

Issue March 2018

**trans-o-flex**

# ***magazine***

## ***trans-o-flex becomes an express service***

• How customers stand to benefit from this • What new products  
are being introduced • How service is set to improve •

### ***Innovative technology***

4,350 new scanners that can do everything better

### ***Customised European distribution***

Making international shipments faster and cheaper

### ***ThermoMed continues to invest***

Regionalisation and fleet renewal drive quality forward



**“EXTREMELY SATISFIED”**

## *What the owners say about the development of trans-o-flex in 2017*

The owners of the company are “extremely satisfied” with the development of trans-o-flex over the past year. This is what Peter Amberger and Christoph Schoeller had to say when requested for this magazine. The two entrepreneurs, who took over trans-o-flex in 2016 from Österreichische Post (Austrian Post Office), were also “particularly impressed” by three points. These quotes are given in full.

*With its **new leadership team**, trans-o-flex not only has extremely professional and experienced managers on board, but also a team that **understands the special nature of trans-o-flex for their customers** and which helps revive the original, customer and market-oriented corporate culture.*

*As shareholders of trans-o-flex, we are particularly impressed with the **enthusiasm** and **speed** with which the entire company has accepted and implemented the **return to high quality**.*

*We feel that not only do all of our employees have a **special relationship with their trans-o-flex**, but also **our customers**. We particularly want to **thank you** for this support.*



*Peter Amberger (left) and Christoph Schoeller (right).*

### **Legal notice**

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**Responsible for the content:** Sabine Kolaric

**Editorial staff:** Ludwig M. Cremer

**Design:** bfw tailoredmade communication GmbH,  
Angelika Szigeti; Grafikbohne, Chantalle Alberstadt

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## Dear Readers,

Hand on heart! At the beginning of 2017, did you believe that trans-o-flex would actually turn the corner, improve its quality sustainably, and finally operate in the black after several years of losses? You would not be the only one who no longer believed this would be possible. But still we did just that. And that is why I can say at this juncture that I am very proud of each and every one of our employees and grateful that you – our customers – have remained loyal to us. Because it is only by working together that we have succeeded in pulling off this double turnaround in quality and profitability.

### Quality and profitability belong together

And it is not by chance that we have achieved this double success. Because quality and profitability are two sides of the same coin. Quality is the key to profitability. Without quality, you don't have satisfied and loyal customers, but plenty of mistakes that require fixing at great expense. At the same time, it applies that without profitability, it is not possible to finance all the investments necessary to ensure consistent or even increasing quality over the long term. And only by ensuring predictable quality can we grow together with you.

### Agenda 2021: Medium-term planning adopted

We will therefore be keeping to the course we have chosen. To which end we have already adopted a medium-term plan, our Agenda 2021. It's most important pillar – which should not surprise anyone after what has already been said – is the quality of our service. Without having to go into too much detail here, I can tell you today that we will be investing primarily in infrastructure – new technology and the modernisation of our sites. We will also however be testing the possibilities of e-mobility, driving forward the digitisation of our processes and products and, not least, developing the skills of our employees. For all this, in this second edition of our customer magazine, you'll find examples of how we're expanding

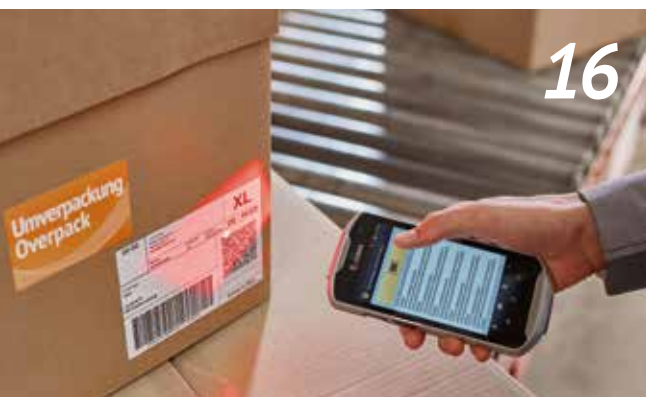
the capabilities of our consignee app, how we are improving sorting and delivery with a new generation of mobile computers, why we are not only accelerating our customer service, but, at the request of our customers, are making it more local, which new services we are testing and will be offering shortly, why we have founded a training academy and how we are also planning to optimise communication with you via a new CRM system. As you can see, we never cease developing, and we know exactly how we plan to achieve our goals.

### More quality, more service, more customer proximity

An important pillar for the qualitative development of trans-o-flex is the transition to an express service, which we describe in the cover story. Again, the three pillars of our Agenda 2021 are pivotal: more quality, more service, more customer proximity. And on the subject of customer proximity, we do not just mean proximity to you as consignors, but also proximity to your customers. We aim to keep your promises with efficient express logistics, be your advertisement in front of your customers. Regardless of whether we work for you in the B2B segment or in the B2C segment, which we will also be focussing on much more intensively this year, you can count on us! We are always there for you – reliable, punctual and predictable. This is important to us, and what we have geared our strategy to.

I am looking forward to working with you in future!

Wolfgang P. Albeck  
CEO



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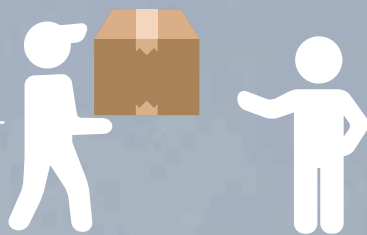
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#### ++ PREMIUM SERVICES ++

##### *Private delivery: Deliver directly to the end customer*

In response to growing customer demand, trans-o-flex will also be delivering to private customers this autumn. "The plan is to offer delivery to private households always in conjunction with an express delivery or Saturday delivery," says Lutz Blankenfeldt, who is also responsible for product development as Head of Strategy, Communication and Commercial. "In order to ensure the personal delivery on the first delivery attempt and to minimise returns, we will announce the deliveries to the consignees and also offer them further services to go with the private delivery." To comply with the requirements of EU-GDP, pharmaceuticals are also delivered exclusively to the authorised consignee. Private delivery will also be possible for actively temperature-controlled shipments.

#### ++ ADDITIONAL CHARGES ++

##### *HGV toll: Extension to main roads pushes up prices*

The planned extension of the HGV toll to include all main roads is still on the political agenda in Berlin. Although the originally scheduled date of 1 July is apparently off the table, by the editorial deadline of this magazine, 1 October 2018 has now been negotiated as the date for the extension. trans-o-flex CEO Wolfgang P. Albeck firmly expects that "the increase in toll costs will come in any case, it is just a matter of when." Shippers will then have to adapt to these costs being charged proportionately.

#### ++ SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY ++

##### *4,000 euro donation thanks to customer survey and summer party*

Because trans-o-flex had promised to donate ten euros for each completed questionnaire in its latest customer survey, the company has donated a total of 4,000 euros to the Haus Freudenberg school in Kleve. Some 2,650 euros of the donation were raised because 265 customers participated in the survey, another 1,000 euros came from by an auction at the trans-o-flex summer party. The last 350 euros were rounded up for this good cause. The school looks after and supports young people with what are in some cases severe disabilities.



Adelheid Ackermann, Head of the Haus Freudenberg school, and some of her students are delighted about receiving the donation from trans-o-flex.

# new



*trans-o-flex's latest sustainability report can also be downloaded from the United Nations website (language: German).*

## ++ CORPORATE GOVERNANCE ++

### *Sustainability report is online*

“Responsible. Environmentally friendly. Successful.” This is the title of trans-o-flex’s latest sustainability report, which is available for downloading in two places on the web. Firstly, on trans-o-flex’s homepage in the section “About us” under Environmental protection. Secondly, on the United Nations’ Global Compact website ([www.unglobalcompact.org](http://www.unglobalcompact.org)). trans-o-flex has been a member of this, the world’s largest and most important initiative for responsible corporate governance, since 2006. The sustainability report documents the latest progress trans-o-flex has made vis-a-vis the goals of the Global Compact. And, over 40 pages, it provides a comprehensive overview of the company’s development in terms of economy, ecology and social responsibility. The focus is on showing how trans-o-flex combines sustainability and financial interests.

## ++ CONSIGNEE NOTIFICATION ++

### *ThermoMed now informs in sky blue*

The colour says it all. The sky blue inscription “2 – 8 °C” also makes it clear: The consignment it informs you about with this colour is refrigerated goods. In the same way as before with the new orange notification card used by Schnell-Lieferdienst, the ThermoMed notification card has now been adapted to the new corporate design. The three ThermoMed-specific delivery attempts have been designed to be particularly strikingly. Because only if the third delivery attempt was in vain, does ThermoMed ask a consignee to contact the consignor. A separate field is provided for the consignor information, which the driver fills out individually.

*In the new corporate design – the ThermoMed notification card.*







## ++ TRAINING ACADEMY ++

### *trans-o-flex invests in employee development*

In order to boost the employee development in the company and to be able to meet the individual training needs of the employees in a targeted and efficient way, trans-o-flex founded the Training & Academy division. The first training sessions were a series for junior management as well as employees from customer service and sales.

“The junior management training sessions are primarily about further developing the leadership skills of the participants,” explains Till Luhn, who heads up the department. “Training modules include, for example, conflict management, team building, leadership and health. These training sessions take place regionally at the trans-o-flex locations.”

The goals of the sales and customer service training sessions are different. “Our goal is for trans-o-flex to stand out from the competition through good communication with cus-

tomers and excellent customer service. We want to equip our employees with the right tools for this purpose.”

“The training sessions are popular with the staff,” is Luhn’s preliminary conclusion. “Many participants have told me that they think it’s great that trans-o-flex is now investing more in their employees – and how much training has already boosted job satisfaction and self-motivation.”

Luhn is currently developing a training concept for all trans-o-flex divisions. It is intended to include both training that is conducted by our own staff as well as external training providers. “We always have the best possible training for the employees in mind.”



## ++ CRM SYSTEM IS COMING ++

### *“Optimum service for customers”*

Have you ever been invited twice by a company to participate in a customer survey? Or have you received the invitation to a customer event twice? Or have you been asked multiple times about your interest in possible new products? Such uncoordinated processes are not only annoying. They are also avoidable. And that is one reason why trans-o-flex is introducing a Customer Relationship Management System, or CRM for short, this year.

“We want to provide optimum service for our customers, and will be using structured and technically supported processes to take us a step further,” says Lutz Blankenfeldt, who heads up the CRM implementation at trans-o-flex. Amongst the more tangible benefits of the CRM system he cites: “Customer enquiries, irrespective of whether it is an offer or a service, will be answered faster, more specifically and sustainably in the future.” How? All enquiries from a customer are documented, and it is possible to track at any time when and how we replied. “In addition, the system automatically reminds you when, for example, there is a call-back request or an offer is pending.” Another advantage: Individual conditions or specific requirements of a customer need only be registered once. This means they are also available if, for example, the account manager is on vacation or sick.



Employees from customer service and sales tested two different CRM systems in the past year. The contract was awarded to a system from SAP, which, in the testers' experience, allows individual agreements and workflows to be better mapped, which displays all the important information in a clearly arranged dashboard and is easier to use.



## ++ CONCEPT ++

### *Inspire with quality*

Even more precise, clearer and easier to grasp. This is how trans-o-flex's concept, revised at the beginning of this year, presents itself. Six short phrases summarise the self-understanding of the trans-o-flex Group and provide all employees with an orientation that is both a requirement and an obligation at the same time. The focus is on the will to convince with quality, to inspire both the direct customer and their customers (the consignees). It is about responsible, sustainable action that is defined by trust and respect both internally and externally. The mission statement is displayed as a poster at all trans-o-flex sites.

## COVER STORY

# *How trans-o-flex will become an express service*



## *New products, new service, new express thinking: How customers benefit from the new development*

This year will see trans-o-flex taking the next logical step in its development. The 'Schnell-Lieferdienst' (fast delivery service) is to become the 'Expressdienst' (express delivery service). There is more to this change than a mere name change. This step signifies the continuation of a strategy consistently oriented to customer needs. It means the introduction of more express products. And it means the implementation of a high standard, both internally and externally: express thinking and acting.

"When it was founded 47 years ago, trans-o-flex set a new standard as a fast delivery service," says CEO Wolfgang P. Albeck. "To date, trans-o-flex has been a top provider for consignments with no time guarantees, with a standard delivery time of less than 24 hours." This applies all the more, as trans-o-flex is not limited to pure package shipments, but also ships complete consignments as a combined pallet and package shipment. "I believe that we are already quality market leaders in this segment today."

Nevertheless, according to Albeck, this service is not enough for an increasing number of customers. "Customers want to be totally sure that a consignment will arrive the next day. And sometimes

they need their delivery to reach its destination by a specific time. This is why we are advancing our fast delivery service into an express service."

The first visible changes in this transition will be two new express products that trans-o-flex will be launching in April. "We will then offer a 9 o'clock service, as well as guaranteed next business day delivery." In total, trans-o-flex will be offering ten express products from April onwards (see page 13). "This puts us in the top group in Germany, even when compared to other express services."

In particular, the early deliveries by the next day will be made possible by a star-shaped, additional express night route network, which trans-o-flex already installed back in April 2016. This plus star accelerates overnight shipping and forms the backbone of trans-o-flex express services. To deliver the plus star service, additional vans are used on special night routes. "Thanks to this network and further optimisation of the interfaces, we achieve decisive time advantages and ensure that particularly urgent consignments reach their destination depots on time," explains Albeck. "The plus star network is one example of how we are advancing the development of our express service: We are investing in the quality of our service."





• plus 8 am •



• plus 9 am •



• plus 10 am •

## *Secure new express products at the introductory price!*

From April, trans-o-flex customers will be able to book the two new express products trans-o-flex plus 9 am as well as Next Day Guarantee. In order to convince customers of the quality of the new service, a **special introductory discount** applies for both products until the end of June 2018. Customers wishing to take advantage of this offer should get in touch with their sales contact. As an alternative, a separate **express hotline** is available until the end of June on the number **+49 6201 988-555**. Please note that the express products require that customers use the current data interface in the modern XML format. Customers who are still using an obsolete interface can download the current interface definition via the trans-o-flex homepage under section e-services / EDI interface.

For the CEO, “express is the logical continuation of our quality strategy.” He believes that quality alone ensures the reliability that express products need.

However, trans-o-flex’s claim to being an express service provider goes even further. “The goal of 100% quality does not only apply to pure shipping processes. The goal must be 360° quality.” Express must become a standard that encompasses all processes: How long is an offer allowed to last? How long should it take to clarify a customer request? How long should it take to clarify and respond to queries about bills? How fast do we answer the phone?

### **Joint customer service by consignor and logistics specialist**

Albeck will be placing one focus of the process improvement on direct customer contact. The key question is: “Do customers perceive us as an express service provider, and are they completely satisfied with the service we provide? That’s what counts at the end of the day.” He wants to examine all customer processes to see if and how processes can be accelerated and sources of error eliminated. Last but not least, this includes “reducing bureaucracy, automating documentation, eliminating duplicate or superfluous checklists, standardising and simplifying processes wherever possible.”



• plus 12 am •



• Evening service •



• Premium •

To implement these plans Albeck has already initiated two organisational changes. “We will set up a Customer Integration Management system in the IT department.” The department will deal with the connection of new customers or support customers with system adjustments. He also responds to the customer criticism regarding the centralisation of customer service decided before he came into office. “Numerous customers have made it clear to me how important the decentralised structure of customer service is for them. We are taking this into account by moving closer to our customers again. For individual customers, we will even establish a joint customer service at their request.”

## *All express products from trans-o-flex at a glance*

<b>trans-o-flex plus 8 am</b>	Next day delivery (Monday to Friday) by the specified time
<b>trans-o-flex plus 9 am (from April)</b>	Next day delivery (Monday to Friday) by the specified time
<b>trans-o-flex plus 10 am</b>	Next day delivery (Monday to Friday) by the specified time
<b>trans-o-flex plus 12 am</b>	Next day delivery (Monday to Friday) by the specified time
<b>Next Day Guarantee (from April)</b>	Guaranteed next day delivery (Monday to Friday)
<b>Evening service</b>	Delivery Monday to Friday between 5 pm and 8 pm
<b>Scheduled delivery</b>	Delivery on a specific date
<b>Saturday service</b>	Next Saturday delivery (which is not a public holiday) – can be combined with plus services
<b>Weekend service</b>	If the shipment was not completed on Friday: collection on Saturday or Sunday and delivery on the next working day
<b>Premium delivery</b>	Individual time slot delivery including pre-advice for bulk consignees



## PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

## Pfizer has thoroughly tested new ident service

*Enhanced security for delivery of particularly sensitive consignments. How consignees can identify themselves.*

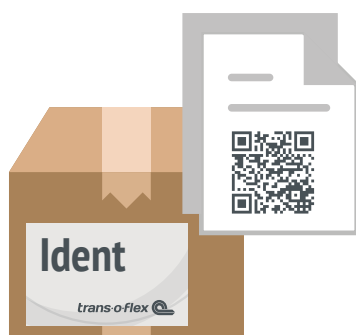
The product was developed last year at the customer's request. Pfizer Pharma GmbH has been testing it under real conditions since mid-January. We're talking about the new ident service from trans-o-flex. Its purpose is to ensure that a partic-

ularly sensitive and high-quality shipment is only handed over to a person who can prove their identity in an uncomplicated but secure way (see customer magazine September 2017), entitling them to take delivery of it. trans-o-flex had developed

### *This is how the new ident service works*

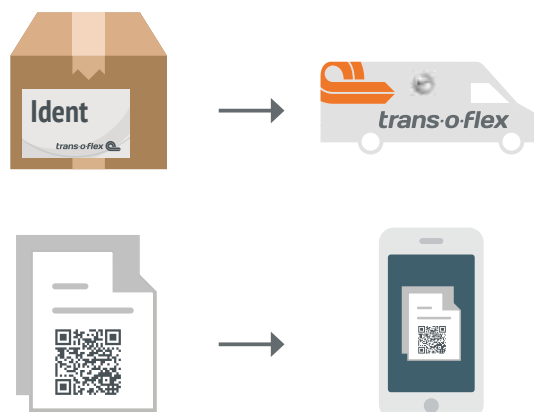
#### 1. Transfer

Transfer of the package and the data record including ident code to trans-o-flex.



#### 2. Network

Electronic data processing and shipping.



The recipient of an ident consignment receives a QR code which allows them to identify themselves when taking delivery of ident consignments.





several logistically possible variants for this service. Pfizer has opted for the variant, where consignees are required to identify themselves with a QR code.

In the pilot test this ident service works as follows: Pfizer transmits an ident code in parallel with the physical transfer to trans-o-flex in the data record of the corresponding package. The same code is simultaneously provided directly to the consignee. When the driver attempts to deliver the ident consignment, he is prompted to first scan the ident QR code. If the consignee cannot provide an ident QR code, the driver cannot deliver the consignment. Pfizer automatically receives the information via the mytof.de customer portal and can decide on what action to take. If consignees

can identify themselves with the ident QR code, the driver is allowed to hand over the delivery. Consignees acknowledge the receipt with their signature.

“In April, trans-o-flex and Pfizer will evaluate the test,” says Sonja Schneider-Hipper, account manager at trans-o-flex. “It will then be decided as to whether adjustments to the processes are necessary or not.” For example, once the service is finally in place, consignors are meant to be relieved of the task of sending the ident QR code themselves to the consignees. One option would be for trans-o-flex to give the consignee access to a portal via which they can download and print out the code. trans-o-flex plans to make the ident service available to all customers in the second half of the year.

### 3. Delivery

Scanning of ident QR code prior to handing over the package.



### 4. Receipt

Package only delivered if ident QR code is successfully scanned.



## NEW GENERATION

# trans-o-flex employs 4,350 Zebras

trans-o-flex is on the cusp of a generation change. More than 4,000 new handheld computers are being purchased. These are used as hand-held scanners in the sorting areas or as delivery computers, on which the consignees sign. They are faster, more stable, more reliable, easier to use and maintain than their predecessors. But before all these benefits can make everyday life easier for trans-o-flex employees and improve the reliability of their processes, major investments are needed. The software also has to be newly programmed. This is why the new generation of devices will be introduced in stages. The hall scanners are being introduced first. The changeover to the new devices already commenced here back in December 2017. The delivery computers will be introduced last due to the programming being most extensive for these. The first drivers will receive their new touch computers in early 2019.

The new devices look like a smartphone. But they can do things you are better not doing with a normal smartphone. The Zebra Technologies TC56 device selected after extensive testing is said to work even if dropped in water or on concrete. "The main reason for changing systems, however, is that we will no longer be using Windows mobile in future, but Android instead as the op-

erating system," says Stefan Thömmes, Head of System Development at trans-o-flex. "The choice of equipment is much greater, and we can use modern technology and develop optimised processes." If problems arise, drivers can be supported quickly and easily in the future, for example, by assisting them directly on the device. New updates are also performed via remote maintenance. The current generation of devices still has to be returned to head office for major updates.

The roll-out of the 800 hall scanners will be completed by the end of March. The programming of the software for the delivery devices is running in parallel. Afterwards, the delivery computers will be tested in a depot under real conditions. On completion, 3,000 handhelds will be deployed for the drivers at trans-o-flex and 550 for those from ThermoMed in Germany and Austria. Altogether, the Group is investing nearly five million euros in this generation change.



## ++ DIGITISATION ++

### Large screens create transparency and optimise goods handling

trans-o-flex installs 100 large screens, projectors and mini-PCs to show the employees in the transshipment hubs what they have done so far in their shift and what to expect. Following a successful trial phase in several branches, the monitors will be installed nationwide in all sorting centres by the end of the year.

The trial has shown that the added transparency contributes to optimising employee commitment and speeding up handling. By way of example, the monitors, which are at least 1.40 m wide, tell the employees not just how many packages and how many pallets are on their way. They also tell them (important because of the temperature control) how warm it is in the hall and from which gates trucks leave next, allowing the goods to be loaded accordingly. Employees can see at a glance which truck to load and unload first. This helps to prevent delayed departures.

The Dashboard project is part of trans-o-flex's digitisation offensive. "We asked ourselves what information is needed, where do we get it from, and how can we present the information in the most straightforward way," says project manager David de Vega from Operational Development. The software was also entirely developed by trans-o-flex. "The displayed information can be automatically read out from our operational core system TOKS, prepared site-specifically and displayed on the output screens for everyone in the transshipment centres."



Which truck needs to be loaded next? Large information screens in the transshipment centres help to optimise the deployment of the employees.

*Lightweight, handy, efficient – this is what the new scanner looks like.*



### Mini computers with maxi performance

A look at a few technical features reveals the power of the new generation of hall scanners and delivery computers:

Large 5 inch touch screen

Touch panel from  
Corning Gorilla Glass

Operating system Android 6.0

1.8 GHz 64 bit processor with  
eight cores

up to 4GB of RAM and  
32GB Flash memory

WLAN and LTE

13 MP camera

omnidirectional scanner for 1D  
and 2D barcodes (QR code)

Lightweight 250 grams incl. battery  
14 hours operation



## ++ EXTENSION ++

### *Consignee app now as a desktop version, even more convenience and features*

trans-o-flex insight, the app for consignees introduced in 2017, will be upgraded with further functions as announced. From April onwards commercial consignees, for example, will be able to enter their opening or holiday times. The direct advantage is that trans-o-flex takes this information into account in the scheduling and route planning. Consignees can receive shipments up to one day earlier, because the drivers note closing times also out of their own interest: Deliveries during opening times of a pharmacy or business avoid double trips.

The new functionality will come through a desktop version of the app which has been developed in addition to the app version for smartphones and tablet computers. "The app for PC and Mac makes operation even more convenient and facilitates access to the program," says Stefan Thömmes, Head of System Development at trans-o-flex. "It also includes some exclusive features that would be too extensive for the app." This includes the calendar function mentioned above, which allows integrating and changing opening and holiday times most easily.

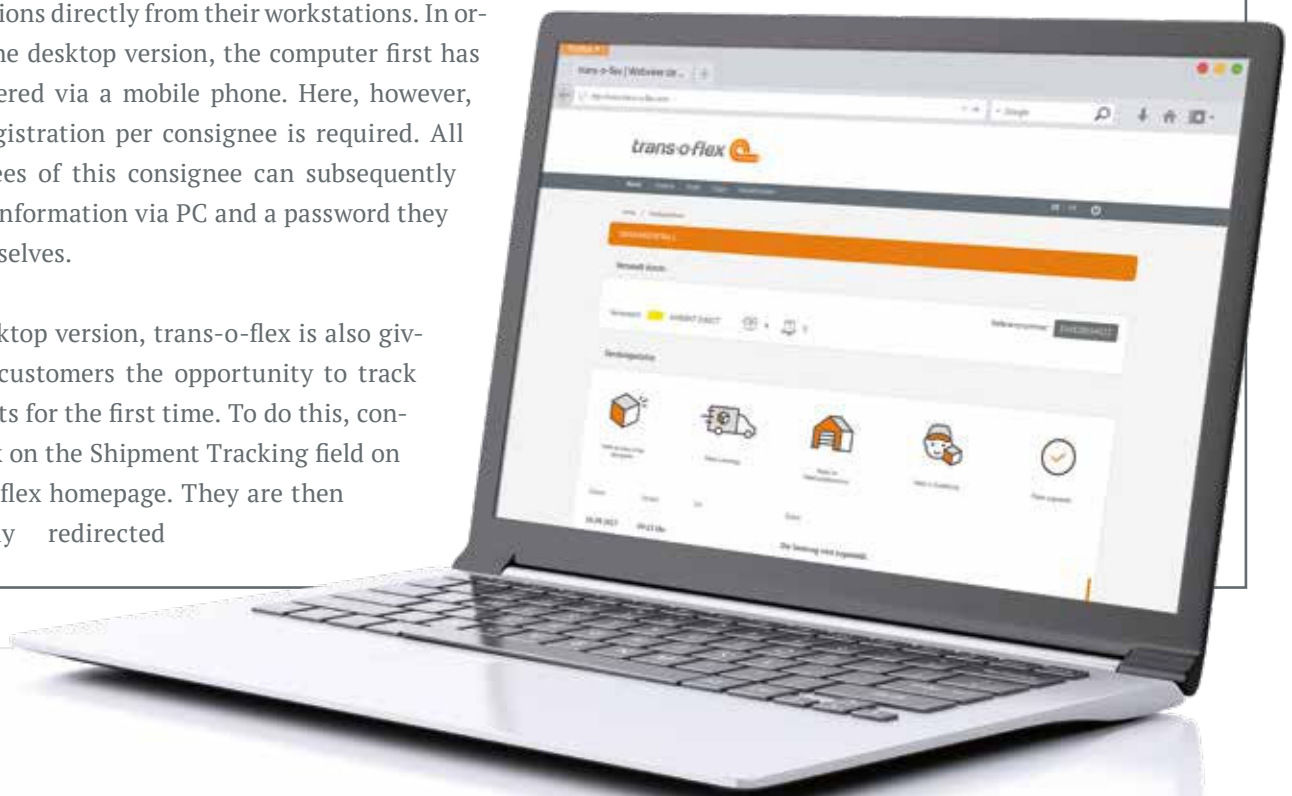
The PC version of the application enables consignees to use all functions directly from their workstations. In order to use the desktop version, the computer first has to be registered via a mobile phone. Here, however, only one registration per consignee is required. All the employees of this consignee can subsequently retrieve all information via PC and a password they assign themselves.

With its desktop version, trans-o-flex is also giving private customers the opportunity to track consignments for the first time. To do this, consignees click on the Shipment Tracking field on the trans-o-flex homepage. They are then automatically redirected

to the app's desktop application, where they can enter their tracking number, and see the current status. Private customers do not need to login in order to use this service. You only need to log in if you want to use other functions of the application in addition to tracking.

Another new feature goes back to the suggestion from users of the app. This will see all consignees automatically receiving a push notification via the app as of April, as soon as a shipment is on its way. Previously, users had to open the app and see if it contains new shipment information.

With trans-o-flex insight, consignees can see before delivery when a delivery is planned (1 hour window), how many shipments they are going to receive from which consignors, whether they are also dangerous goods, ambient or COD shipments and what is the COD amount. By scanning the QR code on their package, consignees can also see the temperature curve of an ambient shipment. "No other service provider offers its consignees this information," says Thömmes. "With the extensions to the app, we are extending our lead even further."



## SMART CONSIGNMENT CONTROL

# Making international shipments faster and cheaper

*Complete service: trans-o-flex develops tailor-made European distribution solutions, which can be ported to other countries and customers at any time*



The international logistics solution that trans-o-flex has been implementing for a customer in Spain since November 2017 serves as a model. “Not only have we shortened transport routes and saved customers time and money, but have also designed all the processes in IT and customer service so that they can be ported to other European countries and customers at any time,” says Senior Account Manager International Holger Eberhard. He developed the innovative concept and implemented it with EURODIS’ support, the trans-o-flex’s European network.

The requirement specified by the pilot customer was: Shoes and textiles should be transported from Spain to Belgium, Germany, France, the Netherlands, Austria, the Czech Republic and Hungary. The parcel service used before transported all the packages from Spain to Germany and distributed them from here to wholesalers and retailers in the different countries. Eberhard analysed the shipment streams and discovered that the

largest quantities go to France and Germany, with the rest being distributed over the other countries. This is why he changed the transport streams. All the French consignments are fed in directly at the EURODIS partner’s in France. The remaining quantity is bundled and transferred to the EURODIS hub in Cologne, from where trans-o-flex handles the local-level distribution in Germany. The rest, for which direct feed-in is not worthwhile, will be redistributed with EURODIS lines in the other countries.

Thanks to this shortcut, the consignments reach their destinations up to two days faster. In addition, thanks to the direct feed-in, it is possible to offer the France consignments at prices on national level. Despite the different feed-in points and the total of eight participating countries, customers have a single point of contact, namely trans-o-flex. “For our customers, we also manage the data transfer to all the partners and have optimised the returns”, explains Eberhard. “All unde-



liverable packages are a national return for the consignees in the respective country.” The same delivery service that brings the consignment, also collects it again. It is then routed via the respective national EURODIS hub to Cologne, where the returns from all the countries are collected, before going back to Spain on pallets.

The special features of the solution include a newly developed package label, on which both the barcode of trans-o-flex and that of the French partner are printed. The label accelerates the fast collection of packages in France and eliminates a source of error because no new label or routing needs to be manually created. The trans-o-flex barcode is used for the assignment of returns. Because trans-o-flex has data sovereignty over the interlinked consignment data, trans-o-flex’s customer service in Germany can monitor all packages, regardless of whether they are fed in in Germany or in France.

“Although the concept ultimately sounds easy, it required intricate preparatory work to ensure that customers receive all



### ***Specialist for international distribution solutions***

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the information from a single source and that all consignees also receive tracking information in their own language,” explains Eberhard. “The solution is now also scalable and portable to all consignors looking for a convenient, international distribution solution, and where multiple feed-in points offer time and cost benefits.”

## **++ EURODIS ++**

### ***New central hub accelerates shipments to and from the Netherlands***

EURODIS, trans-o-flex’s international network active in 36 European countries, has opened a new central hub in the Netherlands. “The new plant increases both the capacity and handling speed of all Dutch imports and exports,” says Wolfgang P. Albeck, CEO of trans-o-flex. “The hub in Nieuwegein is characterised by a new operating concept and innovative processes that significantly accelerate



handling. In addition, the hub is closer to our international hub in Cologne, where all Dutch shipments are consolidated.”

To maximize the efficiency of the hub, the compact, 9,400 square metre transshipment facility has been split into three sections for different flows of goods: parcels, cross docking and temperature-controlled consignments and freight. “The decisive factor for the increased efficiency of the hub is, in addition to a state-of-the-art sorting technology, the concept of dividing up the sorting for different goods streams into three zones in which work is carried out in parallel and between which consignments can be moved”, explains Albeck. “This also makes it possible for straightforward package shipments, which do not contain dangerous goods, to be forwarded very quickly from the cargo area to the package sorter. The parcel network of PostNL then takes care of the delivery.”

The logistics centre employs around 450 people. The centre has more than 40 gates for trucks and 48 gates for distribution vehicles.



## REGIONALISATION

# Refrigerated shipments: Eight quality managers appointed

*Fleet renewal continues: technical improvements in temperature sensors – further investment in new vehicles*

At trans-o-flex ThermoMed, there will be a number of organisational and technical developments this year, with which this specialist for active refrigerated shipments (2 to 8 °C) will be looking to improve service and quality. “In view of our volume growth, to ensure optimal quality across the board, we will be strengthening the regional structures,” says ThermoMed Managing Director Stefan Gerber. “Eight regional quality managers will be appointed, whose sole responsibility will be to ensure the quality of highly sensitive goods.” In addition, Gerber is planning to strengthen customer service for consignors with private customer deliveries to facilitate proactive information and agreements. “This will also see us expanding accessibility in terms of customer service overall.”

In 2018, ThermoMed customers will benefit from further technical developments as well as additional investments in the vehicle fleet. The 165 new vehicles ordered last year have all been delivered since the end of January and, according to Gerber, have “totally proven their worth.” Their technical details, which are very important for practice, include improvements in the temperature sensors that are used in all new vehicles. A new type of rubber coating on the plug-in sensors not only prevents the cables from kinking, but also means that the sensors are better protected against corrosion. Both of which ensure the long-lasting trouble-free operation



of the sensors. Not least because the new plug-in sensors are removable and thus easier to calibrate, which in turn reduces the downtimes of the vehicles.

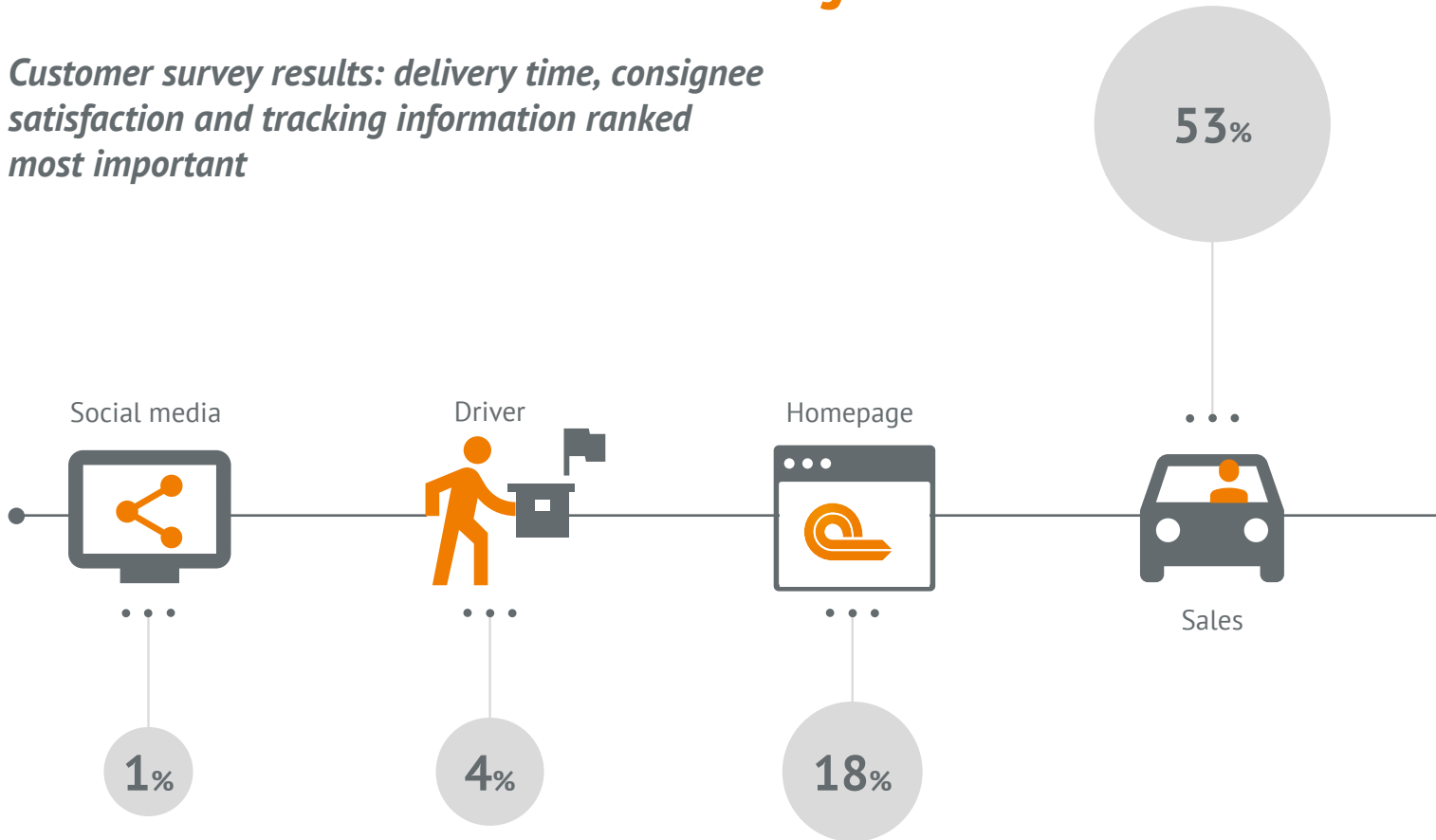
The company has ordered 44 new thermal trailers for new vehicles this year, 24 trucks for collecting or delivering large items (15-tonners) and 15 other delivery vehicles. The first nine trailers will be delivered by Schmitz Cargobull at the end of March.

Another focus in the development at ThermoMed is on digitisation. “We are driving forward the digitisation of processes at ThermoMed in the same way as for our Schnell-Lieferdienst, always with the aim of delivering new benefits for our customers,” explains Gerber. “Because trans-o-flex’s IT service team works for both companies, many process steps only have to be developed once from an IT perspective, thereby enabling us to leverage further synergies.”

## OUTSIDE PERSPECTIVE

## How customers rate trans-o-flex

*Customer survey results: delivery time, consignee satisfaction and tracking information ranked most important*



trans-o-flex is faster and safer and has a higher quality than other logistics service providers. According to the latest representative customer survey, this is the opinion of the majority of all trans-o-flex customers. “The results of the survey are now available, and we will be looking at these very carefully, not resting on our laurels, but thinking about ways of how we can put the various suggestions into practice,” says Wolfgang P. Albeck, CEO of trans -o-flex, commenting on the survey.

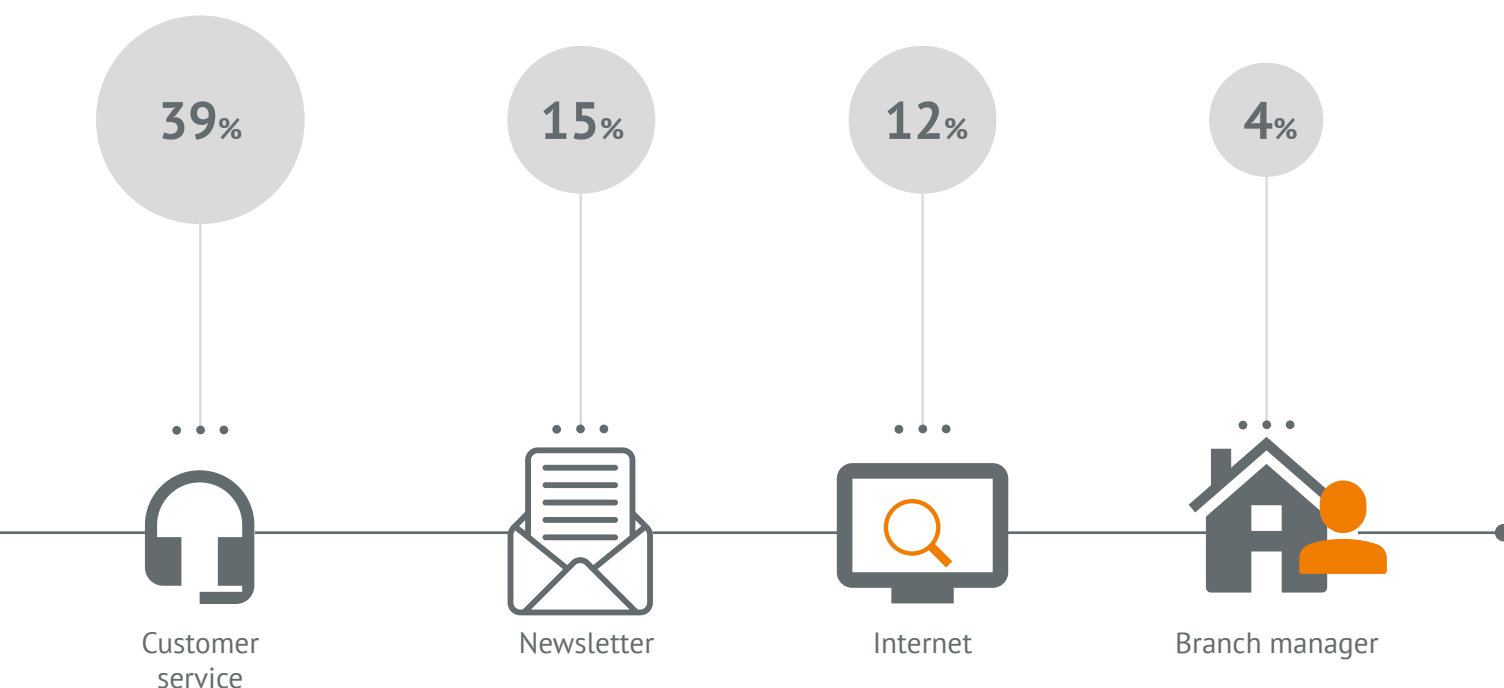
One focus of the survey, in which a total of 366 customers participated, was the communication between customer and company. Whilst the vast majority of customers have personal contact with trans-o-flex through sales or customer service, for 23% of customers the driver is the contact person and for 12% a branch manager. Sales (53%) and customer service (39%) also dominate the channels customers use to inform themselves about trans-o-flex. Social media channels currently play a minor role. “Both findings encourage us to fur-

ther expand customer service, but also to better enable sales to intensify direct customer contact,” says trans-o-flex CEO Wolfgang P. Albeck. “It will also shorten the processing time of requests that were perceived as too long, as well as proactively inform customers.”

The survey also revealed that trans-o-flex customers primarily prefer to be contacted by e-mail and telephone (78% each) as well as in person (71%). The online portal mytof.de is the preferred channel of communication for 62% of customers, and letters for 46%. Multiple answers were possible for this question.

This also applied to the question of what customers felt to be the most important service aspects. The first five places were as follows: Delivery time, consignee satisfaction and ability to access tracking information (all 1.4 on a scale of one to six), followed by IT connectivity and security (1.6).

*Most customers get the information they require about trans-o-flex via our sales or customer service channels.*



“We will be conducting the customer survey on a regular basis in future,” says Albeck. The next survey is scheduled for autumn this year. “This reflects the principle that it is our customers and their customers who decide over our performance and not the company’s internal measurements. They help us too, but only shed some light on what we mean by customer satisfaction.” Repeating the survey at regular intervals enables us ultimately to see how customers perceive the company’s development and evaluate the changes, which are not least developed on the basis of customer feedback. What Albeck hopes to see with the next survey: “This time, we had a very pleasing response rate with well over 20% of all the customers contacted participating. It would be great if we could top this figure next time!”

#### ++ CUSTOMER MAGAZINE ++

##### ***Fantastic response – thanks!***

Numerous customers, employees and partners of trans-o-flex took advantage of the opportunity to provide feedback on the first issue of the trans-o-flex customer magazine. Thank you very much! We were overwhelmed by the positive response to the autumn 2017 issue. This is why we have retained the structure of the magazine for this second issue. Only a few minor changes have been made to the layout. The aim is for the content to be grasped even easier, to improve the overview and ultimately also the pleasure when browsing and reading the magazine. You will again have the opportunity to give us direct feedback. Please forward your comments on the current issue by simply sending us an informal e-mail to [pr@tof.de](mailto:pr@tof.de).



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