



Internship report from Dennis Sommer, who spent two months in Dalian, China

During your assignment in Dalian from August 10th to October 15th 2004, you will be part of the local Kuehne + Nagel branch team. You are expected to get to know all aspects of the office's day-to-day work.

"I had always wanted to go to China as an intern, and now it was finally becoming a reality. I was picked up from Dalian airport by Simon Zhu, a colleague from Kuehne + Nagel, who had kindly agreed to accommodate me.

Dalian is a popular vacation spot for Chinese and Russian tourists. The city is said to be one of the most beautiful Chinese metropolises and has even received an international award for its outstanding quality of life. Dalian boasts one of the largest shipyards in the country.

Compared with other Kuehne + Nagel branches in China, the Dalian office is rather small with around 20 staff. It is, however, expanding with unbelievable speed. During the two months of my internship four new colleagues were employed, and meanwhile the office space has more than doubled and further staff have been hired.

Dalian and the surrounding areas have strong economic ties with Japan and South Korea. Trade from Dalian to Europe and Germany is also very important and one of the focal points for the local Kuehne + Nagel branch. Most of the staff work in the seafreight department, but airfreight is increasing in importance.

As all Kuehne + Nagel offices worldwide use the same forwarding software, forwarding operations in Dalian are very similar to Germany. There were, however, some basic differences. At the time of my stay, the Dalian branch was not yet allowed to handle customs declarations nor sign BAL/BLs. Such documents had to be signed by a local agent on the company's behalf. Meanwhile though, now that Kuehne + Nagel has been awarded the Class A forwarding licence, these formalities are taken care of independently by the branch.





Internship Report

My main job as an intern was in a different field. Melissa Liu, the branch manager, asked me to prepare a survey about the local economy. It consisted of an analysis of existing import and export flows to and from northeast China, a close look at our local competition, and a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis for the Dalian branch. I was also given the task of organising a customer survey. This would give us hints regarding the continual improvement of service levels.

Communication wasn't a problem. Almost all of my Chinese colleagues have a bachelors degree and are fluent in English. I received a very warm welcome and strong support from the whole team. The atmosphere at the branch was great, and the company often organised tours or dinners that everybody took part in. Of course I also spent a lot of time exploring the city, and I had the opportunity to visit some other Chinese metropolises as well, such as Shanghai and Beijing.

This internship in China was a fantastic experience that has left a a very positive and lasting impression on me. It is highly interesting to experience a country that is undergoing such rapid development first hand."

Dennis Sommer,
Dalian 2004

