

YOUR INSTITUTE

# Voices of our future



Finalist  
CILT Annual Awards  
for Excellence 2018



## Meet Sebastian Steinhauser

**S**ebastian Steinhauser talks to *Focus* about his role as CEO of Parcelly, dealing with growing consumer expectations and the future of last mile logistics.

**Congratulations on being nominated as a finalist in the CILT Rising Star 2018 award. What does this mean to you?**

Thank you. It is a huge honour to be recognised in this category. Managing a company, being responsible for two teams across two cities (our Parcelly HQ in London and our tech team in Hamburg), and continuously driving the company's vision to stay ahead sometimes makes me forget to pause, look back and appreciate what was achieved over the past three-and-a-half years. This nomination not only makes me feel extremely proud, but also thankful for the great team, business partners and wider Parcelly support network.

**What made you switch from a career in banking to logistics?**

I worked as an investment banker and long hours in the office meant I relied almost exclusively on online shopping. I frequently faced the hassle of missed deliveries, wasting hours with phone calls to reschedule them or being forced to collect my online orders from a remote delivery depot. I also relied heavily on my

next-door dry-cleaner taking in parcels for me. I have always been fascinated by process optimisation and driving efficiencies, and saw a gap in the market for a way to improve last mile delivery. I decided to create a company that would not only eliminate failed deliveries, but also turn online shoppers back into high street footfall and deepen a sense of local community. My vision was to revive local high streets and, by donating 5% of each Parcelly transaction to offset its carbon footprint, trigger environmental benefits through a business model with an app at its heart.

**What is it that Parcelly does and what does your role as CEO of the company entail?**

By converting redundant space in local businesses into storage space, Parcelly offers a variety of B2C and B2B related services, for the first and last mile. This includes click-and-collect, mini-warehousing, cross-docking and reverse logistics. I am responsible for the management and technological direction of Parcelly and oversee an international team of 15 people across London and Hamburg. I also speak at national and international conferences about first and last mile innovation, supply chain tech and the future of urban logistics.



Innovative last and first mile delivery options propose an exciting solution to growing supply chain pressures

If you are a young professional and interested in writing for *Focus*, email:

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Parcelly's app is at the heart of the company

**How much pressure is growing consumer expectations putting on the company?**

Parcelly's business model has been built around customer convenience and we continue to develop our technology and service proposition in this direction. The customer is at the heart of our fulfilment solutions, where we keep catering to increasing customer demands for choice, control, flexibility, speed and mobility. Our mobile technology, with its unique check-in and check-out system, is a key differentiator, as it facilitates the fulfilment process, communication, engagement and convenience. However, customers now expect more, which is why additional features such as in-flight reallocation, parcel returns and product insurance are becoming standard.

**What challenges do you believe the industry will face in the next few years and how is Parcelly preparing for any possible disruption?**

Global e-commerce is forecast to reach \$2.8 trillion this year with no end of growth in sight. With same-day deliveries increasingly becoming the norm, collaboration between stakeholders along the supply chain is imperative, not only in view of a limited amount of transport channels and human and physical resources available, but also with regards to acceptable fulfilment and delivery.

**What do you think the future holds for e-commerce delivery and last mile logistics?**

Urban logistics with hyper-local fulfilment is part of the customers' growing expectations for on-demand delivery options at check-out, the supply chain's need for efficiency and optimisation, and society's drive towards greener and more sustainable fulfilment solutions. Moving goods closer to the customer helps cities run faster and to be more cost-effective and sustainable. As the demand for on-demand fulfilment grows, commercial roads and infrastructure will have to make space for pedestrianised inner-city areas and congestion-free zones. Smart distribution models and innovative last

and first mile delivery options propose an exciting solution to these growing supply chain pressures and it will be interesting to see how different cities adapt.

**What impact do you believe technology will have on the sector and how is Parcelly using technological advancements to help benefit its service?**

Technology has already had a huge impact, but most exciting to watch and anticipate are those technologies still in the making: not just drones, but also autonomous road vehicles to improve delivery cycles and speed, AI to predict and improve the overall fulfilment process and blockchain technology to make all this faster, more transparent, traceable and secure. Parcelly is already using AI technology to improve, for example, payment security, and we have a long list of fascinating projects in the pipeline.

**Where do you see Parcelly in five years' time?**

We have ambitious plans, including our international expansion that will start in 2019. Digitalisation and the growing demand for efficient pick-up/drop-off solutions, induced through influencing trends such as the evolving customer expectations, continuous urbanisation and growth in e-commerce, will fuel our growth ambitions. Five years from now, we aim to be a truly global omni-channel logistics tech platform.



Sebastian was announced as the Service Industries Entrepreneur of the Year at the Great British Entrepreneur Awards 2016



Customer expectation continues to rise when it comes to deliveries

**'The customer is at the heart of our fulfilment solutions, where we keep catering to increasing customer demands for choice, control, flexibility, speed and mobility.'**

**What do you think the logistics sector should do more of in order to be more appealing to young professionals?**

It can sometimes appear pretty corporate, traditional and grey-haired, although I consider it to be one of the most exciting sectors to be in. There is a huge opportunity for all stakeholders involved to attract the best and brightest talent. The willingness to support innovative ideas and technologies, through action and collaboration, not just intention, would certainly make it more appealing to young professionals, drive growth for the sector and have positive side-effects, such as improved equality and diversity.

**What advice would you give to young professionals interested in starting a career within logistics?**

Be curious, collaborate, do not be afraid to question the status quo and keep ahead of new technology. The pace we are experiencing from digital/AI advancements is accelerating, which means flexibility and a healthy appetite for change are imperative.