



PRESS RELEASE

Westlake Tyres announces an exclusivity deal with Direct Tyre Management for the UK's truck tyre market

- Westlake Truck Tyres will be distributed in the UK through Direct Tyre Management
- Westlake Tyres is the world's 10th largest tyre producer
- Direct Tyre Management will distribute Westlake from their premises in Lancashire

London, 17 October, 2011.– Westlake Tyres, manufactured by ZC Rubber –the world's 10th largest tyre maker and China's biggest producer of rubber products– announced at the recent Westlake NTDA Golf Day, that it had appointed Direct Tyre Sales as sole distributor of its truck tyre range in the UK. Direct Tyre Management (DTM) is an extremely successful and growing company, which is one of the reasons why Eskay Tyres became interested in working with them.

When asked to explain why DTM chose to work with Eskay Tyres, Ian Woodfinden, General Manager for DTM, said that: "In 2010, Westlake were in 11th place out of the Top 75 Global Tyre Manufacturers, producing Passenger, LTR, HTR, Bias, Bicycle and Motorcycle tyres. The Westlake 'brand' in Passenger and Van has been accepted in the UK market for some time now. Indeed, we have seen the Van product perform exceptionally well against major manufacturers when looking at the whole life costs". When asked about DTM's interest in reaching a deal with Eskay, Mr. Woodfinden mentioned that "Westlake will enable us to sustain our recent growth and to continue to deliver industry-leading choice and availability".

Jorge Crespo, European general manager of Eskay Tyres –part of the Al Dobowi Group– said that Eskay decided to partner with DTM "because of their knowledge of the UK's





Truck Market, and the value proposition they offer their customers. When we first looked into the different options, we had a very different idea in mind about how best to tackle the market, however, after our first meeting with the directors of DTM we realised that we had in front of us the perfect match to develop the Westlake brand in the UK”.

Crespo also stated that among the advantages DTM had over other distributors was that they fitted “most of their tyres into wheels; their service levels and systems are outstanding and they do not wholesale their tyres. DTM has a very loyal customer base and they have a very good understanding of their clients' needs and wants. They also own a retreading plant, which will help to benchmark Westlake Truck Tyres against their competitors Finally, DTM decided that, because of the quality of Westlake Truck Tyres, they would like to nurture this brand versus a myriad of other brands that are available in the UK market”.

Mr. Woodfinden mentioned that DTM had been “searching for a strategic partner for some time. We were introduced to Eskay Tyres and the Westlake brand through a ‘third party’ and the timing couldn't have been better”. He also states that DTM were chosen over other companies because, “It was clear from our first meeting that we shared a similar vision and would be a good fit for each other!”

When asked about the marketing strategy of the brand, and the quality of Westlake tyres, Mr. Woodfinden stated that Westlake “has a clear ambition to grow their market position throughout Europe. The Westlake plant uses ‘state of the art’ technology and has purpose-built manufacturing facilities. We have total confidence in the quality of a product which will be compliant with the forthcoming tyre labelling requirements EC 1222-2009 including noise, fuel efficiency and wet grip”.

Mr. Crespo also mentioned that the UK’s truck tyre market was “very important” for Westlake, to which Mr. Woodfinden added that, insofar as the British market was





concerned, “Westlake TBR is very well positioned in this market, and without doubt will be a force to be reckoned with!”

In order to supply the British market, DTM will promote Westlake’s TBR brand through their own “team of regional sales staff”, according to Mr. Woodfinden, where it will “complement” their own “retread brand”. DTM plan to distribute all Westlake TBR products destined for the UK from their Wigan Retread Factory in Lancashire. Mr. Woodfinden also stated that he expected “sales of circa 90,000 Westlake TBR units over the next three years”.

Finally, Mr. Crespo stated that: “Westlake is one of the top ten manufacturers in the World, and as such, their expectations are to partner with equally first class companies that are able to grow at the pace the factory is introducing new product ranges, and developing outstanding products. Direct exposure to the end user via a well managed and controlled distribution is of paramount importance in the new commercial strategy, and Direct Tyre Management will be a critical partner in that area”.

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