

## Lidl's shipping line swells fleet

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Tailwind Shipping Lines, founded two years ago by German supermarket chain Lidl to battle covid-related shipping chaos, has grown its fleet to nine ships, and now operates three services designed to bring goods from Asia to Europe.

In a market update to celebrate its second anniversary, the Hamburg-based shipping line revealed it now has nine ships ranging in size from 920 to 6,800 teu, two of which are owned and the rest chartered in.

In addition to the Panda Express (PAX) service, which connects China with the Mediterranean, the start-up shipping company now operates two other services for Lidl and a growing number of third-party customers.

The Tiger Express (TEX) service operates between Chattogram in Bangladesh and Colombo in Sri Lanka as a feeder for the PAX, which loads cargo from Bangladesh in Colombo. And the Dolphin Express (DEX) service operates between Barcelona in Spain and Moerdijk in the Netherlands.

“We have established ourselves on the market as a premium service provider that transports goods to and from Asia,” said Christian Stangl, Tailwind’s managing director. “In doing so, we are fast, on time and reliable. This is an essential service for us at Lidl, in particular, given our fixed promotion schedule and special offers that change on a weekly basis. At the same time, we are seeing growing interest in our transport services among external customers.”

The return of a high freight rate environment this year has caused a sharp increase in the share of non-alliance capacity on ex-Asia trades to the US west coast and North Europe with a host of names reentering the east-west tradelanes, whereas Tailwind stood out having decided to stay in the markets last year as rates fell back.