

trans·o·flex **m**agazine

Listening. Understanding. Implementing.

*Customer satisfaction: how and why trans-o-flex
measures all processes and products by this standard*

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Framework agreement

Independent importers of international pharmaceuticals use GDP-compliant deliveries to pharmacies

Client Ludwig Bertram

Medical products: express service for medical supply retailers in 19 European countries

Directly from A to B

How trans-o-flex uses charter and direct services to create bespoke solutions for very specific logistical challenges

More interaction

Magazine to go fully digital in the future!

Are you holding a piece of paper in your hands right now? If you're reading this trans-o-flex magazine in printed form, you may want to store it somewhere safe. It could soon become a valuable collector's item – because this is the final edition to be printed on paper.

Starting next year, the magazine will be published exclusively in digital format. As a reader, you'll be able to choose whether to read the magazine directly online on the trans-o-flex website or receive it as a PDF attachment delivered automatically to your email inbox.

"One of the main advantages of switching to a magazine in digital format is that we can now integrate cross-media and interactive features," says Lutz Blankenfeldt, Head of Strategy, Commercial, and Marketing at trans-o-flex. "We can offer videos, animations, and interactive graphics, making it an even more engaging read. Readers can share articles instantly or provide feedback and comments. And last but not least, we'll be faster from the planning to the finished published product, since we won't need to print and mail it anymore."

Anyone who would like to receive the next issue of the trans-o-flex magazine as a secure PDF file directly in their inbox can sign up to the mailing list. To protect your privacy, the registration process involves a double opt-in procedure, meaning you'll receive a confirmation message that is sent to your email address.



You can sign up for the mailing list here:
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Errors and omissions excepted. The details given in this magazine do not, in any circumstances, replace the General Terms and Conditions of Business of the trans-o-flex companies. For ease of reference, in German the masculine form is used to designate persons (e.g. the customer). Such terms should be understood to apply to both sexes.



Dear readers,

Where does the customer focus begin? I am convinced that it does not just start with excellent service and outstanding solutions, but much earlier on. It starts when we listen to our customers. Only those who really listen can find out what is troubling the other person. Those who truly really listen can avoid misunderstandings. This allows solutions to emerge that are in line with what is wanted and required. And when these are then also put into practice, all the parties involved can feel satisfied. That is one of the reasons why our cover story, which revolves around the topics of customer focus and customer satisfaction, is also closely linked with listening.

Customer focus itself is nothing new, even if it has not always been called that. Sometimes it appeared in the guise of friendliness, reliability, good value for money, or outstanding service. Customer focus has therefore always been one of the most important factors in every successful business. Just think of the many small shops where customers are greeted by name, where their wishes and needs are known, and where the product range is tailored accordingly. That is an outstanding service that has been brought to life. The topic therefore remains both current and pivotal. From the perspective of trans-o-flex, the topic is so important that we have decided to approach it in a systematic way and implement it meticulously – in projects, in all our processes, and not least in dialogue with you. How exactly we are going about this therefore forms the focus of our cover story.

Of course, we have also compiled many other important insights from the world of trans-o-flex for you. My favourite section in this magazine goes by the name of Customer Solutions. In this issue, for instance, we show you how trans-o-flex delivers to addresses in 19 European countries for Ludwig Bertram GmbH, a company specialising in medical aids and healthcare products for people and animals. We also show you how pharmaceutical wholesalers, as members of an association, benefit from a special framework agreement concluded by trans-o-flex with the association. And we show you the many ways in which direct shipments can be used as a logistics problem-solver: whether as a means of transport for 5,000 books to the Federal President's citizens' festival, the delivery of hazardous goods to a European island, or even the delivery of relief supplies to a war zone. The possibilities are virtually limitless – feel free to put our service to the test whenever you need it.

But first, I wish you an enjoyable and interesting read!

Kind regards

*Martin Reder
Chief Executive Officer*



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ISO 9001 and 14001

Successfully recertified

This year, the trans-o-flex companies have once again successfully completed their recertification for ISO 9001 and ISO 14001. “We passed the audits without any major deviations,” Tamara Schulz, Head of Quality Management, happily reported. “The certificates have therefore been extended for another three years without being subject to any further conditions.”



Proven quality: trans-o-flex's new ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 certifications are valid for another three years.

ISO 9001 specifies requirements to ensure that companies consistently provide high-quality products and services and satisfy their customers. ISO 14001 aims to minimise a company's negative environmental impacts and promote sustainable development.

The certification body BSI Group audited all trans-o-flex companies over almost two months to verify their compliance with both standards. trans-o-flex first obtained ISO 9001 certification in 1995. It was first certified according to ISO 14001 in August 2010.

TAPA Certificates

Twice as much certified security

trans-o-flex has received certification in accordance with the TAPA FSR C 2023 security standards for two additional network locations. Certificates for the Steinach and Appenweier sites are available for download on the trans-o-flex website. This means that six locations have already been newly certified according to the strict TAPA standards this year.

By way of a reminder: in order to avoid costly losses as a result of damage, theft and other criminal attacks on valuable cargo, the Transported Asset Protection Association (TAPA) has developed a security standard for the handling of particularly vulnerable transport goods, known as the FSR standard, where FSR stands for Facility Security Requirements. Experts also



refer to sensitive goods as high-value theft-targeted assets or HVTT. “By means of the TAPA FSR certification, we are increasing the security of our freight and reducing insurance costs.” According to Oliver Kuhn, Head of Security, “the security of our goods along the supply chain makes a significant contribution towards our business success,” precisely because one of trans-o-flex's specialist fields relates to ‘sensitive goods’.

This year, TAPA FSR C 2023 certification is also planned for our Bruchsal, Hanover and Koblenz sites. In total, trans-o-flex will then have TAPA certification for all four locations in Austria and 23 locations in Germany.

Umbrella brand strategy

The industry specialist that belongs to GEODIS

“We are part of the globally active GEODIS Group!” trans-o-flex is now expressing its pride in this fact with means of the “by GEODIS” notice it uses. In the future, it will appear on the company’s vehicles as a so-called endorsement brand. The starting gun was fired at this year’s transport logistics trade fair in Munich. There, the first trans-o-flex vehicle was also symbolically adorned with the GEODIS logo and lettering. Over the coming months, the addition will be gradually applied to all the vehicles. Moreover, the GEODIS logo will become a part of the trans-o-flex website. It will appear there in the lower part, in the footer.

On the one hand, this umbrella brand strategy leverages the strong awareness of the trans-o-flex brand name, which stands for logistics solutions in the pharmaceutical, healthcare, beauty and other sensitive-goods sectors. On the other hand, the reference to GEODIS highlights the global logistics opportunities available to trans-o-flex customers, due to the fact the company belongs to the leading French logistics group.



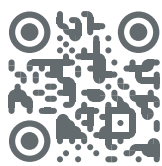
At the trade fair, Lutz Blankenfeldt personally affixed a sample sticker reading “by GEODIS” to a trans-o-flex transporter, thus symbolically highlighting trans-o-flex’s affiliation with GEODIS.

Neutral surveys

trans-o-flex customer service honoured three times

An award for “excellent customer service” and twice named industry winner in the courier, express and postal services sector – that is trans-o-flex’s impressive haul from three comparative surveys published this year. The first was reported on by a renowned business magazine: a survey of 691 companies from 40 industries on the best customer and consumer service in 2025. “The fact that we received an “Excellent” rating in our industry in the ranking proves that we are on the right track in this regard as well,” Jutta Roller, Head of Customer Service at trans-o-flex happily informs us.

Read the full article
here: bit.ly/studie-ww
(in German only)



In a second survey, trans-o-flex emerged as the industry winner, this time for “customer satisfaction and customer service”. This survey is a B2B ranking that took place throughout Germany in the areas of customer satisfaction, customer service and value for money. The customer survey, which included around 208,000 decision-makers’ assessments of a total of 1,388 providers from 106 industries, was held between January and April this year.

In a third survey, trans-o-flex was named one of the “Customer Favourites 2025”. For the large-scale survey, several hundred million public German internet sources, including editorial websites and social media, were trawled through between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2025 for mentions of around 13,500 brands and companies from almost 140 industries. The focus was on comments relating to price, service and quality. trans-o-flex has now received the award for the third year in succession and was also the winner in the courier, express and postal services sector this year. Only two other CEP services made it into the ranking at all on the basis of a sufficient number of positive mentions. However, both achieved only 56 percent of the score achieved by trans-o-flex.

The survey appeared online
here: bit.ly/studie-dt
(in German only)



Orange

How the trans-o-flex colour came about and what it stands for

trans-o-flex? Well, obviously – orange! Many customers immediately think of orange. But how did they come up with this colour in the first place and what does it stand for? When trans-o-flex was founded in the 1970s, orange was one of the trendiest colours around. Orange appeared in fashion, interior design and graphic design. Orange was hip. Orange attracted attention and conveyed energy and optimism. No wonder that the graphic designer commissioned to develop a company logo proposed orange as the colour scheme. The founders of the company were quickly convinced. Another advantage also arose for them: orange allowed the company to stand out from the frequently more conservative freight forwarders and underline its self-chosen image as a fast delivery service. The fact that another express delivery service later entered the German market also using orange was further proof that the decision to use this colour was the right one.

Other factors spoke in favour of orange at the time and continue to do so today. The colour has a high recognition value. Cars and buildings with orange markings are easy to spot.

This is especially true when orange is combined with a second colour, as in the case of trans-o-flex: white. Above all, white stands for cleanliness and also for new beginnings. And trans-o-flex positioned itself at the time as a new service provider for direct transport from manufacturers to pharmacies.

To this day, the colour orange is associated with a whole range of positive attributes: in addition to warmth, it stands for enthusiasm, creativity, speed and energy. Even when trans-o-flex tried out a new colour scheme and added anthracite as a company colour, orange was still preserved as the trademark colour. And because people quickly recognised that the original combination of white and orange was not inferior, but much cheaper (for instance, when applied to vehicle paintwork), the main colours of trans-o-flex are now orange and white once more. The associated connotations convey dynamism, efficiency and reliability.

Jobs

Careers at trans-o-flex

Don't spend ages searching, quickly find what you need. Under this motto, trans-o-flex has set up a central website for job offers. The range extends from internships to jobs for IT specialists and executives to transport companies wishing to become partners of trans-o-flex. For young people who are in search of an apprenticeship trans-o-flex offers both traditional learning offers such as an apprenticeship to become a freight forwarding agent as well as various dual study programmes. In addition to specific job postings, the site provides application tips, from preparation and writing application letters to selection procedures.

At www.trans-o-flex.com/en/career, you can find the whole range of different training and job opportunities that the logistics sector now offers.





Cover story

Listening. Understanding. Implementing.

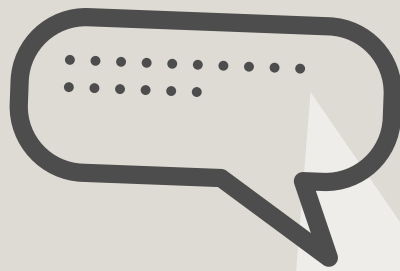
How trans-o-flex consistently measures the development of processes and products against the benchmark of customer satisfaction – and what this means in practice: Customers can send items more easily, are informed more quickly and comprehensively, and enjoy transparency across the entire logistics chain – even if something goes wrong.



A baker has it good, all he really has to do in the morning, is open the door to his bakery so that the aroma of freshly baked bread and rolls wafts down the street. And suddenly, the people on their way to the bus who pass by the bakery are magically drawn to the bakery counter by their own noses. They will stock up for the day. And if the service is friendly, the quality is right, the bread not only smells good but also tastes good, and it is not excessively expensive, people will come back. They then become satisfied regular customers. They enjoy buying from their baker and proudly inform their friends about “their” baker with such delicious bread. Is something like that also possible in the logistics sector?

“In principle, yes,” states Lutz Blankenfeldt confidently. “In fact, I believe that every successful company basically works this way.” That is why the Head of Strategy, Commercial & Marketing at trans-o-flex is primarily concerned with one subject: the customer experience. He calls them touch points – meaning all the points at which customers have contacts with trans-o-flex. “Logistics doesn’t come with the smell of freshly baked bread, but every one of our customers has daily experiences with us – and those experiences may or may not leave a good taste. And the sum of those experiences is key in determining whether someone is a satisfied customer who recommends the company to others.”

trans-o-flex addresses the touch points purposefully and systematically. “Each department has its own customer-centric team whose job is to continuously reflect on whether and how the department’s work can improve customers’ experiences.” The ideas the teams are currently working on mainly revolve around increasing transparency across the entire logistics chain. However, before he discusses those concrete results, Blankenfeldt wants to stress something that is of particular importance to him. >>



Satisfied customers, satisfied employees, and a profitable company

“The topics of customer orientation and customer satisfaction have existed for as long as there have been companies. But the consistency with which these topics are taken at trans-o-flex as central measures of our entire corporate development is, at least in logistics, unprecedented.” The starting signal was given at the Executive Board’s strategy retreat earlier this spring. “We asked three central questions: How should trans-o-flex develop? According to which criteria? Where do we want to be in ten years’ time?” In response, three goals were formulated: satisfied customers, satisfied employees and a profitable company. “The important thing here,” according to Blankenfeldt, “is that the three goals belong together. They depend on one another.” Only satisfied employees will do everything they can to keep their customers satisfied. Only satisfied customers stay and are willing, in the long term, to pay their service providers fair prices. Only profitable companies can pay their employees appropriately and finance investments in future innovations.



Customer survey: Every response counts

“If it didn’t already exist, it would absolutely have to be invented, because it is so valuable for everyone involved,” says Lutz Blankenfeldt. The Head of Strategy, Commercial & Marketing is referring to the regular customer survey, in which trans-o-flex now writes to its customers four times a year and requests their feedback using a standardised questionnaire. “This is a systematic and highly efficient method that allows customers to provide individual feedback – anonymously or openly, as they wish – without it involving a great deal of effort on their part.”

trans-o-flex first introduced customer surveys in 2017. Since 2020, they have been conducted on a quarterly basis, with each contact person only approached once per year. “As customers now know that every single response is taken seriously, more and more of them are taking the time to participate.”

“A new, more personal form of feedback is also being used increasingly often,” Blankenfeldt continues. “Since the fourth quarter of 2024, customers can voluntarily leave their contact details at the end of the survey. By doing so, they waive the anonymity of their feedback in the customer survey and we can contact them.” The internal follow-up process works as follows: once the survey round has been completed, the data is shared with the relevant departments. Representatives from Sales and CS then review the customer feedback, discuss the topics with the specialist departments and get back to the customer. This then creates an opportunity to develop joint solutions for the issues raised.

The questionnaire also enables customers to give a straightforward rating of the various trans-o-flex areas using a school grading system ranging from 1 to 6. “However, the key benchmark for customer satisfaction is the Net Promoter Score (NPS), the recommendation rate,” explains Blankenfeldt. “The NPS is calculated by subtracting the number of dissatisfied customers from the number of satisfied customers of a company (who recommend the company to others).” According to this benchmark, the satisfaction level on the part of trans-o-flex’s customers has risen sharply this year. In the first quarter, the NPS increased by no fewer than 21 points compared with the previous quarter, and by 13 points compared with the same quarter the year before. In the second quarter, the NPS even rose once again by a further four points. Blankenfeldt: “It would seem that our work is paying off – and that is a great source of motivation for the whole team to proceed full-steam ahead down the designated path.”



Making it as easy as possible for customers to provide feedback

Blankenfeldt relies on regular customer surveys (see box on p. 13) as the central yardstick for customer satisfaction. “This is one of the tools we use to make it as easy as possible for our customers to provide us with feedback,” he explains. “Other tools include personal visits from our sales staff, as well as specialist events such as the Pharma Logistics Day or the Pharma Customer Forum.” The framework varies depending on the respective format. The visits frequently comprise one-to-one meetings. The Pharma Logistics Day is a one-day specialist conference with over 100 participating customers, while the Pharma Customer Forum is a small roundtable with just a few customers and trans-o-flex experts discussing specific topics and working together on solutions for the future. “The aim is always to enter into a dialogue, exchange views on new developments, identify what is working well and where problems lie – and see how improvements can be made.”

And what then happens to all the different types of feedback from these various sources? Blankenfeldt: “They don’t just disappear into a drawer somewhere – they are systematically addressed and acted upon as part of our touchpoint management.” A current focus is on projects to further increase transparency in the logistics chain. Blankenfeldt cites three examples of measures designed to further increase customer satisfaction.

Notification for recipients: We’ll be there between 11 and 12 o’clock!

In the Insight App, which recipients can already use to track the progress of their consignments at any time, there will be more relevant information available in future. These will be presented in a clearer way thanks to layout changes. Recipients will need to enter fewer details and should be able to use the app more intuitively. “One of the most frequently requested improvements is more information about the precise time of delivery.” In future, recipients will therefore receive advance notification of a one-hour delivery window, for instance: We’ll be there between 11 and 12 o’clock! “We would also like to show recipients the location of the delivery vehicle on a map and indicate how many stops still need to be made before their delivery. However, we must carefully weigh up the potential security risks associated with this.”



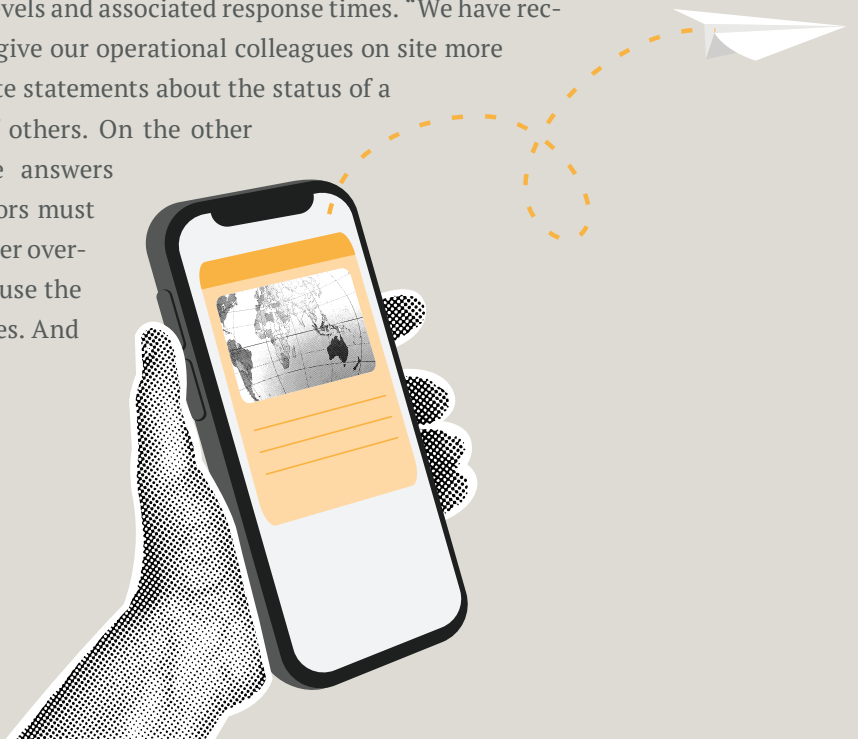
New status updates in the event of delays

The additional information that will be available in future at the customer's request, both in the app and on the trans-o-flex website or in the normal sender's consignment tracking via mytof, includes status messages in the event of delays. Up to now, when an unforeseen event occurred, the last consignment status simply remained unchanged without any further information on what would happen next. The plan is now to provide specific updates, for instance if a consignment has been damaged, if it has to be returned, or if the address was incorrect. In the last case, the recipient will see the following message: "We were unable to reach you at the address you provided. The sender has been informed of the delay. If you have any questions about the delivery, please contact the sender." Once the address has been checked and corrected, the recipient will be informed accordingly: "The sender has provided us with a new address." Recipients will then receive the usual notifications regarding the planned delivery date.

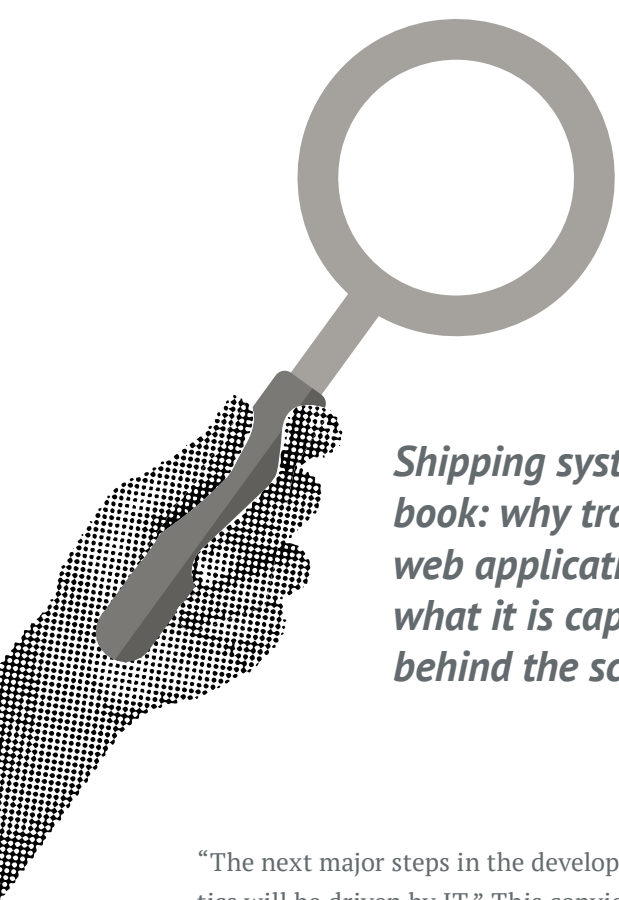


Faster responses to customer service enquiries

Another request from customers is for shorter response times to enquiries submitted to the Customer Service (CS) team. "This involves major adjustments to the processes and changes to CS priorities, but it is entirely comprehensible, and that is why we are implementing it," says Blankenfeldt. Background: For many customer enquiries, CS staff need to involve operational colleagues on site to clarify details. The tool they use for queries is now revising the priority levels and associated response times. "We have recognised that, on the one hand, we need to give our operational colleagues on site more than 60 minutes if they are to make accurate statements about the status of a specific consignment among thousands of others. On the other hand, urgent enquiries generally require answers within just a few hours. Both of these factors must be balanced so that response times are shorter overall, but above all realistic and reliable. Because the most important thing is to keep our promises. And that is our goal." ■



Rapid. Simple. Logical.



How customer-oriented IT solutions are created

Shipping system, master accounts, central address book: why trans-o-flex is launching numerous new web applications and developing a new customer portal, what it is capable of and when it will be launched. A look behind the scenes of the company's system development.

"The next major steps in the development of logistics will be driven by IT." This conviction is shared by Stefan Thömmes, Managing Director of trans-o-flex IT-Service GmbH, with many logistics and IT experts. "But very few people know in which direction IT should drive development and what it should be driven by. At trans-o-flex we have answered these questions clearly: IT solutions must reduce costs, increase the level of quality and delight customers." In order to show how and why the Weinheim-based express specialist is working on this triad of cost reduction, quality management and customer enthusiasm, Thömmes has given this magazine insights into the development pipeline of trans-o-flex's IT-Service. His promise to all customers: "I will let you take a look behind the scenes of our system development so that you know which solutions you will be able to benefit from within just a few months."

The most recent IT developments were prompted by a systematic analysis of customer requirements. "Both in direct discussions with the customer service representatives and in our regular customer surveys, one need clearly emerged," said Thömmes. "Many customers no longer wanted a fragmented range of offerings, where there were specific solutions for specific tasks, each of which then required a separate login." Instead, the desire for a central access point from which all functions can be reached and operated intuitively clearly emerged.

The upshot of several years of development work is a completely new customer portal, which trans-o-flex has not had in this form before. "The portal is intended to serve as a central point of contact for the web applications for consignment entry and tracking," explained Thömmes. "In addition, it offers customers access to further services, which will be continuously built upon to meet the growing needs of users."

One of the applications that has been developed from the ground up is the shipping system. The new application for consignment entry replaces the “TOP tof” tool. “A new design and the current state of the art offer a simplified and intuitive user interface and enable customers to enter their consignments efficiently.” Recurring consignments can be saved as templates, which significantly reduces the amount of work involved for customers. Users also have the option of reviewing their recorded consignments and deciding for themselves which orders should be transmitted electronically to trans-o-flex at which time.

Other applications that customers can use via the new customer portal include the option to manage a central address book and to control various user accounts via a “master account”. Thömmes explains: “This simplifies the administration work involved considerably, as only one person from the respective company needs to register. This person receives the master account and can use it to create and manage further accounts.” In this way, user control is simplified and customers can manage their processes and responsibilities themselves according to their own needs. Access rights can be granted for individual or multiple applications, so



The new shipping system guides customers logically from one step to the next, thus making the entry of consignments easier and ensuring that no required information is overlooked.

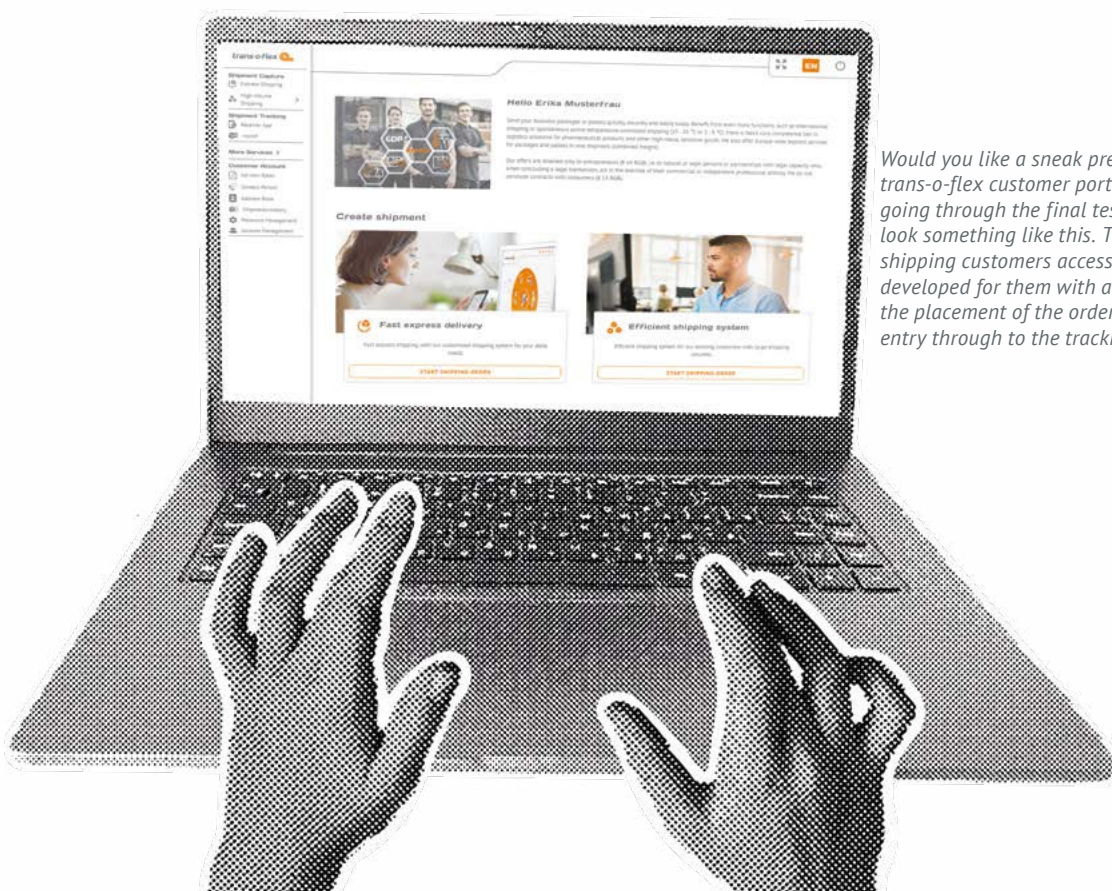
that an employee can, for instance, order individual express shipments via *tof.now* and then immediately record further consignments via the new shipping system. If an employee switches jobs or leaves the company, their access can be deleted and transferred to a colleague.

“If all internal tests of the customer portal and the new applications have been successfully completed, we will first subject the system to further tests with selected customers to check it thoroughly.” However, with the subsequent general introduction for all customers, the development will by no means be complete, emphasises Thömmes. “In the way we have now set up the platform and its applications, it is possible to work continuously on further development and to install new functions and services as required.”

Thus, parallel to the introduction of the customer portal and the new shipping system, intensive work is being performed on the further development of the customer dashboards. “This will enable us to

offer our business partners a personalised and clear presentation of relevant key performance indicators – from order volumes and transport times to variance analyses.” The aim is that in future trans-o-flex customers will not only be able to see more data, but above all the data that is relevant to them. “Through intelligent filters, configurable widgets and extended export functions, we are creating genuine decision support. Especially in a sector where temperature control, delivery accuracy and compliance are of key importance, this transparency is a real added value.” One example is the expansion of tracking and tracing functions. “In addition to classic consignment information, it will soon be possible to retrieve additional status information – for instance, regarding the compliance with temperature-controlled transport conditions – in real time.”

While the reason and focus of the IT development described thus far is the improvement of the customer experience, another development is aimed primarily at strategic business development, the



Would you like a sneak preview? The new trans-o-flex customer portal, which is currently going through the final testing phase, will look something like this. The aim is to give all shipping customers access to all applications developed for them with a single login – from the placement of the order and consignment entry through to the tracking.

improvement of internal processes and reducing costs. “Here, through the launch of a digital twin of our entire company, we have achieved an enhanced level of internal transparency. This digital image of our supply chain enables us to answer key questions on material flows, depot and vehicle utilisation, process bottlenecks or scenario simulations on a data-driven basis and in real time.” From

Thömmes’ point of view, the digital twin is a key element on the way to becoming a data-driven company. His outlook: “We plan to continue along the path towards a data-driven company – both in terms of the level of detail and also with regard to the integration of external data sources. Our vision is data-driven decision-making in real time, based on networked, trustworthy information.” ■

IT development from the customer’s perspective



How do customers experience us? Is the collaboration with trans-o-flex easy or difficult, does it fray the nerves or is it enjoyable, does everything work and is it transparent and comprehensible? These questions also form the backdrop to IT development at the Weinheim-based express service. And in order to structurally safeguard this development from the customer’s perspective, an in-house customer-centric team has been set up within the trans-o-flex IT-Service GmbH company. Its task is generally to improve the user experience through technical innovations. Specifically, the team is currently working on developing, testing and expanding a new trans-o-flex customer portal and to become the central point of contact for all the customers’ logistical needs.

At the head of this team is Nele Kerth, Junior Product Owner / IT Service Management, who acts as an intermediary between the various stakeholders and translates customer requirements into technical specifications. She is supported by five

experienced software developers who assume responsibility for the technical concept, the design and the programming of the applications. The releaser, responsible for testing, ensures that all functions seamlessly merge with one another before the product reaches the customer. In order to successfully implement the concept, there have been and continue to be numerous consultations with the relevant departments. This collaboration ensured that the various requirements and perspectives were taken into account that are necessary for a comprehensively thought-out and successfully implemented concept. The first planning meetings and brainstorming sessions started as early as 2022. Since then, work has been carried out continuously on implementation and improvement, with initial concepts developing into detailed proposals and demonstration models. Internal tests are currently underway before the portal is then tested live by the first customers and the various applications are gradually rolled out.

Medical products

Good logistics start with an S – such as smoothly and serenity

Since 2023, trans-o-flex Express has been supplying German medical supply stores – but also, on behalf of Ludwig Bertram GmbH, international recipients in 19 European countries. The company specialises in trade with medical aids and veterinary medicines and required a logistics partner that is able to adapt flexibly to ever changing product ranges.

‘Serenity’ may at first sound a surprising answer to the question of what a logistics manager values most when working with trans-o-flex, but for Marko Stritzke, Head of Logistics and member of the Management Board at Ludwig Bertram GmbH, those two words say it all. “Serenity means at the end of the day that everything works smoothly and that there are no major issues.”

Since the start of 2024, trans-o-flex has been working for the mid-sized trading company in healthcare and veterinary medicine. All the German B2B parcels have been routed via trans-o-flex Express ever since. Apart from consignments to German medical supply stores, trans o flex also delivers for Ludwig Bertram to companies in a further 19 European countries, from Norway to Italy, from Poland to Portugal. “The fact we can route not only our national consignments in Germany



Items are stored, picked and packed in Isernhagen, where Ludwig Bertram operates its own warehouse.

LUDWIG BERTRAM GMBH



RUSSKA



The headquarters of Ludwig Bertram GmbH are in Isernhagen on the outskirts of Hanover. From here, products currently go to 19 European countries. More countries could be added.

150 years of tradition and a broad product range

Ludwig Bertram GmbH in Isernhagen, on the outskirts of Hanover, is a mid-sized trading and service company with more than 160 employees, that has been specialising in medical aids and health products for people and animals. The company, that was founded in 1874 and regularly trains around ten young people every year, is broken down into four central business areas:

- **RUSSKA:** a distribution specialist with its own brand for a broad range of medical aids and health products, especially in the fields of care, rehabilitation and daily living aids, fitness and orthopaedics.
- **Bertram Vital:** one of the leading specialist retailers in the field of rehabilitation technology and care supplies in the Hanover area.
- **MEDVET:** a mail order and online shop for veterinary practice supplies.
- **Sanivita:** The Sanivita partner concept is an innovative marketing and sales concept which offers support to medical specialist retailers on site and online.

In addition to its trading operations, Ludwig Bertram GmbH offers extensive services in the logistics, warehousing, order processing and aid refurbishment sectors.

but also our international consignments via trans-o-flex simplifies many things – even though the majority of our customers are currently based in the DACH region,” explains Stritzke. trans-o-flex’s international capabilities could become even more important in future, “because we can very well imagine opening up further new markets in the future.”

Electric mobility requires hazardous goods expertise: batteries!

trans-o-flex’s ability to transport hazardous goods consignments competently and safely is also important to Ludwig Bertram. “Our product range is constantly on the move,” says Marko Stritzke. “Around two years ago we expanded our portfolio to include electric mobility scooters, which have to be mapped accordingly in terms of the logistics.” The batteries for them fall under the special provisions of hazardous goods regulations. “At present we ship these products exclusively via one freight forwarder, but in future we would like to handle some of them via trans-o-flex as well.”

To ensure everything continues to run smoothly, Stritzke can call on two personal contacts in the trans-o-flex sales team: Key Account Manager Mariam Gründel and Internal Sales Representative Lea Thimm. “I am in regular contact with them. Both take an active interest in our concerns and ensure that everything runs well. Adjustments are only rarely necessary, but when they are, they are implemented reliably.”

Marko Stritzke, Head of Logistics and member of the Management Board at Ludwig Bertram GmbH, is delighted that in the collaboration with trans-o-flex “everything runs smoothly and there are no major problems.”





VEIA



Sabine Fuchsberger-Paukert, Managing Director of
ilapo Internationale Ludwigs-Arzneimittel GmbH & Co. KG
and Chair of the VEIA Board



Individual imports

Framework tariff for association members

***GDP-compliant shipments to pharmacies
throughout Germany: how ten pharmaceutical
specialist wholesalers secured favourable terms.***

As early as 2008, ten pharmaceutical specialist wholesalers joined together in the Association of Single Importers of International Medicines (VEIA). In 2023, VEIA and trans-o-flex Express concluded a framework agreement granting all member companies a discount on the standard price. Since then, trans-o-flex collects the imported medicinal products from each respective member and delivers them, under ambient-service conditions, to the ordering pharmacy. Temperature-controlled consignments, at the same time, run through the trans-o-flex ThermoMed network.

“In collaboration with trans-o-flex, our member companies are able to supply their customers in GDP-compliant fashion, reliably and at manageable cost,” says pharmacist Sabine Fuchsberger-Paukert. She is Managing Director of ilapo Internationale Ludwigs-Arzneimittel GmbH & Co. KG in Munich and at the same time Chair of the VEIA Board. “We founded VEIA in 2008 to give small and medium-sized enterprises a stronger voice in politics through acting together. At the same time, we exchange information on legal issues, discuss market challenges, organise joint training courses



Specialists such as ilapo specialise in individual exports of pharmaceuticals in accordance with Section 73.3 of the German Medicines Act. This ensures that patients can also receive medicines which are not yet or not currently available, or not available in this form or no longer available, in Germany.

and, not least, secure purchasing advantages for our members by concluding framework agreements such as the one with trans-o-flex.”

VEIA members import from all EU countries, the USA, Canada, Japan and Switzerland. Each VEIA member arranges its own imports and customs

clearance of the medicinal products. “trans-o-flex is responsible for GDP-compliant and actively temperature-controlled shipments within Germany; in some cases an express option – for instance, delivery by 10 a.m. – is also used,” explains Eugen Günther, Chief Sales Officer of trans-o-flex.

How to obtain medicines that are otherwise unavailable



In view of the 1.4 billion packs of medicinal products sold in German pharmacies in 2024, according to the Federal Union of German Associations of Pharmacists (ABDA), the volume of single imports appears vanishingly small. Around 1.4 million packages were imported in the same year by the ten companies joined together in the Association of Single Importers of International Medicines (VEIA), which cover the majority of the market. Yet the significance for patients is far greater than the raw figure suggests. When – as happened this summer – medicines such as quetiapine are unavailable for months, sin-

gle imports of this drug, used among other things to treat schizophrenia or bipolar disorders, often represent patients’ last hope for continuing their treatment. Accordingly, worldwide single imports of medicinal products according to Section 73 subsection 3 of the German Medicines Act (AMG) are permitted when the corresponding products are not yet, or are no longer, available in Germany. However, to ensure that the statutory health insurance scheme covers the cost of a single import, an application is required in every case.

Directly from A to B

Personal service, tailor-made solutions

5,000 books for the Federal President of Germany, temperature-controlled hazardous goods shipments to an island, international security transports: By means of its Charter Transport and Direct Transport product divisions, trans-o-flex realises individual solutions for very special logistical challenges.

The shortest connection between two points is, in theory, known to be a straight line. “That’s why direct journeys are often also the fastest, simplest and best solution to a transport problem,” says Michael Zorell, authorised signatory and Head of the Linehaul Division at trans-o-flex. “In practice, however, there is sometimes a sea, a mountain or a customs border between the two points, roads are only passable at certain times for certain vehicles, the goods are subject to special requirements and so on.” But it is precisely these challenges that Zorell and his team specialise in overcoming. Every day, the thirty-five employees in the Linehaul Division steer a fleet of more than six hundred

vehicles. Most of them transport consignments overnight between various trans-o-flex locations and thus make it possible for consignments from Berchtesgaden to be delivered in Flensburg the following day. “A portion of the vehicles is, however, also used for our services Charter Transport and Direct Transport, in which we develop, implement and personally accompany entirely bespoke solutions for customers.”

This necessarily involves the fact that customers’ requirements are extremely diverse. “It is precisely that which makes our work so interesting,” says Artem Tutatcikov, Group Leader for Dispatch in the

Michael Zorell,
Authorised signatory and
Head of the Linehaul Division
at trans-o-flex



Linehaul Division. Together with further employees, he speaks in the Weinheim office about assignments they particularly enjoy recalling. “For a major book retail chain, we organised the transport of more than five thousand books to the Federal President’s citizens’ festival at Bellevue Palace. Every small detail mattered: from the registration of the driver and the vehicle to the exact route taken. In the end, Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier read aloud from the books delivered by us.”


Most journeys are organised by the dispatchers in Germany. “Generally, however, we work throughout Europe. In the case of direct journeys or chartered journeys, it is irrelevant for the sequences whether you are travelling from Munich to Berlin or from Amsterdam to Vienna,” Tutatcikov adds. “Borders only play a part in terms of the customs formalities.”

More important than distance are the details of the assignment. “Our solutions begin by listening to the customer and attempting to understand the challenge they are facing,” interjects dispatcher Dawid Sujdak. His tasks include the costing and planning of national and international transports. He has worked for trans-o-flex for more than six years and has been active in the direct-journey business for more than twenty years in total. >>

Customised transport solutions: No customer request is overlooked

In the area of bespoke transport solutions, trans-o-flex offers the services Charter Transport, Direct Transport and, since May, also Special Services. How does a customer know which division can solve their problem best? Do they even need to know?

“To make it easy for the customer to find the right contact person for their special transport wishes, we have deliberately chosen to locate all offers for bespoke transport solutions in one division, namely Linehaul,” explains Michael Zorell, who is responsible for the division. “The distinction between the different products is simple.” Recurring, frequent orders are produced by Zorell’s team under Charter Transport. Sporadic transports are a case for Direct Transport. “And extremely urgent consignments or complex requirements are handled by Special Services. All three teams are in close exchange and no customer request gets lost.”



Artem Tutatcikov,
Group Leader for Dispatch in
the Linehaul Division at trans-o-flex

Special orders

The requirements for Direct Transport and Charter Transport are as individual as the people who place them. Here are a few examples:

- ▶ A warehouse relocates: Several times a year, trans-o-flex is entrusted with transporting goods from one warehouse to another during site relocations.
- ▶ Good Distribution Practice-compliant transports in all temperature ranges and vehicle classes, from the van to the forty-tonner. From ambient-temperature shipments (15 to 25 degrees Celsius) through refrigerated shipments (2 to 8 degrees Celsius) to deep-freeze shipments (minus 20 degrees Celsius).
- ▶ Time-limited customer campaigns with high volumes: transport of almost one hundred full-truckloads of coronavirus tests.
- ▶ Combination of plant waste disposal and procurement logistics for a medical products manufacturer: collection of products from the plant, transport to pharmaceutical wholesalers and, on the return journey, collection of preliminary products from suppliers and delivery to the plant.
- ▶ Temperature-controlled inter-plant shipments between the sites of a pharmaceutical manufacturer while taking aviation security into account: Carriers must be approved as secure air cargo transporters, drivers must be specially trained, vehicles must be sealed. This allows shipments to be combined with other goods and then flown out together.

Among his most interesting and demanding projects, he ranks temperature-controlled transports of hazardous goods to various European islands. "That involves agreements with authorities, drivers' training certificates, the equipment of the vehicles, special permits for ferries – indeed many factors that must be coordinated." Therefore, according to Sujdak, the successful implementation of such projects only functions when working as a team. Nevertheless, the customer always has a specific employee as a contact person who accompanies the assignment from start to finish. "When the goods have then been delivered, we celebrate as a team and forget all the hard work we put into the project."

When transport assignments are single orders, they run under the product name Direct Transport. If they are regular orders, they fall within the Charter Transport division. Viacheslav Fridman has worked as a dispatcher there for five years. His daily focus is on monitoring and controlling the planning, from departure checks to data maintenance in the transport management system. "We must leave nothing to chance," says Fridman. "Otherwise, Murphy's law strikes and anything that can happen, does happen."




Dawid Sujdak,
Dispatcher at trans-o-flex

Two years ago, Fridman organised a shipment from the Czech Republic to Ukraine because he has the greatest experience in this area within the team: “The challenge was delivery into a war zone, customs clearance at the European Union external border and the sensitivity of the goods that practically anyone could make use of.” It concerned laptops and similar equipment for pupils who had switched to “home schooling” because of their school’s proximity to the front line. Similar to multimedia transports for a large wholesaler between the Czech Republic and Poland, these were thus security transports. “In general, we align ourselves with the customers’ requirements and then, for instance, organise shipments in accordance with the Transported Asset Protection Association security standards. The carrier must then provide proof of certification to the particularly high TAPA standards, often such vehicles are escorted, the driver must be able to press an alarm button or a particular vehicle type must be used.”

When customers choose trans-o-flex as the partner for their individual transport solutions, they have several advantages from the perspective of Division Head Zorell. “Many interested parties are already customers of trans-o-flex Express or

ThermoMed and can keep the number of interfaces with transport service providers low by collaborating with us.” Another reason he puts forward are the synergies that exist between the bespoke solutions and the trans-o-flex network. “On the one hand, we have access to transport companies listed and vetted within the linehaul network and know what they can deliver. On the other hand, we can partially deploy surplus tours of the linehaul network – namely ordered but unused transport capacities – for direct journeys.” However, the most important advantage, according to Zorell, is the experience and passion of the team. “Every day we handle a wide variety of sensitive goods, including temperature-sensitive, theft-prone or hazardous goods. Our concern is to understand the challenges of our customers, to develop individually tailored solutions for them and provide close, personal support for every order. And we reliably put that into effect.” ■

A man in a black t-shirt and khaki pants stands with his hands on his hips, looking towards the camera. He is positioned next to a large, stylized arrow that points upwards and to the right. The arrow is made of a road surface with dashed white lines. The background is a bright blue sky with white clouds. The foreground is filled with a chaotic pile of road surface strips, suggesting a complex or tangled path.

*Viacheslav Fridmann,
Dispatcher at trans-o-flex*



Continuous Growth

One-stop service for 38 European countries

How the EURODIS network enables its partners' customers to organise both national and international shipments – including customs clearance for deliveries to non-EU countries

“For the past 32 years, EURODIS’s core service has essentially remained the same, which is a stroke of luck for our customers,” says Kerstin Böhm, Head of International Sales at trans-o-flex. “This is because we can offer our customers a single point of contact for both national and international services as a result of this.” What Böhm specifically means by this is: There is only one collection from the customer, whether it’s for national or international consignments, and the Customer Service and Sales contacts remain the same. International consignment tracking is handled via mytof.de in exactly the same way as domestic tracking; the billing logic and IT integration are identical. No additional interface is required. “However, around that core service, i.e. the joint international shipment of parcels and pallets in a single consignment there have of course been a lot of further developments since our foundation.”

Most notably, the geographical coverage has increased. When, on 31 August 1993, representatives of nine companies signed the founding charter of the European Distribution Network, EURODIS for

short, trans-o-flex and its founding partners covered ten countries: Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Italy, the United Kingdom, France, Spain and Switzerland. Today, EURODIS operates in 38 European countries, extending from Ireland to Turkey and from Poland to Portugal. Twenty-five countries are served by EURODIS partners, and thirteen by delivery partners. The delivery partners have their own contracts, which individually specify the services they offer. EURODIS partners are obliged to meet all EURODIS standards.

These standards also include in many countries, alongside the B2B product (transport to business addresses), a dedicated B2C product, which has developed over time. “Over the years, more and more partners with strong 2C shipment operations in their respective countries have joined us, which then led to the development of a standard 2C product. This means that trans-o-flex customers can now send goods to private recipients in 16 countries and benefit from our partners’ expertise in the process,” adds Böhm.



Due to the fact that numerous non-EU countries such as Norway, Switzerland, the UK and Turkey are now also covered, EURODIS's international service also includes customs clearance for consignments. "Customs clearance usually takes place in the last country before border crossing – for instance, for a shipment from Spain to Switzerland, it would be in Germany," explains Böhm. "Customers' customs requirements are discussed with the relevant partner during the implementation process to facilitate a smooth, rapid and cost-effective service."

Some partners in the EURODIS network, similarly to trans-o-flex, also offer logistics solutions specifically for the pharmaceuticals and healthcare sector. One example of this is our partner Redur, which, similarly to trans-o-flex in Germany and Austria, has a comprehensive network for actively temperature-controlled shipments in the ambient range (15° to 25° C) in Spain and Portugal. A further example of this is our partner PostNL, which has its own network enabling active temperature control at 2 to 8 or 15 to 25 degrees Celsius. SDA in Italy also provides passive temperature-controlled transports (15 °C to 25 °C, 2 °C to 8 °C and –20 °C).

An overview of all the EURODIS Countries

<i>Countries</i>	<i>Partner</i>
Germany	trans-o-flex
Spain, Portugal, Andorra	Redur
The Netherlands	PostNL
Luxembourg	Interoute
Italy, San Marino, Vatican City	SDA Express Courier
Switzerland, Liechtenstein	Bonafide
The Czech Republic	One by Allegro
Austria	Österreichische Post
Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Bulgaria	Express One*
Croatia	Overseas Express*
Serbia	City Express*
Romania	FAN Courier
Greece, Cyprus	Geniki Taxydromiki
Turkey	Aras Kargo

In addition, thirteen countries are covered by delivery partners: France, Monaco, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Poland, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

* The Express One companies are, similarly to City Express and Overseas Express, independent subsidiaries of Österreichische Post.

Special consignment?

Special solution.

Time-critical and tailor-made solutions.

Through trans-o-flex Special Services, we connect people, markets, and opportunities – even the most remote destinations, worldwide, quickly and securely. Whether it involves air charter and on-board courier services, or time-critical special logistics – we offer more than just standard solutions: **Is your consignment unique? Then so is our solution as well.**



*You can obtain more information
on the Special Services we
offer on our Website.*

