

# Charting New Waters

Gebr. Heinemann becomes a retailer for Scandlines and expands its distribution footprint westward.

Growth with existing partners and expansion into new markets: The ferry business at Gebr. Heinemann has once again demonstrated strong performance in recent months. With seven ferry operators supplied on 40 vessels – 96 per cent of which are on duty-free routes – this seg-

ment represents a key pillar of the company’s travel retail portfolio. It is also a compelling example of a channel that combines resilience with long-term growth potential.



Eric Grégoire, CEO of Scandlines

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## Milestone: Concession with Scandlines

A major success was the deepening of the strategic partnership with the Danish-German ferry operator Scandlines. The two companies signed a ten-year concession agreement, under which Gebr. Heinemann will assume responsibility for retail management on six ferries operating between Germany and Denmark, as well as two port shops in Puttgarden and Rostock, Germany. Previously, Scandlines managed its shops independently, while Gebr. Heinemann had served as a trusted supplier of a wide range of products for more than 15 years.

“Scandlines’ decision to take this next step underscores the success of our long-standing collaboration,” says Jens Wolf, Director Sales Nordics. “Our shared values – responsibility, commitment to quality, and respect for the people who make this business possible – have consistently delivered results and now form the foundation for this new chapter. In terms of scale, this business is comparable to airport operations such as Keflavík, and we look forward to enhancing the shopping experience with our travel retail expertise.”

Eric Grégoire, CEO of Scandlines, states: “This is a major milestone in Scandlines’ history. We are excited to take the shopping and travel experience of our customers and passengers to an even higher level together with Gebr. Heinemann.” He adds: “We share many core values with Gebr. Heinemann, which was a key factor in choosing our partner, because our stores are so important to our customers and passengers. Scand-



lines plans to sail for many decades to come, so this is the right step to future-proof our business.”

## Expanding West: New Markets and Customers

In addition to shifting from distribution to retail with Scandlines, Gebr. Heinemann expanded its ferry business westward in 2025, serving both existing and new customers. The company now supplies three additional DFDS vessels on new routes to and from the island of Jersey in the English Channel. DFDS is Gebr. Heinemann’s longest-standing and second-largest ferry customer, operating 19 ships on 25 routes across the North Sea, Baltic Sea, and the English Channel. Since 2021, Gebr. Heinemann has also been supplying DFDS’s two premium port shops in Calais and Dunkirk, France. Another milestone was reached with the onboarding of Brittany Ferries as a customer. Brittany Ferries operates an extensive route network between the UK, France, Ireland, and north-

ern Spain, as well as connections within the Channel Islands, and runs port shops in Guernsey. In 2025, Gebr. Heinemann began supplying confectionery and spirits to four vessels in a pilot phase. After a successful start, a full-scope partnership covering all 13 ships, the port shops, and the full product range commenced in 2026 under a three-year contract. Previously, Brittany Ferries sourced directly from manufacturers.

With the new DFDS routes and the Brittany Ferries partnership, Gebr. Heinemann now has access to attractive markets in the English Channel and the Atlantic Ocean, which are home to a sophisticated and affluent passenger base with high purchasing power. Since Brexit, duty-free shopping has become an added benefit on Channel routes.

“Our successful expansion into new waters illustrates our ability to respond quickly and flexibly to diverse market requirements,” says Oleksandra Büntig, Senior Sales Manager Nordics. “Consumer behavior here differs significantly from that in Scandinavia, with distinct shopping habits, preferences, and brand expectations – particularly in the liquor, tobacco, confectionery, and beauty categories. We are able to respond swiftly to these dynamics and ensure rapid implementation.”

### Continuing Momentum with Color Line

The partnership with Color Line, one of Europe’s leading ferry operators, was also characterized by strong performance. Color Line remained a key growth driver, and the two companies signed a contract extension in 2025.

“With just five ships on four international routes connecting Norway, Germany, Denmark, and Sweden, Color Line stands out as our highest-revenue customer,” says Kerstin Geldmacher, Area Sales Manager Norway. “For Norwegians, ferries are destinations in their own right. Many passengers, particularly on short routes such as those between Norway and Sweden, do not board primarily for a prebooked vacation trip, but rather for duty-free



Oleksandra Büntig, Senior Sales Manager Nordics

shopping. On these occasions, Norwegians tend to favor well-known local brands, especially in the confectionery category.”

Gebr. Heinemann has helped transform duty-free shopping on ferries into a modern and attractive retail experience through its ability to adapt quickly to individual requirements and develop tailored solutions. The offering features an optimized assortment aligned with route length and passenger profiles, complemented by premium selections across all categories. In addition, shop design and brand presentation on board have advanced significantly in recent years. Against this backdrop, the ferry business remains a dynamic growth engine for Gebr. Heinemann, driven by growing coastal and island tourism as well as public investment in more sustainable maritime infrastructure.



Kerstin Geldmacher, Area Sales Manager Norway

### Overview of Ferry Harbors

- DFDS
- Brittany Ferries
- Color Line
- Go Nordic Cruiseline
- Fjord Line
- FRS Syltfähre
- Scandlines
- Smyril Line

