In 2018, Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba made an interesting move. They signed an agreement to lease a 22,000 square meter logistics hub at Belgium’s Liège airport. Their goal: set up an e-commerce hub that would deliver to any EU-country within 72 hours.

Shortly afterwards, in 2019, Made.com followed in their footsteps. The furniture company selected Belgium’s Port of Antwerp – Europe’s second biggest port – to become their main EU hub.

Why, however, did two major international e-commerce players opt for Belgium? It may have been a surprising choice, but it was a smart one. We’ll give you seven excellent reasons.
Seven excellent reasons

1. **Prime location:** Belgium’s largest port, Port of Antwerp, is close to close to over 60% of European purchasing power and to the majority of its distribution centres.

2. **Short distances, fast connections:** Distances between Port of Antwerp and other major Belgian transport hubs are short, and you’ll reach most of Europe within 48 hours, as well.

3. **Multimodal transport options:** Belgium offers excellent hinterland connections. Whether you prefer road, rail, barge or air transport (or a combo), it’s all available. Belgium’s main transport hubs all work together to ensure smooth transport, with Port of Antwerp in a leading role.

4. **Hassle-free customs procedures:** Belgium has a customs clearance procedure specifically for e-commerce players. The system was designed to smoothen logistics for companies like Alibaba and was quickly installed in all of the country’s international transport hubs, from Port of Antwerp to Liège.

5. **Multilingual professionals:** Most of your Belgian contacts will be able to speak different languages fluently and will go out of their way to help you out with your business.

6. **Expansive international network:** As the second largest port in Europe, Port of Antwerp is a global actor. For centuries, the city and the Port of Antwerp have had excellent trade relations with China, as Belgium is linked directly to the Silk route. Numerous treaties of friendship have been signed and each year, delegations from the Antwerp port community visit Chinese port cities in order to strengthen their good relations and contacts.

7. **One-stop-shop for your logistics:** In Antwerp, Belgium, you’ll find sufficient warehousing space, as well as logistics partners who are used to collaborating across platforms and adapting their strategy to a changing market. Port of Antwerp has over 200 specialized logistic service providers, 6,1 million m² covered warehouses and more than 700 European distribution centres.

Share your dreams with us

Wondering how shipping with Port of Antwerp and its partners can help you grow your e-commerce business? Talk to one of our experts to map your needs.

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