

# *trans·o·flex* **m**agazine

## **Digital transformation**

*When the app tells the driver where to  
ring the bell • How trans-o-flex uses IT  
to drive innovation*

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### **WDT customer solution**

Partnership for greater  
sustainability in logistics

### **European strategy**

How trans-o-flex is positioning  
itself internationally

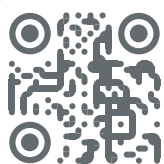
### **Picking up pace in climate protection**

Carbon-neutral shipments for  
all customers

++ NEW PROMOTIONAL VIDEO ++

## trans-o-flex in a nutshell

What values does trans-o-flex stand for? What is the essence of the service? And how can this be summed up in one sentence? Answers to these and even more questions are provided by a new promotional video, which you can watch at any time on the trans-o-flex website. In 2 minutes and 12 seconds, the video summarises the most important things about the company in words and pictures. Depending on the language setting, it will automatically play in German or English. Just a little appetiser?



Link to the film:  
[bit.ly/3NWui42](https://bit.ly/3NWui42)

### Watch the video and win!

What is the one sentence that sums up the core service of trans-o-flex in the video?

Simply write your answer in an e-mail and send it to [pr@tof.de](mailto:pr@tof.de). All correct answers will be entered into a draw for a chance to win one of the ten trans-o-flex thermal mugs we are giving away. These mugs score points for their inner and outer values: insulating double-wall structure, tightly sealing lid and bright trans-o-flex orange!



*trans-o-flex  
raffles 10  
thermal mugs*

#### Legal notice

trans-o-flex magazine, Spring 2022

##### Publisher:

trans-o-flex Express GmbH & Co. KGaA  
Hertzstr. 10  
69469 Weinheim, Germany  
[trans-o-flex.com](http://trans-o-flex.com)

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Printing: ABT Print und Medien GmbH  
Bruchsaler Straße 5, 69469 Weinheim

Photos and illustrations: iStock/KrulUA, iStock/Yevhen Lahunov (Titel, 10–11, 12), Freepik (6, 8, 15, 21–23, 25, 30), iStock/Ackun (6), iStock/Warchi (6), iStock/Elena Mitrokhina (7), iStock/Michele Ursi (7), iStock/Georgijevic (11), Joppen (13), iStock/Paperkites (16), iStock/Parradee Kietsirikul (17, 19), Southpole (18), VetLogOne (21–22), iStock/GarryKillian (26–27), iStock/bgblue (29), Redur (30)

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## Dear Readers,

*Given the terrible news that has been reaching us at ever shorter intervals recently, it is sometimes difficult to remain optimistic. Crises wherever you look – whether in Ukraine or Russia, whether in China with Hong Kong and Taiwan, whether to do with global warming or the decimation of biodiversity. And then there is our own country, where things are not always in the best of shape, either, after two years of the pandemic and the increasingly noticeable effects of the world crises on our economy.*

*Nevertheless, there are some – namely, signs of new beginnings, innovations and positive developments for sustainable growth, for more climate protection, for a free world order that stands up to despots and dictatorships. Each and every one of you – I am sure – can think of well-known examples of this, without me having to name any now.*

*With this customer magazine, we would like to draw your attention to a few lesser-known signs of new beginnings, innovations and positive developments from our own company. First and foremost, the opportunities of digital transformation, which many talk about but too few act upon. We will show you how trans-o-flex consistently uses these possibilities to make processes more efficient, to make the entire logistics chain more transparent, to generate more benefits and more services for you as a customer. That is why the cover story deals in detail with how we use IT as a driver of innovation.*

*Other topics are no less important. For according to Chinese wisdom, it is the many small streams that feed the great river. There is the network expansion and process optimisation, which are continuing with a new branch in Saxony (page 23). There are 174 new refrigerated vehicles for ThermoMed, each of which will*

*not only operate much more quietly but also consume several litres less diesel per 100 kilometres because they will be equipped with a new type of electric cooling system (page 24). There is our strong international development, where we achieved double-digit growth in 2021 (page 26). And above all, there are satisfied customers who, like Germany's largest veterinary cooperative WDT, are expanding their cooperation with trans-o-flex because they see us as the best partner for more sustainability in logistics (page 21).*

*This leads me to a final subject area that is particularly important to me: our climate compatibility. There is a rare consensus among experts that humanity must act quickly if it still wants to win the battle against global warming and preserve the world's biodiversity. In the past, logistics has not yet made the contributions that would be necessary in this regard. Therefore, it is high time to really pull out all the stops to reduce the carbon footprint of shipments. And that is precisely why we have launched a new initiative here, with which we can make a significant impact in one fell swoop. I therefore urge you to support our initiative to make all trans-o-flex consignments CO<sub>2</sub> neutral by offsetting emissions through recognised CO<sub>2</sub> reduction projects (page 17).*

*Thank you very much and, stay optimistic!*

Wolfgang P. Albeck  
Chief Executive Officer



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### ++ INDEPENDENT STUDIES ++

## 14 new awards

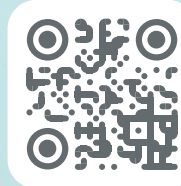
Several newspaper and magazine publishing houses have presented awards to trans-o-flex in recent months. The thrust of the independent studies commissioned by the publishing houses ranges from the certification “Highest Quality” to “Germany’s Fairest Logistics Companies”, “Germany’s Best Consultants”, “Trendsetters of the German Economy”, “Excellent Customer Satisfaction”, “Highly Trustworthy Companies 2021”, “Highest Trust 2021” through to “Exemplary Fulfilment of Customer Wishes 2022”, “Company of the Year 2022”, “Highest fairness on the job 2022”, “Excellent Customer Advice 2022”, “Climate-Conscious Companies of Germany 2022”, “Outstanding Customer Service 2022” and “1st Place Customer Service 2022 (express courier industry)”. The studies primarily examine social media channels in terms of how several 10,000 brands and companies perform with regard to the various criteria. “The fact that we are regularly ranked among the leading companies in Germany from a wide variety of perspectives by independent sources shows that we are doing many things right,” says trans-o-flex CEO Wolfgang P. Albeck. “We are delighted with the awards and take them as an incentive to keep getting a little better every day.”



### ++ MUSIC TIP ++

## Company song and video? Just have a listen!

Fancy some lively music and rousing choreography in the video? Then listen to the company song composed and written for trans-o-flex’s company anniversary and watch the video here. The song and video were produced by trans-o-flex employees, who formed their own band for the occasion – the tof.allstars. The video was filmed at actual trans-o-flex locations in Alzenau, Dortmund, Driedorf, Hanover and Weinheim.



The company song of the tof.allstars:  
[trans-o-flex.com/en/company-song/](https://trans-o-flex.com/en/company-song/)



### ++ DATE ANNOUNCEMENT ++

## Pharmaceuticals Customer Forum and Pharmaceutical Logistics Day

This year, trans-o-flex is planning at least two customer events. The Pharmaceutical Logistics Day is planned as a hybrid format for Thursday, 22 September, in the greater Dortmund area. The Pharmaceuticals Customer Forum is scheduled for Mannheim – an in-person event. The date and further details will be announced later.



## ++ TAPA CERTIFICATION ++

### Three more sites documented with the highest level of safety

Three more trans-o-flex sites have been awarded the exacting TAPA certifications. TAPA stands for Transported Asset Protection Association and is an independent organisation supported by consignors, which has established the highest security standards in transportation worldwide. The Driedorf, St. Ingbert and Nuremberg sites were certified according to the TAPA standard FSR-C 2020. Several other sites were successfully recertified to the same standard at the same time.

“This certification is more demanding than anything in ISO quality management in terms of security standards. It is the ideal basis for the further development of our security processes and technology,” explains Wolfgang P. Albeck, CEO of trans-o-flex. “The highest security standards are vital for a company that specialises in the transportation of sensitive goods.”

Certification requires all security-relevant processes to be described. Clearly defined technical security installations are required. Both are audited annually. Lastly, all persons involved in transportation and handling must regularly undertake security training. TAPA, which was founded by discerning consignors, also makes very specific constructional demands, for example on fences, access regulations and video surveillance. For example, all the certified sites have been equipped with a video management system that enables a targeted and quick search for individual packages.



## ++ CUSTOMER AWARD ++

### Customer service Oscar for trans-o-flex

Royaltrade GmbH, a leading German supplier and retailer of protective equipment, has awarded trans-o-flex its Customer Service Oscar as “Top Business Partner 2021”. A trophy modelled on the American film Oscars was presented to the customer service representatives at the Herford site. It is only since October 2020 that the company has been shipping medical masks and Covid tests via trans-o-flex Express and ThermoMed to consignees such as the German Red Cross (test stations), Malteser Hilfswerk (aid organisation), pharmacies, retailers, hospitals and doctors. “We are very satisfied with trans-o-flex’s service, have already communicated

this several times and have now chosen this special form for it,” says Robin Cramer, Managing Director at Royaltrade. “We particularly appreciate the uncomplicated consignment registration, the flexibility of the colleagues in operations during collection and the accessibility as well as the personal contact persons in customer service and sales.” Last year, Royaltrade shipped more than 5,000 consignments via the trans-o-flex ThermoMed and trans-o-flex Express networks. In addition to standard consignments, 8 am, 10 am, 12 pm, Saturday deliveries and international consignments are also included.



## ++ ANNUAL REVIEW ++

## Customers give trans-o-flex even better marks in 2021

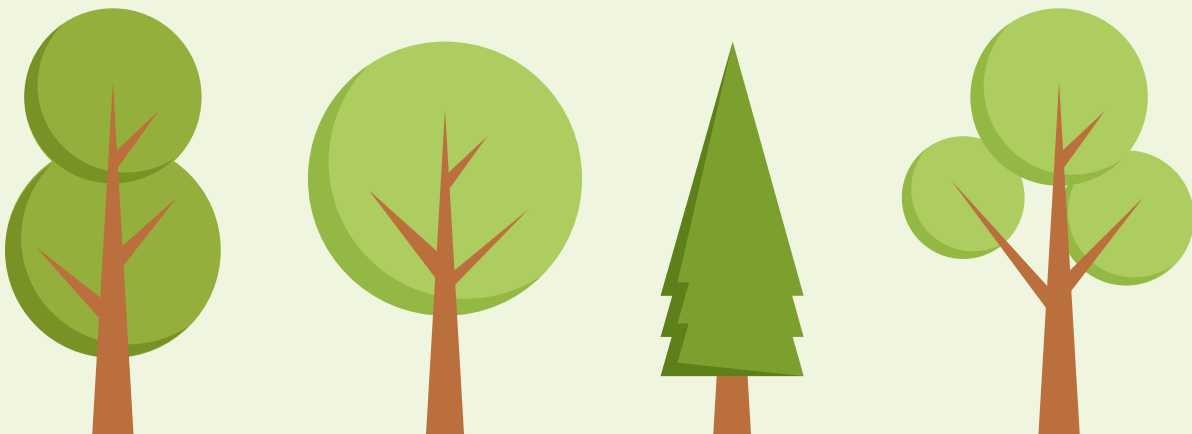
After evaluating all four customer surveys conducted in 2021, we now have the overall result. In the surveys conducted every three months, customers again gave trans-o-flex a better overall rating than in the previous year. The improvement is not the same in all quarters, but the overall trend is positive. "The individual quarterly results show how sensitively the customer survey actually reacts to quality fluctuations in our network," says Lutz Blankenfeldt, Business Unit Manager Strategy, Marketing, Product Management and Commercial. In his view, the system of quarterly surveys has therefore proved its worth. "We get direct and quick feedback and can respond directly if necessary."

To all customers who take part in the customer surveys, trans-o-flex is offering to donate ten euros as a thank you for each response we receive. 476 customers ticked this option in one of the surveys in 2021 – and now a small forest is emerging from it! Thanks to the cooperation with the organisation click a tree, two trees can be planted for each of these responses.

The planted forest also became even larger last year because trans-o-flex had additional trees planted for every new customer acquired or for business expansions. In 2021, a total of 1,257 trees were planted and tended. The trans-o-flex partner organisation makes sure that the trees are not only planted, but also tended and protected until they are big enough to grow on their own.



*trans-o-flex had 1,257 trees planted in 2021: as a thank you for cooperation in the customer survey and new customers.*



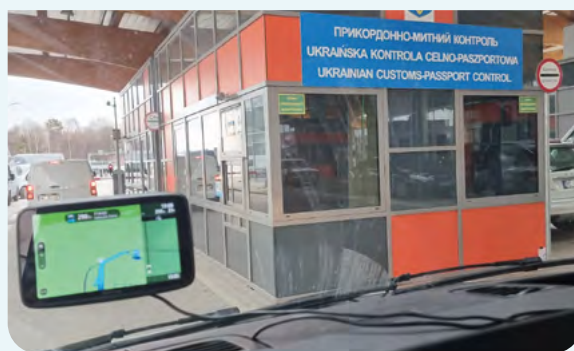




### ++ DONATIONS ++

## Thank you for Ukraine aid!

The response to this appeal for donations in kind for Ukraine aid was huge! After various aid organisations specifically approached trans-o-flex and asked for the provision of certain goods and their free delivery, many customers spontaneously pledged their support. At the same time, staff and transport partners have also been actively collecting donations: from durable food to hygiene products, baby nappies, woollen blankets, medicines and other things that are urgently needed for emergency supplies in the reception camps near the border or by the people in Ukraine. Some of trans-o-flex's transport partners brought donations directly to the Ukrainian border in trucks or vans. All the drivers deployed volunteered to drive there at the weekend. Others have ensured that Ukrainian truck drivers stranded at German service areas were provided with food or urgently needed hygiene articles. For all this, trans-o-flex says a big thank you on behalf of the aid organisations and also the Ukrainians!



Volunteers drove donations in kind to the Ukrainian border in trans-o-flex vehicles.

### ++ PANDEMIC RESPONSE ++

## More than 300 semi-trailers full of rapid tests

They are small and lightweight, they play a very important role in pandemic response and they generate a significant transport volume for trans-o-flex Express – namely, rapid tests for the detection of Covid-19 infections. In North Rhine-Westphalia alone, trans-o-flex delivered a good 115 million rapid tests last year on behalf of a customer. When extrapolated, that was a volume of about 300 articulated trucks!

For the same customer, trans-o-flex also delivered tests in Hamburg and Baden-Württemberg in January. Not only did



the shipments run successfully via trans-o-flex Express, but the goods were also picked by the Logistics Service. In January and February, for example, trans-o-flex provided basic supplies of rapid tests to schools in Hamburg. In Baden-Württemberg, trans-o-flex supplied tests to town halls and district council offices in January. This was about ensuring basic supplies for staff testing. In both federal states together, this wave also amounted to a high transport volume, filling 33 articulated trucks.

## COVER STORY

# When the app tells the driver where to ring the bell





## *From a caterpillar to a butterfly – how trans-o-flex uses investments in IT to drive innovation: new API interface, new customer portal, digital drop-off authorisation, delivery time prediction, voice assistance for drivers and data science*

“Companies that see IT primarily as a cost factor will never realise the immense potential that the digital transformation holds,” Stefan Thömmes is convinced. “IT is rather the central innovation driver for trans-o-flex, with which we generate added value for customers.” In an interview with this magazine, the Managing Director of trans-o-flex IT-Service GmbH cites specific examples to illustrate that these added values will not only arise

in the future, but are already bringing tangible benefits to express logistics today.

One of the latest IT developments at trans-o-flex is an API interface. “Thanks to the tofOrderAPI, customers can now start working with trans-o-flex much more quickly and easily than before,” explains Thömmes. The background: to produce an address label in such a way that it contains all the



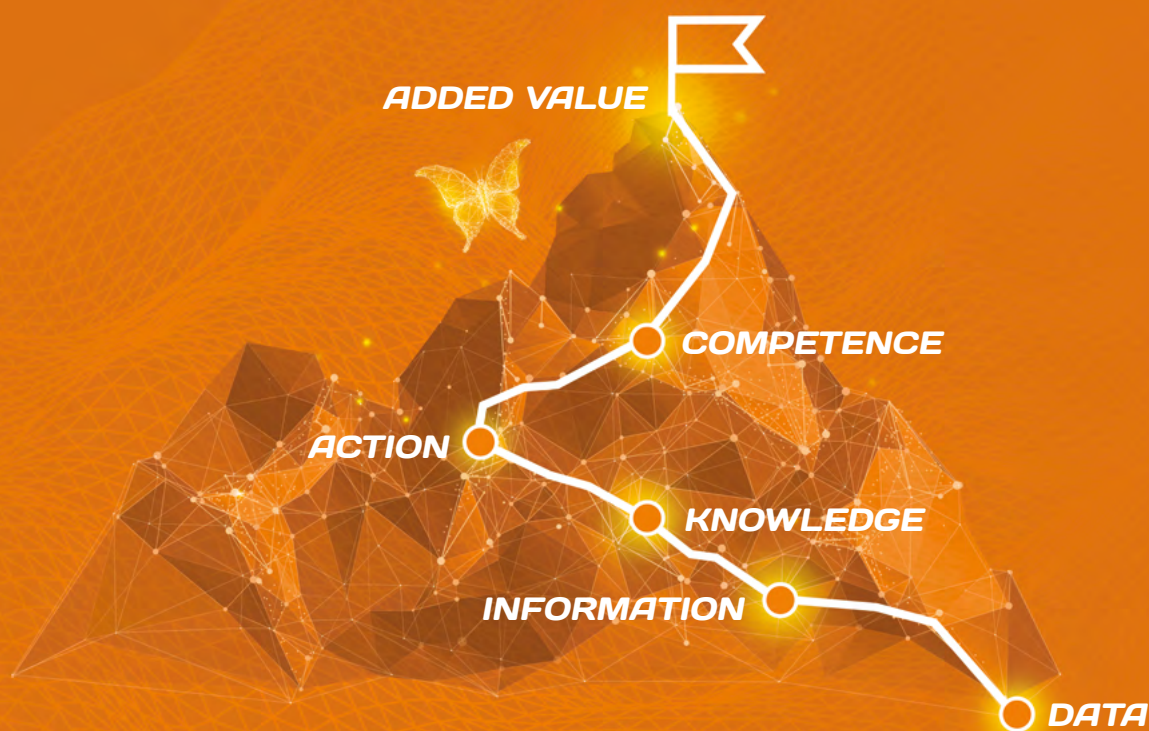
information necessary to deliver a consignment as requested, customers used to have to make sometimes considerable adjustments to the shipping system. Not anymore. Today, even a new customer of trans-o-flex can electronically transfer their consignment data directly from their ERP system right from the start. This is because the API interface immediately informs the customer whether the data has been transmitted completely and is syntactically correct, or whether it contains errors. If this is the case, corrections can be made immediately on the basis of the feedback, before resending the data. If the data is correct, the customer receives a finished trans-o-flex shipping label directly back electronically. “On both sides, time-consuming checking processes for the quality of the data and label are no longer necessary. From an IT perspective, the cooperation can start in a day.”

### **Strategy: Creating added value for customers from data**

For trans-o-flex CEO Wolfgang P. Albeck, the example has to be seen in a larger, strategic context. “We are not just doing an IT project here and there, but the digital transformation

affects the entire company with all its processes. In doing so, we follow the basic framework of the modern stairs of knowledge: we turn data into information – from which knowledge emerges that shows us how best to act. With this expertise, we can create added value for our customers and our company.”

To structure this process, trans-o-flex has developed four core digital transformation projects. The first involves **facilitating customer entry**, and it includes the development of the API interface. The second core project involves a new **customer portal**, which, in future, will serve as a central communication and service point for customers with trans-o-flex. “In future, all services will be available to customers with a single sign-on (SSO),” says Thömmes. “For example, it will be possible to update customer data, view invoices and resolve discrepancies directly online, as well as initiate customer-specific reporting or spontaneous shipments.” My.tof, the current platform for tracking and tracing consignments, is to be integrated into the new customer portal.





Setting up **data science** is perhaps the most complex of the four core projects. “This is where we optimise many operational processes with the help of artificial intelligence and machine learning.” For example, automated analysis of long-distance traffic data is used to develop suggestions as to which routes certain trucks should take in future to avoid delays and arrive at their destination on time. The development of an international temperature platform, in which data from very different systems is compiled into a consistent, transparent temperature profile of international consignments, also comes under this heading.

### **Numerous projects already implemented**

Several projects that have already been implemented to increase productivity and transparency also fall into this category. This includes the development of the Control Tower family. The application provides information on the location and the temperature of all consignments for the line-haul service and, in the future, also for collection and delivery. The trans-o-flex insight consignee app provides precise information about the type and quantity of consignments a consignee receives on a given day. Dashboards – large warehouse monitors – display important information in the sorting centres, such as the number of expected packages and pallets, the temperature in the warehouse or departure schedules. The knowledge about this, which is available at all times, helps to optimise the flow of goods and the deployment of employees. Last but not least, the GDP Monitor tool automatically shows those responsible for operations when and where deviations from the specified processes have occurred during the transport or handling of consignments. This allows the causes of errors to be eliminated and processes to be improved.

The fourth core project involves **innovations on the last mile**. Examples from this area are the digital drop-off authorisation, delivery time prediction of consignments, the change of the delivery address and the requested delivery time by the consignee, as well as the voice assistance module for drivers.



*Among other things, his team is currently working on a voice assistance system for delivery drivers supported by artificial intelligence: Stefan Thömmes, Managing Director of trans-o-flex IT-Service GmbH.*

“The example of voice assistance is a good illustration of the fact that the individual projects are not isolated from each other, but influence and benefit each other,” adds Thömmes. For example, the planned voice assistance module for drivers is also an application of artificial intelligence, which is being developed primarily in the area of data science. “In addition, the voice assistant is an example of how we intentionally don’t develop everything ourselves, but rather draw on proven solutions from specialists, which we then adapt for our purposes.”

### **Voice assistant: Driver should be able to keep hands on the wheel**

The background to the AI-based voice assistance for drivers was the realisation that delivery drivers either have their hands on a parcel or – if they are driving – on the steering wheel. Thömmes: “And we need to inform our drivers in such a way that their hands can also stay where they are supposed to be, so they are not distracted by displays they have to tap on or at least look at.” This is how the idea came about that every driver should receive all relevant information and instructions in their own language. “By using a multilingual system from the outset, we can also avoid misunderstandings due to language barriers.”

The digital voice assistant, developed in a joint project with the software company German Autolabs, will understand and speak more than 30 different languages. “We hope that new drivers can be trained much faster, that delays in express services can be avoided and that the delivery quality will be even better. Because with appropriate instructions, a driver will deliver a parcel exactly where it is supposed to go.” This is made possible by simple spoken messages such as: “Stop 8, Grüner Weg 32, Berlin, ring the bell at the side entrance.”

At the same time, the voice assistant also records spoken messages from the driver and stores them in the system data. A dialogue could then look like this:

The dialogue has clear consequences. Not only is the information saved, but during the company’s holiday period, no further consignments will be scheduled for them on the delivery route.

“The next step in the development of the voice assistant is a practical test in which we will test five different scenarios,” reveals Thömmes. The voice assistant first has to be integrated into the trans-o-flex system landscape and in particular into the driver’s handheld. If the practical tests produce the expected results, the system will be licensed and rolled out nationwide. Further scenarios can then be developed by trans-o-flex IT itself. “The first tests on the road are planned for this summer.” ■







#### ++ CUSTOMER MAGAZINE ++

## Choose now: do you prefer online or printed?

trans-o-flex customers can now choose whether they want to read this magazine in printed format or prefer to receive it electronically. In doing so, the company is taking on board suggestions from customers who would like to receive the magazine electronically in future. In addition, this allows more readers to receive the magazine free of charge.

If you no longer want a printed version of the magazine, but prefer to read it on screen, you can use the new information service on the trans-o-flex website to change your subscription. Other interested readers can also register here to receive the customer magazine (double opt-in procedure). To date, only the main contact person of each trans-o-flex customer has received the magazine.

There are plans to expand the information service even further. In future, it will also be possible to register for other trans-o-flex media, such as the trans-o-flex Inform customer newsletter. For the sake of completeness, it should be mentioned that it is also possible to unsubscribe from the magazine at any time, either also via the information service or via the unsubscribe link sent with the trans-o-flex media.



You can order the magazine here:  
[trans-o-flex.com/en/info-service/](https://trans-o-flex.com/en/info-service/)

## ++ SIMPLIFICATION ++

## *Invoices come less often – and best of all in digital form*

Less administrative work, less paper, more environmental protection. From May, trans-o-flex will start to change over customer invoices to longer periods. At present, trans-o-flex raises around 120,000 invoices per year. About half of these are invoices that are raised on a weekly basis. “In future, invoices will be sent to customers on a maximum fortnightly basis,” says Michael Schmidt, Managing Director of Finance at trans-o-flex. “And for those customers who are already receiving fortnightly invoices today, we are looking at whether we can switch to monthly.” Schmidt believes that this simplification brings advantages for all sides. “The amount of work in raising invoices as well as in auditing them will be noticeably less.”

The sustainability effect through less paper consumption can be increased even further by switching to electronic invoicing now. trans-o-flex has a form available for customers to consent to invoices being sent digitally, which is required for legal reasons. This form can be downloaded from the company website. If customers have any questions about digital invoicing, they can contact their sales representative.



Download form:  
[bit.ly/3uTCBVq](http://bit.ly/3uTCBVq)



## CLIMATE PROTECTION

## ***Pace increased: Faster to a green company with investments and CO<sub>2</sub> neutrality***

With an even stronger focus on the issue of sustainability, trans-o-flex wants to increase its pace in an effort to operate on a CO<sub>2</sub> neutral basis as soon as possible. “If we are serious about our contribution to limiting global warming, then we really have to pull out all the stops that are available,” says trans-o-flex CEO Wolfgang P. Albeck. “And that means investing first as a company to reduce our carbon footprint. At the same time, we need to get our customers on board, too.” This is made possible by offsetting transport-related CO<sub>2</sub> emissions via certified projects that have already been proven to save CO<sub>2</sub>. “We have demonstrated with the





## Where does the CO<sub>2</sub> surcharge go?

Because the climate killer CO<sub>2</sub> knows no borders, trans-o-flex offsets transport-related CO<sub>2</sub> emissions via recognised projects that meet high sustainability standards. Last year, for example, we already offset 1,787 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> through our cooperation with the Southpole organisation. This was done through two Southpole projects in Indonesia and India. Both

projects generate clean energy from hydropower. They save 685,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions every year. In addition, the projects promote the development goals of the United Nations and, for example, create more than 100 new jobs locally. The project in India is Gold Standard certified, the highest international benchmark for sustainable development.



*The projects supported by trans-o-flex not only reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, but also have a verifiable, comprehensive and sustainable impact. For example, they have created jobs and made local development possible.*

co<sub>2</sub>de green service that it works and will now introduce it across the board this year.” The offsetting is to be financed by a CO<sub>2</sub> surcharge that each customer pays for their consignments.

“If all trans-o-flex consignments are transported in a CO<sub>2</sub> neutral manner, then this is not only a serious contribution to climate protection, but also a milestone for our customers in their corporate development towards more sustainability,” Albeck continues. “The image gain associated with this should not be underestimated, because more and

more people are demanding sustainable solutions on all levels.” trans-o-flex will make it easier for its customers to document transparently the CO<sub>2</sub> they offset by providing each customer with proof for each year of what amount of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions were generated and offset by the consignments shipped with trans-o-flex.

In an interview with this magazine, Albeck made it clear that the introduction of general CO<sub>2</sub> offsetting was no substitute for trans-o-flex’s own efforts to avoid and reduce the emission of green-

house gases in the logistics chain. “The opposite is the case: we are putting considerable resources into advancing climate protection organisationally and operationally.” He cited the following steps as tangible evidence:

### 1 Sustainability team established

Since 2021, a dedicated team at trans-o-flex has been responsible for further developing the sustainability strategy, incorporating it into management processes, developing suitable key figures or also establishing contacts with environmental protection organisations, energy and waste management associations, research and development institutions in the field of sustainability. At the same time, the team’s tasks include the development and implementation of concepts to increase environmental awareness and social commitment, the preparation of the annual emissions balance, the customer-specific carbon footprints and the regular exchange with the specialist departments with the specific aim of reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

### 2 Exclusively green electricity purchased

This year, trans-o-flex will once again purchase electricity exclusively from renewable energy sources and will accept a significant mark-up compared to the conventional electricity mix. The company has concluded a corresponding supply agreement with its energy supplier MVV Energie for the purchase of an expected 17,606 megawatt hours of electrical energy, 100% of which will be generated from hydropower. Only at a few smaller sites, where trans-o-flex is a quasi-subtenant in a larger building and therefore does not buy the electricity itself, does the company not obtain all of its electrical energy from hydropower. Since this results in 230 grams less CO<sub>2</sub> per kilowatt hour than the normal electricity mix of MVV Energie AG, trans-o-flex will reduce its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 4,001.14 tonnes this year alone by using green electricity. trans-o-flex already switched its electricity supply to green electricity back in 2008. >>





## Sustainability achievements recognised



Germany's largest monthly business magazine conducted an independent study and explicitly recognised trans-o-flex's commitment to sustainability. According to the study, trans-o-flex is one of the German companies that have reduced their greenhouse gas emissions the most in the past five years and can therefore count itself among the "Climate-conscious companies of Germany 2022". The seal of quality is intended to show customers which companies are living up to their responsibility in terms of environmental awareness, climate protection and future orientation.

### 3 Investing in new technology helps save electricity

trans-o-flex is investing in energy-saving technology to reduce costs and protect the climate. The successful outcome of this is that, in 2020, trans-o-flex achieved a turnaround in electricity consumption and used less electricity than in the previous year. In 2021, electricity consumption was once again below that of the previous year, and this is expected to be the case in 2022 as well. "This is all the more significant when you know that the proportion of actively temperature-controlled consignments in the trans-o-flex network is steadily increasing," explains Albeck. "And these consignments naturally require energy for temperature control, not only during transport, but also during handling and storage, where it is not possible without – mostly electrically operated – air conditioning."

According to Albeck, one of the most important reasons for the lower electricity consumption at trans-o-flex is the conversion to LED lighting. "That is why we will continue to invest in new LED technology this year." The decision in principle to completely switch to LED lighting has already been made and will be implemented in two ways. Firstly, all new sites will be equipped with economical LED lights right from the start. Secondly, all other sites will also be gradually converted.

### 4 Company car fleet goes electric

In future, the more than 200 trans-o-flex company cars will be hybrid or purely electric vehicles. On 12 January, the first two electric company cars were put into service. The new vehicles are not only quieter than their predecessors, but their CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are above all considerably lower than those of diesel-powered cars, which have been used to date as trans-o-flex's company cars. The new regulation stipulates that all company cars will be gradually replaced by one of the three models with a pure electric or hybrid drive. The pure electric cars do not produce any CO<sub>2</sub> when running, and the two hybrids used by trans-o-flex only produce 30 grams of CO<sub>2</sub> per 100 kilometres in combined motorway-urban traffic.

### 5 Quiet cooling without diesel

After successful tests of electric cooling units, trans-o-flex ThermoMed ordered 174 new delivery vehicles, which are significantly quieter and more environmentally friendly than the vehicles used to date (see report on page 24). ■



## VETERINARY MEDICINES

## “Strategic partnership for sustainability in logistics”

*Wirtschaftsgenossenschaft deutscher Tierärzte eG has significantly expanded its cooperation with trans-o-flex: why most passive packaging is no longer needed and how the shipping processes at Germany's largest supplier of veterinary medicines are to be streamlined even further*



For Andreas Mahn, Managing Director of the WDT logistics subsidiary VetLogOne GmbH, it is more than just a normal expansion of business that was established between trans-o-flex and the Wirtschaftsgenossenschaft deutscher Tierärzte eG (WDT) at the beginning of the year. For him, the new cooperation with WDT, a trans-o-flex customer for more than 20 years, is a “strategic partnership for greater sustainability in logistics”. One specific goal of the cooperation, he says, is “to reduce the proportion of passive packaging in refrigerated shipping against the background of the new legislation on veterinary medicinal products that came into force at the end of January”. Mahn has already been able to achieve this goal.

Every day, trans-o-flex collects almost 4,000 parcels and numerous pallets in Wunstorf near

*He is one of the big supporters of trans-o-flex Ukraine aid: Andreas Mahn, Managing Director of WDT logistics subsidiary VetLogOne GmbH. “Together with trans-o-flex, we have formed one of the hubs for Ukraine aid in the veterinary sector.”*

Hanover. This is where VetLogOne GmbH has been operating the first German logistics centre specifically for veterinary medicines since May last year. “By doing so, we have laid the foundation for sustainable logistics and consolidation of parcel consignments,” says Mahn. It is about “state-of-the-art logistics according to the EU standard of Good Distribution Practice (GDP) for pharmaceutical products”. Different principles in the logistics of human and veterinary medicines should no longer exist, also from a legal point of view, at the latest after the new legal changes that came into force this year.





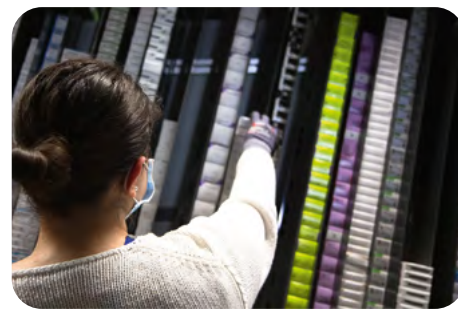
*An aerial view of the VetLogOne logistics centre in Wunstorf near Hanover: This is where trans-o-flex collects the WDT consignments.*

WDT is the basic provider for 95% of all veterinarians based in Germany. Of the WDT consignments that trans-o-flex collects in Wunstorf, around half are transported using the Ambient Express service between 15 and 25 degrees Celsius and a further proportion using the refrigerated service between 2 and 8 degrees Celsius. This involves dangerous goods and express consignments. Most of the passive packaging is no longer needed because the consignments have been handed over to trans-o-flex. Mahn: "We have changed our internal processes and only use passive pack-

aging solutions for temperature-controlled consignments in certain exceptional cases."

But the road to more sustainability in logistics is far from over. Since as early as 2019, trans-o-flex has been delivering all WDT consignments in a climate-neutral manner. This is because WDT now uses trans-o-flex's co<sub>2</sub>de green service. For WDT alone, the transport-related emissions totalling around 266 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> could be offset via certified climate protection projects in the years 2019 to 2021. "We active-

ly communicate this to customers and regularly publish our certificates under our own sustainability section on our company's website," says Mahn. "Customers are demanding more sensitive use of all resources, as in other areas of society." WDT and VetLogOne see themselves "responsible for taking tangible measures to improve their carbon footprint, be it in the area of packaging or energy efficiency and shipping optimisation. Customers appreciate these efforts."



*A VetLogOne employee picks items for delivery to vets.*

This is one of the reasons why WDT is planning to switch its entire shipping to returnable containers. "We plan to complete the introduction of the returnable logistics system tof.ecobox in the third quarter of 2022 which will ensure improved handling of consignments on the consignee side. The aim is to reduce shipping in cardboard packaging, which is generally not or hardly reused despite its high quality and corresponding FSC certification for sustainable forestry." The multiple use of the containers will "further increase sustainability in the logistics process. Our project team is in place and already preparing tests."

Last but not least, Mahn hopes for a further simplification of shipping processes through the development of a digital





drop-off authorisation at trans-o-flex. “We attach great importance to this technical possibility.” It is important that “the relationship between consignor, carrier and consignee is as uncomplicated and convenient as possible. For the veterinary profession, the drop-off authorisation is particularly important because it allows goods to be received even during consultation hours, for example.” The digital variant is not only intended to make it easier to authorise the drop-off. In future, consignees will be able to give their consent online via the trans-o-flex insight consignee app for their goods to be dropped off. In addition, trans-o-flex is also planning the possibility of storing images of the drop-off location, which will then be automatically shown to the respective driver on the display of his scanner during delivery, telling him exactly where to deliver the consignment to. “The easier the drop-off authorisation is to arrange and the more convenient it becomes, we believe the higher the level of customer satisfaction will be.” ■



#### ++ NETWORK EXPANSION ++

### *New site in Saxony*

In Wildenfels near Zwickau in Saxony, the final extension of a new trans-o-flex transshipment centre is currently underway. “Despite the pandemic, we are right on schedule so far and will probably be able to begin operating the logistics centre in June,” says trans-o-flex CEO Wolfgang P. Albeck. “The new branch will be both a transshipment centre for our trans-o-flex ThermoMed refrigerated network and trans-o-flex Express with its non-temperature-controlled and actively temperature-controlled shipments in the ambient range.” trans-o-flex is investing tens of millions of

euros in Saxony to increase the efficiency and capacity of its networks. The site is also helping to achieve the company’s sustainability goals. Albeck: “With our concept of the sorting centre in Y-shaped design, we achieve a small footprint coupled with high handling capacity, we install heavy-duty strong thermal insulation, natural cooling, rainwater infiltration, charging stations for electric vehicles – all this will make Wildenfels a logistics centre that will also set environmental standards.”





## ++ GREEN INNOVATION ++

## Clean and quiet: ThermoMed buys 174 delivery vehicles with electric cooling



*Hardly any difference externally, but significantly quieter and cleaner in operation: one of the three test vehicles with electric cooling. The first of 174 new vehicles are to be delivered by the middle of the year. The three test vehicles are already in regular operation.*

The test results were so clear that trans-o-flex ThermoMed triggered the order for 174 new delivery vehicles even before the end of the trial period, which was originally scheduled for one year. 74 vehicles from VW and 100 from Mercedes will be factory fitted with an innovative electric cooling system, which, although slightly more expensive to buy than conventional cooling units, is quieter and cleaner in operation and even slightly lower in overall costs. The reason for this is to save diesel fuel.

Conventional cooling units in vans obtain the necessary energy exclusively from the vehicle's diesel engine. "When the vehicle stops for delivery, the engine may have to keep running to ensure that the temperature is maintained," explains ThermoMed Managing Director Stefan Gerber. "This not only leads to higher fuel consumption but also higher noise pollution." Both can be avoided by a new, electrically operated cooling unit, which ThermoMed has been testing on three vehicles since April last year: in the pure refrigeration range of 2 to 8 degrees, in the so-called room

temperature range of 15 to 25 degrees as well as in mixed operation with two temperature zones. "The units have lived up to expectations in all areas, they are a truly green innovation."

While driving, the energy supply for the Mitsubishi electric cooling units is provided by a generator powered by the engine. As soon as the engine is off, a back-up battery provides the necessary power. The vehicle engine is also not needed for the necessary advance regulation of the load compartment to the correct temperature. For this purpose, the vehicle can be connected to a conventional 230-volt socket, which is also used to charge the back-up battery. Gerber: "We have installed these sockets at our loading gates, allowing us to pre-cool the vehicles electrically in summer and heat them in winter accordingly." Another advantage of the new solution: in the event of engine failure, the battery can maintain the temperature of the vehicles for several hours.

**++ TRAINING CONCEPT ESTABLISHED ++**

## *This is how trans-o-flex wants to develop its employees*



The team at trans-o-flex Training & Service GmbH has created a new, comprehensive training concept for all trans-o-flex employees. trans-o-flex plans to use this to further the qualification of all employees. “The concept has two focal points,” says Michael Löckener, who is also Managing Director of Training & Service in addition to his management duties at Express and ThermoMed. “There will be a two-day basic training course for everyone, as well as individual specialised training sessions.” In addition to providing standardised, technical basic knowledge in industry-oriented express logistics, the basic training also aims to address and promote the values and culture of trans-o-flex and strengthen identification with the company. The tasks as trainers are performed by internal managers who have been specially prepared for this task with a train-the-trainer course.

At the end of the basic training, each employee receives his or her personal training passport, which confirms participation in the course. The passport accompanies employees throughout their time at trans-o-flex and also documents all further training. Training is planned for all trans-o-flex departments, i.e. Operations, Sales, Customer Service and Administration. In addition to classroom-based training events, various modules are also planned as online training.

According to Löckener, professionally equipped training centres have been set up as the necessary infrastructure at seven sites, each responsible for a specific region. “This way we can keep travel times and costs to the events low.” At the same time, it is expected that the take-up rate of the training courses will increase if they are open to employees from different sites.





## STRONG GROWTH

# European strategy: How trans-o-flex is positioning itself internationally

Growing by almost 20%, trans-o-flex has, in 2021, once again achieved strong growth in the international sector – together with its partners in the EURODIS network. In an interview, the managing directors of trans-o-flex and EURODIS, Wolfgang P. Albeck and Jens Reibold, name the reasons for the massive increase and reveal how EURODIS intends to secure further growth without sacrificing quality. Albeck also provides insights into trans-o-flex's strategy for further internationalisation in the GDP domain.

***trans-o-flex enjoyed double-digit growth in international consignments in 2021. What do you see as the reasons for this rapid increase, which is significantly above market growth?***

**Wolfgang P. Albeck:** EURODIS has recognised what customers need: high and stable quality. Every single partner knows that quality is the key factor for further development. This

quality is a good selling point for us and therefore we had no trouble increasing the number of consignments even by this amount.

***Within two years, EURODIS has increased the total number of consignments transported by almost 50%. How does the network ensure that the considerable additional volumes are delivered reliably?***

**Jens Reibold:** Our partners have been adapting to the continuously increasing volumes for years. On the one hand physically through site expansions and new buildings, on the other hand through process improvements and innovations that make operations easier, faster and more efficient. In addition, the international line-haul connections, which are directly controlled by EURODIS, are proactively monitored. With the help of key figures, we can immediately see where we need to make adjustments in terms of capacity and quality of the connections.





*Delighted about the double-digit growth in the number of international consignments in recent years: Jens Reibold (left), Managing Director of the EURODIS network, which covers 36 European countries, and Wolfgang P. Albeck, CEO of trans-o-flex.*

In general, the network is continuously monitored on the basis of key figures, deviations are discussed with the partners, and appropriate measures are initiated. This allows us to recognise weak points at an early stage and to respond in time.

Last but not least, we are continuously working on improving the availability of all consignment information. We have introduced a new delivery notification feature, which proactively informs consignees. This has created more transparency and, despite an increase in volumes, we are experiencing a simultaneous reduction of consignment queries.

**Albeck:** In my view, the volume at EURODIS could easily double again without causing us a quality issue. >>



*If you look at the EURODIS partners in detail, they include, for example, larger medium-sized family businesses such as the Spanish company Redur, postal companies such as in the Netherlands or Austria, but also express services such as trans-o-flex or the Italian company SDA. Is there a common recipe for success that links all these partners?*

**Albeck:** Yes, it is the ability to transport pallets, parcels and non-sortable goods across Europe via one system.

**Reibold:** All partners are united by the will to achieve more together and, in contrast to the conventional integrator, to act flexibly and in a country-specific manner. Within the EURODIS family, we have short decision-making channels and direct communication between partners, supported by central committees where we make strategic decisions together.

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*The EURODIS partners include several companies in Central and South-Eastern Europe that are subsidiaries of Österreichische Post AG. What does this mean for customers in Germany?*

**Albeck:** These companies bring a high degree of stability and dynamism at the same time ...

**Reibold:** ... and German shippers have direct access to the markets here and can draw on a solid partnership for this. Austrian Post's stakeholders are modern companies with a high level of innovative strength and highly trained employees.

In addition, and this applies to the entire EURODIS network, customers have the advantage of a standardised and synchronised database. Delivery events and scanning steps are mapped centrally, meaning that consignors and consignees are always up to date on what is happening. And if there is a need for additional clarification, a similarly standardised customer service process handles the matter.

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*EURODIS delivers parcels and pallets, but no temperature-controlled consignments. Is the time not yet ripe for a European GDP micro-distribution network?*

**Albeck:** No, because a European market for the cross-border micro-distribution of individual consignments simply does not exist yet. There are hardly any international direct-to-pharmacy consignments. The international pharmaceutical shipments usually go directly as partial or full loads to regional warehouses or are sold in large quantities to distributors in the respective destination country. They then organise the shipment with regional or national companies. National legislation in the pharmaceutical sector also still seems to differ too much for the establishment of a uniform European distribution standard.



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***What strategy is trans-o-flex pursuing as a solution for the shipment of temperature-controlled, international consignments?***

***Albeck:*** We start country by country and already cover the core countries Benelux, Germany and France with our EUROTEMP network. Over time, the market will develop, and opportunities will arise to gradually expand the network. We will not hesitate. trans-o-flex will always benefit from its strong position in this country as a potential partner. Germany also occupies a key position in the pharmaceutical market within Europe. That is why every international GDP network needs an efficient partner in Germany. ■





## EUROPEAN NETWORK

## Express logistics for Spain, Portugal and Andorra



Spain's economy is back in the fast lane. As recently as 2020, this EU member was the country in the European Union that was hit hardest by the economic consequences of the pandemic, with a real slump of 10.8% in its gross domestic product. But last year, Spain's economy grew faster than at any time in the last 20 years. According to the national office for statistics, the gross domestic product increased by 5% in 2021. This was the highest growth rate since 2000. "Anyone who wants to take advantage of the upswing should already secure efficient and reliable logistics solutions for imports and exports to and from South-Western Europe now," recommends Wolfgang P. Albeck, CEO of trans-o-

flex. trans-o-flex's Expressdienst has been working with the Spanish company Redur throughout the Iberian Peninsula since 2008. "This is a stroke of luck for customers on both sides," says Albeck.

This is because the family-run company has the same focus on quality and express deliveries as trans-o-flex and concentrates on similar sectors. The EURODIS partner for Spain, Portugal and Andorra was founded in 1967 and has been operating under the name of Redur since 1988. "In Spanish, Redur is the combination of the word network (Red) and the word for urgent (urgente)," explains Alberto Lozano. Together with his brother Raúl, he



The brothers jointly manage the Spanish company: Raúl Lozano, Executive Chairman (left), and Alberto Lozano, CEO (right)



On long routes or when the volume is high, Redur also uses giga-liners, which are more economical and environmentally friendly.

is now the second generation to run the company. “Urgent deliveries in its own nationwide network are Redur’s speciality.” Just like trans-o-flex, the company transports goods in packages and on pallets in one network. In 2004, all kinds of warehouse services were launched under the name Redur Logistica. For this purpose, Redur has established a total of 17 warehouse sites on the Iberian Peninsula and the Canary Islands.

Certified dangerous goods shipments have been possible throughout the network since 2010, and in 2012, a special B2C service was developed with Redur E-Commerce. Last but not least, Redur has been offering an ambient service for pharmaceutical goods since 2015. Like trans-o-flex Ambient Express, the product “Farma” 15–25° offers a GDP-compliant logistics solution from collection to delivery, based on active temperature management, including temperature monitoring and documentation.

The Spanish company is currently implementing its strategic growth offensive “Redur Quality 2023”. It envisages significantly expanding the existing infrastructure of branches and hubs to be ready for the increasing demand on both a national and international level.

Redur employs a total of 2,000 people. Of the 60 hubs and depots, 49 are located in mainland Spain, 7 on the Balearic and Canary Islands and 4 in Portugal. The 1,500 vehicles deployed cover a total of 450,000 kilometres on behalf of Redur – every day.



## ***Country profiles at a glance: Which services are available and where?***

EURODIS partner Redur delivers and collects consignments for trans-o-flex customers in Spain, Portugal and Andorra. The central entry hub for all three countries is Barcelona. What exact

dimensions and weights the packages may have, what dangerous goods classes are allowed, what cash on delivery service is offered, what the standard delivery times are or what customs conditions apply, for example for the Canary Islands – trans-o-flex has compiled all this information for each country in a country profile. trans-o-flex customers can request the compact overviews as a PDF file from their dedicated sales contact at any time.

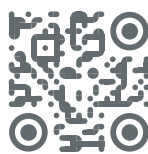



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