



# Fast food service with a

## **BRYNLEY SMITH HAS BEEN IN**

show biz, worked as a diesel mechanic, held roles in marketing and logistics planning, and is now head of a successful transport business....Auckland-based Hughes Transport.

There's no one left in the company with the Hughes name any more. Its origins go back 33 years to when Stewart Hughes set up a small transport operation that gradually grew to three trucks and stopped there because that was as big as Stewart wanted it to get.

Fast forward to 2008 and enter Brynley and Sue Smith who made

Stewart the obligatory 'offer he couldn't refuse' and Stewart found himself happily retired, while Bryn found himself happily at the helm of a soon-to-be much larger transport company.

The most recent chapter in Bryn's story is no less interesting and shows the entrepreneurial spirit of the man. The trucks used by Hughes Transport made history by being the first fully wrapped truck and trailer units using digital printing in New Zealand.

There's a fair amount of science behind the method, along with a dash of art.





# smile

Conceptualised by Ross Ellen of Fin Design, the artwork began with a long 'swoop' incorporating a stylised 'H' and some colourful 'bubbles' were added for good effect.

The science lies in the application. Handled by Comfleet Graphics, a division of Truck Collision Repairs, the matching of the swoop and the bubbles on both trucks and trailers has proven to be a technical challenge, but one Bryn thinks has been worth the effort, as the result is very eye-catching.

Each truck is a one-off piece of art, as the coloured graphics differ from truck

to truck, which makes the graphic work even more challenging.

The distinctive Hughes Transport 'bubble wrapped trucks' are an indication of the way Bryn approaches the business of freight haulage, with great attention to detail.

Bryn explains: "We deliver on time, every time and with a smile. We don't employ truck drivers; we actually have a team of customer service people who are trained to drive trucks."

It's a philosophy that summarises all aspects of the work ethic of Hughes Transport.

Bryn adds: "More and more emphasis is being put on customer service than on product itself. In the freight business, it shouldn't be any different."

It's all about being a professionally-run and professionally presented business, he says.

Hughes Transport specialises in moving food products around the country and all personnel are food safety trained and compliant.

What's more, the trucks in the fleet, as clean as they look on the outside, are even cleaner on the inside, in line with food safety guidelines.



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A key component with food transport is fast delivery time. Bryn explains that food transport is time-critical and the more efficient the transport system, the quicker the products are made available to the end customer. Having been in logistics management since 1995, Bryn knows what works and he runs a tight operation.

Hughes Transport doesn't only deal in foodstuffs – the company handles any sort of palletised freight and is, according to Bryn, the haulage version of a taxi company.

"If you want product delivered quickly, that's what we do. Traditional truck companies might give you a pickup time of two days for bulk freight to fit in with their schedules," says Bryn.

"We work in hours not days, and we thrive on challenge. One pallet or 15, we'll get it to where it needs to be and on time in line with our customer's requirements, which is part of the reason our customers stay loyal to us.

"We have retained one of Stewart's original customers from 33 years ago and are comfortably building a faithful following, many of whom tried us once and never looked back."

To make the success story so much

sweeter, a number of other freight companies use Hughes Transport for their local deliveries around Auckland; could you ask for a better testament to your business than that?

Hughes runs four Mercedes-Benz Actros truck and trailer and tractor and semi configurations, backed up with one of Stewart's older Scania's, along with a relatively new addition to the fleet for smaller deliveries, a Ford Transit van.

Bryn loves the Scania as a truck, but the decision to go with Mercedes-Benz was based largely on his knowledge of their after-sales/consumables parts pricing.

"I'm familiar with the brand and I respect the durability inherent in the Mercedes-Benz truck range," he says, adding a favourable opinion when it comes to brand image perception on the part of his customers.

"The Actros will work all day long and is a brilliant truck for both long-haul and inner city bulk work," he says, though Hughes Transport delivers mainly Auckland Metro, Hughes does do bulk line haul and provides LCL nationwide freight forwarding and the company is planning expansion into LCL line haul in the near future.

On the slightly less substantial side of the fleet, the Ford Transit van came along after the Actros' trucks had already been carving the new Hughes Transport niche.

The Transit came up at a good price at the right time, and Bryn saw the advantages to having a smaller, more nimble vehicle than a large truck for getting lighter loads in and out of smaller delivery areas.

Hughes Transport acquisition of the Transit falls into line with a trend being seen in other transport sectors both here and overseas, that of

'access vehicles' supplementing the mainstays of the fleet.

How has the Transit worked out as far as Hughes Transport is concerned? "It's almost as busy as the rest of the large truck fleet," says Bryn "and happily, we haven't had any issues with it.


"It pulls heavy-duty as a shuttle type vehicle when the big trucks come in with one pallet or two and have to go out again. We can load up the Transit to deliver the goods and anyone can drive it."

To facilitate efficient delivery times, Hughes Transport use the iCOS integrated electronic freight system, which allows customers to book, manage and track their freight and dispatchers can marry general or bulk freight from location to delivery vehicle and then to drop off point.

iCOS provides live status updates, real time point of delivery with sign-on glass technology, along with invoicing from a web-based platform, which makes it easy to use and practical for operators like Hughes Transport.

Efficient management of the heavy fleet vehicles is further enhanced with the use of GPS technology, through E-Road, which is linked seamlessly to iCOS, to live track the Hughes Transport fleet and provide real time information to clients.

E-road also provides management of Road User Charges, fleet service reminders, driver reporting and fuel usage among other advantages keeping the Hughes Transport fleet compliant at all times.

From colourful trucks and customer service-trained drivers, Hughes Transport is re-shaping the image and business model of a modern transport company. 



And one little guy for Hughes Transport.



&gt;&gt;&gt; IAA

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# A veritable van-tasy land at Hanover

**THERE IS NO BETTER PLACE TO** visit than the IAA Commercial Vehicles Show in Hanover to keep abreast of what's new in light commercial land.

And, if the recently-held 64th edition of the Hanover show was any indication, the future is looking especially busy and bright for van users.

There was a real high-tech focus from the main players in the market, in particular Volkswagen, Ford, Mercedes-Benz and Renault/Nissan.

Of those four, Volkswagen would have to be singled out for the cleverest innovation with its e! "ultimate delivery van."

While this vehicle has yet to be produced, a physical example was at Hanover, but strictly as a research concept only.

Concepts are the manufacturer's way of testing ideas on the press and public and, judging on the reaction, picking the winners to put into production. Thus, it will be interesting to see how much of the technology in the e! will be seen as vans ply the delivery routes of European cities in the not-too-distant future.

The e! electric Transporter comes like a faithful hound when called, or it can

'crawl' behind its driver as he/she walks door-to-door doing deliveries.

It started as a time and energy saving solution for postal or courier drivers who spend much of their time unproductively walking to and from their vans. Volkswagen's answer is to get the van to follow the driver.

There are two commands the van can understand: "come to me" and "follow me", using Wi-Fi communication and location fixing between an iPhone strapped to the driver's arm and the four transceivers located on the 'intelligent' electric van.

A driver with multiple deliveries to make in close proximity to each other might choose to leave the van while the deliveries are made. He can then call the van to him when required.

The other option is "follow me" where the driver leaves the vehicle and commands it to shadow him at a 6km/h walking speed, using the transceiver with the driver like a homing beacon.

According to Volkswagen, in "follow me" mode, the e! 'knows' where the driver is and can pace him accordingly.

How does the e! cope with kerbs and other objects? Cameras mounted

near the rear vision mirrors monitor the road and its edges and the van can detect and avoid 'kerb furniture' such as rubbish bins, which don't protrude more than a metre into the road.

Any other detected object prompts the van to stop immediately and it will stop five metres before an intersection.

The e! is not all about autonomous control, however. There is a "stand and drive" option, which allows the driver to start and stop the electric drive motors, accelerate to a brisk walking pace and steer the van if desired.

To further expedite delivery, the e! is equipped with an electronic mail tracking and routing system, which works again with an iPhone and iPad.

Specifically for postal applications presently, the routes are electronically mapped and provide useful information, such as the known location of dogs, best parking spots and hidden letter boxes.

The e! could almost have stolen the show on its own, but Volkswagen displayed much more, bringing its entire LCV range to demonstrate the brand's diversity – this equated to 120 vehicles with various power trains and body