs from anywhere abroad, and bring them through the Port of Baltimore. In the past eight years, we have grown with our customers, assisting them on both the import and export side."

MTC Logistics has stepped in to shorten the logistics chain by providing customers with trucking from the ship terminal to the warehouse, USDA inspection services and outbound consolidated transportation services — all within a stone's throw of the Port of Baltimore.

The new warehouse and corporate headquarters opened in August 2009 and represents the state-of-the-art in cold storage and sustainable construction.

STORY & PHOTOGRAPHY BY KATHY BERGREN SMITH

"We are very pleased to work with Harry and his team to bring more refrigerated cargo opportunities to the Port of Baltimore," said Maryland Port Administration (MPA) Executive Director James J. White. "Merchants Terminal Corporation has made a significant investment in this Port with their involvement in the Duke Realty property. We look forward to helping them grow their business and succeed."

The new facility utilizes 48% less energy per cubic foot than the warehouse it replaced. Refrigeration controls are coordinated with a computer in the engine room that is constantly monitoring power usage on the grid and will adjust equipment when the need arises. Halpert is also looking toward installing solar panels on the white roof.

The loading docks that receive refrigerated trucks are designed to allow the trailers to be backed in before opening the truck doors, thus maintaining the integrity of the cold chain by ensuring security and wholesomeness throughout the loading or unloading process.

"We operate under very strict standards; you have to be detail-oriented to be in this business," said Halpert.

The relocation of MTC Logistics to the Seagirt Industrial Area makes sense on both a local and a global level, according to Halpert. "Our employees are like part of our extended family, and when we decided to relocate, it was essential to us that we stayed near the neighborhoods where our old warehouse was and where our employees still live, while simultaneously providing quick turnaround for the shippers and consignees utilizing Seagirt."

Halpert has been a member of the Baltimore Industrial Group for four years and works with other business leaders to promote industrial uses for property adjacent to the deepwater berths of the Port. "The areas around the Seagirt and Dundalk marine terminals are now very attractive to new industrial development in light of the support the Mayor and City Council have lent to the Maritime Industrial Zoning Overlay District Plan," he said.

From a global perspective, the Port's infrastructure, capacity and efficiency, as well as its inland proximity to America's breadbasket, all add up to reduced transportation costs for MTC Logistics' customers. And, as growth in the shipping of perishables continues, the Port will be ready with its new 50-foot berth at Seagirt.

"The Maryland Port Administration and the Maryland Department of Transportation should be applauded for partnering with Ports America Chesapeake in the build-out of Seagirt in preparation for the widening of the Panama Canal," said Halpert. 🌐

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