DHL'S EXPANDED LEIPZIG HUB TO BOOST EUROPEAN OPERATIONS

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DHL Express is to invest up to $70 million expanding its **European hub** at **Leipzig** Halle Airport so it can handle up to 150,000 shipments per hour by the fourth quarter of 2015.

DHL will be doubling warehouse space to 80,000 square metres and will upgrade the conveyer belts to reduce the time it takes for packages to travel around the site from 35 to 10 minutes.

The company says when the expansion is completed in the fourth quarter of this year, processing packages will take less than two hours and it will have an aircraft taking off or landing once every three minutes. At the moment, it can process up to 60,000 parcels an hour and 43,000 flyers during the same time.

Describing the German market as a whole, DHL Express executive vice president for network operations and aviation, Roy Hughes tells Air Cargo Week (ACW) in Leipzig on 11 September: "In 2015 we are seeing the same level of growth as other mature economies, growing faster than the natural measure of GDP [gross domestic product]."

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For the rest of the year, Hughes tells ACW: “We expect more of the same, there is no reason we should see a slowdown. We have a significant investment at Leipzig and we expect to see growth seasonally at the end of 2015.”

Describing the investment, he continues: “Leipzig helps enable us to manage volumes more efficiently. It will give us a better platform over the next five to 10 years for growth.”

DHL has invested a total of 507 million euros ($574.3 million) at the Leipzig hub, the site is on an area of 225,647 square metres and handles more than 60 flights a day.

The integrator is also spending 1.3 billion euros on 40 infrastructure projects across its network, including European hubs.

As well as expanding Leipzig, it has been investing other European hubs. In the UK it is spending £90 million ($138 million) at East Midlands Airport with an additional £32 million at Heathrow Airport .

DHL is also spending 114 million euros on a new hub at Brussels Airport, which will more than triple capacity from 12,000 packages an hour to 39,000.

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