

trans·o·flex **m**agazine

***Swift,
swifter,
special
services***

*Customised solutions
for time-critical, sensitive
and extremely important
goods*



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Logistics Service

Cooling capacity in Alzenau
more than doubled

Bauerfeind, WiBU, Pharmadrug

Three customer solutions for
pharmaceuticals and healthcare

AI optimises service

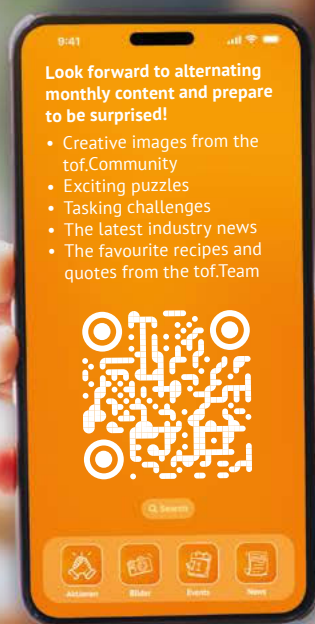
Digital twin gains
additional siblings

Interactive calendar

Tips, tricks and surprises every month

There are very few calendars that are still worth acquiring even as the year progresses. The interactive 2025 calendar, that was put together by the trans-o-flex marketing team, certainly belongs among them. “We wanted a calendar that offers new surprises each month, with such a broad range of content that there’s something in it for everyone,” says Lutz Blankenfeldt, Head of Strategy, Commercial & Marketing at trans-o-flex.

That’s why there isn’t only a large-format image to catch the eye every month, but also various sections offering numerous tips. These range from tried and tested methods for better self-organisation thru “kitchen gossip” (the recipe of the month from a trans-o-flex employee) to puzzles, creative ideas for the whole family, and inspirational quotes. And that is not everything by a long shot! Therefore: It is best to scan the QR code on the trans-o-flex 4-month calendar and try out the interactive calendar. Alternatively, you can also access it via the direct link in the image.



bit.ly/interaktiver_kalender
(in German only)

Legal notice

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Dear readers,

Why do we actually produce this magazine? We want to show you how trans-o-flex is evolving and which strategies we are pursuing. We want to use examples to demonstrate how we listen to you, our customers, and how we develop and implement solutions that make your life easier. Last but not least, we are proud of our successes and wish to share them with you.

The biggest developmental step featured in this issue is undoubtedly the establishment of our own Special Services division. Its task and unique selling point involves finding solutions for our customers that are facing extreme logistical challenges. In most cases, these are genuine case-by-case solutions for time-critical, sensitive and particularly important goods. They involve situations where it is not only extremely costly if a specific product does not arrive at the right time and place, but where people's lives may also depend on the correct logistics. Even the best planning cannot always prevent an emergency, which then requires a very rapid and customised solution. This offer closes a gap in our service portfolio that our customers have pointed out to us. We have listened and now we are delivering.

Less spectacular, but no less important, are the continuous improvements in the capacity and network that drive the evolution of a logistics provider. That is why I am delighted that, come May, we will be able to commence operations at a new site. This investment will expand our capacity, accelerate throughput and unlock further synergies between our two networks, Express and ThermoMed.

By expanding our international EURODIS network to include Turkey, we are integrating a country within our service that is increasingly significant as a near-shoring production location for all of Europe. In Aras Kargo, EURODIS didn't just secure any partner, but one of the leading ones in this great country. And

because our EURODIS partner, Österreichische Post, secured a majority stake in this company several years ago, the long-term inclusion of Aras Kargo in our network is also guaranteed.

Last but not least, each of the customer solutions we present to you in this issue demonstrates how we have developed ourselves and our service. In each case there is an element that distinguishes the service from a mere standardised service. I am not trying to call into question the benefits of industrialised standard services. They are necessary and something that we are also implementing because the industrialisation process means that a reasonable standardised service can be offered at low cost. However, in many cases this standard simply isn't enough. More flexibility is required. Solutions are required for the particular conditions and challenges that certain industries are simply faced by.

We at trans-o-flex, do everything we can to reliably implement these solutions every day. After all, it is the continuity of quality that truly defines a brand. This continuity is much harder to achieve for a service than in the production of a branded product. In the production of a cola drink, no external parties add anything to it. In the case of a service, however, it is also necessary to cope with the effects of external factors such as traffic jams, strikes or storms. This is where we apply innovative AI applications. I am confident that our digital twins will help us make existing processes even more resilient, and thus to enable us to uphold our brand promise reliably.

Yours sincerely,

Martin Reder
Chief Executive Officer



7



8

10



*Special services:
the solution when
things get a bit tight*

News

- 2 **Interactive calendar** • Tips, tricks and surprises every month
- 6 **Supply chain act** • Risk analysis completed, policy statement published
- 7 **Dual safety** • Logistics service: cooling capacity in Alzenau more than doubled
- 7 **transport logistic trade fair** • Visit us in Munich!
- 8 **Independent studies** • Top performance, top prices, top customer satisfaction
- 9 **Hauliers in comparison** • Systematic evaluation introduced for local transport operators

Customer solutions

- 10 **Cover story** • Special services: the solution when things get a bit tight
- 16 **Interim review** • Won a tender – what happens next? This is how the first year went with Bauerfeind
- 18 **WiBU** • Cooperative hands over entire parcel volume to trans-o-flex
- 20 **Service from one source** • Global logistics solution for medical cannabis

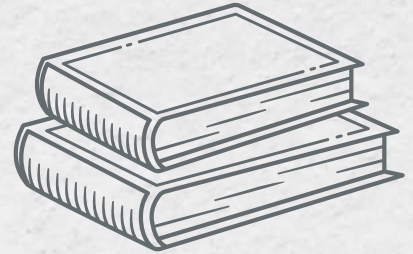


Quality

- 22 **Process optimisation with AI** · Digital twin gains additional siblings
- 26 **No temperature control** · Pharmaceutical shipping: problems with returns and strikes

Network

- 28 **New location in Bavaria** · Capacity increased, further synergies created
- 29 **Emergency care** · ThermoMed pledges further support
- 29 **Security** · Four sites are awarded new TAPA certificates
- 30 **European network expanded** · Making use of major growth opportunities in Turkey!



Supply chain act

Risk analysis completed, policy statement published

“It goes without saying for us that we adhere to all legal regulations, environmental standards, and, of course, human rights relevant to our business and forms an indispensable part of what we do,” says trans-o-flex CEO Martin Reder. The company has therefore fulfilled all the requirements for which the Supply Chain Due Diligence Act (LkSG) had set a deadline of the end of 2024.

A key milestone was a comprehensive risk analysis to systematically identify and assess human rights and environmental risks in the supply chain. “In doing so, we not only analysed our internal processes in detail but also our collaboration with suppliers,” explains Reder. “This study enabled us to prioritise potential risks and develop targeted measures to counteract these risks.”

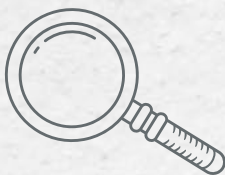
The results have been incorporated into a policy statement in which the management of trans-o-flex transparently outlines the commitments and procedures for complying with due diligence obligations. This statement explains, among other things:

- ➔ **The approach to the risk analysis:** how human rights and environmental risks were identified, assessed and prioritised.
- ➔ **Identified risks:** the potential hazards detected within our own operations and among suppliers.
- ➔ **Prevention:** the measures implemented to minimise or prevent identified risks.
- ➔ **Expectations upon stakeholders:** the requirements placed upon employees and suppliers to meet our high standards.

At the beginning of 2024, trans-o-flex had appointed a Human Rights Officer responsible for the monitoring of compliance with human rights and environmental due diligence. At the same time, a transparent and easily accessible complaints procedure has been introduced, enabling employees, suppliers, and other stakeholders to report potential violations of human rights or environmental standards quickly and easily.



The entire policy statement can be found on the trans-o-flex website and downloaded there as a PDF file: bit.ly/tof_policystatement



Refrigerated storage with space for 850 pallets. Due to the fact it has its own emergency power generator, it does not run out of energy even in the event of a power failure.



Dual safety

Logistics service: cooling capacity in Alzenau more than doubled

The significant increase in the cooling capacity at the trans-o-flex Logistics Service site in Alzenau is now complete. A new cooling cell has been installed in an existing warehouse. It has 850 pallet spaces, which are kept at 2 to 8 degrees Celsius. It also offers 2,000 shelving positions, on which the order picking of refrigerated goods is performed. Where necessary, this can be expanded to a total of 4,000 shelving positions. A deep-freeze cell (-25 °C) with an area of 25 square metres and three ultra-low temperature freezers (-80 °C) are also new additions. "Previously, Alzenau had space for 750 pallets in the refrigerated area. The capacity has thus more than doubled," says Peter Astor, Head of the Logistics Service Division.

"As previously, the new facility adheres to the highest safety standards, both with regard to unauthorised access and temperature security," adds Astor. A completely redundant cooling system has been installed. "Each refrigerated warehouse can be cooled by two entirely separate cooling systems. Should one of the two systems fail, the second system can immediately take over, ensuring the correct temperature at all times." In normal operation, both cooling systems alternate regularly. In addition, there is a diesel-powered emergency generator that guarantees the secure operation of the refrigerated areas for 72 hours in the event of power outages. An important effect for the environment and operating costs: In winter, it is possible to heat the warehouse for ambient products using the waste heat from the cooling system.

Hall B5
Stand 303/402

tl transport
logistic

Trade fair

Visit us in Munich!

From the 2nd to 5th June the transport logistic trade fair will open its doors in Munich. trans-o-flex will be represented alongside GEO-DIS at the leading international trade fair for logistics, mobility, IT and supply chain management. You can find our stand in Hall B5, 303/402. Anyone who would like to arrange an appointment in advance can do so online at any time.



Click here to arrange
an appointment:
bit.ly/meeting_fair

Independent studies

Top performance, top prices, top customer satisfaction

In recent months, trans-o-flex has once again received numerous awards in independent studies. “Whether it is the title Price Winner 2025, whether we are recognised as providing the highest level of customer satisfaction, or top value for money in 2025 – all these studies provide impartial evidence of how trans-o-flex is perceived by the public and by its customers,” according to Martin Reder, CEO of trans-o-flex.

In search of exclusive contents that offers their readers clarity and guidance, renowned media such as Handelsblatt and the Focus group regularly commission studies. Thus, trans-o-flex was named “Company of the Year 2025” for customer satisfaction in the Deutschland Test, commissioned by the financial magazine Focus Money – for the fourth time in a row.

According to a study based on more than 900,000 representative online interviews commissioned by Handelsblatt, trans-o-flex is one of the top 5 companies in the parcel services & logistics category in terms of its value for money. And the Deutschland Test for Germany’s Price Winner was all about “top prices paired with top performance”. In this test, trans-o-flex was declared the industry leader among transport and logistics companies, setting the benchmark for all other firms in the sector.

More information on the individual studies can be found via the accompanying QR codes and the links adjacent.



**Company of the
Year – all results
from all sectors**

bit.ly/unternehmen-des-jahres
(only available in German)



**Value-for-money ranking
in Handelsblatt with the
study results**

bit.ly/preis-leistungs-ranking
(only available in German)



**Prize winner and best in class
in the Deutschland Test**

bit.ly/preissieger
(only available in German)





Hauliers in comparison

Systematic evaluation introduced for local transport operators

trans-o-flex has implemented a systematic and impartial supplier evaluation for all hauliers engaged in local transport operations. “We want to ensure in this way that the hauliers meet our high standards – maintaining them or even improving on them,” says Andreas Hübscher, Business Unit Manager Operation Production Head office. “A transparent and systematic assessment helps us to not only assess individual service providers based on their delivery quality but also to compare several partners fairly and objectively. In this way, we can identify early on where action may be required and take targeted measures to optimise our collaboration.”

The assessment is based on a survey comprising more than 50 weighted questions. Depending on the score achieved, trans-o-flex assigns a rating from A to C. “Furthermore, the responses provide each branch with specific starting points for discussions with each haulier.”

The assessment is divided up into four categories. Among other things, delivery quality, complaints, creditworthiness and how reliably the services were provided are assessed for the performance category. In the fleet category, issues such as ambient capability, load securing and environmental aspects are covered. In the driver category, the focus is primarily on safety and training. Thus, factors such as proof of valid ADR certificates for the transport of dangerous goods or driving licences, but also driver apparel, are included. Finally, it also covers other freight forwarder documents. This category addresses documentation and evidence, especially in terms of subcontractor liability.

“In the end, there is a clear result that shows us where the respective strengths and weaknesses of the individual freight forwarders lie,” summarises Hübscher. “The results help us to make informed decisions, work together to improve our processes and partners, and thus contribute to a long-term successful collaboration.”



Cover story

Special services: the solution when things get a bit tight

Time-critical logistics involving the need for consultancy: That is the core competence of a new team at trans-o-flex which organises bespoke national and international shipments for extremely urgent, important or sensitive consignments as a Multimodal service: the approach chosen is the one that solves the problem. »



Anna Maria Cirimele joined trans-o-flex back in 2024 to set up the Special Services division. Following an extensive preparation period, she is now launching her career here with a team that has years of experience in the field.



She is the woman for very special cases. Together with her team, Anna Maria Cirimele is responsible for highly individualised solutions for logistical challenges which, despite their diversity, have one thing in common: the consignments are extremely urgent, important, sensitive or require special handling. "Often it is a combination of these," says Cirimele, who heads the new Special Services division at trans-o-flex. "We find solutions for trans-o-flex customers that cannot be provided via our standard express networks or scheduled direct runs."

At its core, the Special Services team utilises various proven service variants that, depending on the customer's needs, can be deployed individually or in combination to solve the logistical challenges involved. "A classic example of this is the direct courier run," explains Cirimele. "Depending on the size of the consignment or its specific requirements, such as temperature control, we organise a driver with the appropriate vehicle who collects the goods within 90 to 120 minutes of order confirmation and drives straight to the destination."

When the motorcycle courier is too slow

The longer the transport distance, the less likely it is that a direct courier on the road will be sufficient for urgent consignments, even if it is a motorcycle courier. "Then we utilise tools such as OBC, Next Flight Out or Air Charter." An On Board Courier (OBC) is, for instance, well suited to deliver a pacemaker from Germany directly to an operation in a hospital in São Paulo. "We then organise a courier run from the manufacturer to Frankfurt Airport. There, the driver hands over the pacemaker to the OBC, for whom we have booked a ticket on a direct flight to São Paulo. In such cases the OBC is the fastest option because they usually only travel with hand luggage, thus saving the time-consuming baggage check with its lead time, and at the destination airport they do not have to wait for the luggage to be unloaded. Instead, following the passport control they can immediately catch a taxi, drive to the hospital and personally hand the pacemaker over to an authorised person." >>

Who needs special services?

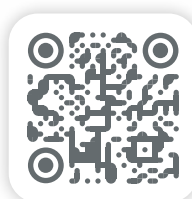
“The establishment of our own Special Services division represents not least, a signal to our customers,” says Martin Reder, CEO of trans-o-flex. “We are there for our customers when they need our support, offering a flexible, fast and customised service.” The CEO is fully aware of the effort involved in providing such customised solutions, as before taking up his current position, he was responsible for the Special Services division at a global express provider covering more than 20 European countries. “trans-o-flex already supported a multitude of customer initiatives with complex solutions at short notice during the Corona pandemic. This was very successful. That is why we want to make such options permanently available to our customers with immediate effect.”

The newly created Special Services division organisationally forms part of the Line Haul business unit, which has already offered similar services in some area, and will also continue to do so. Reder continued: “Our line haul will continue to organise direct and charter runs for our customers. These involve scheduled, regular operations with partial or full truckload shipments or rapid van services. We offer all the time-critical special solutions that also require consultation, through our special services.”

The range of special services, which is tailored to individual requirements according to customer needs, consists of the following core elements:

- ➔ On Board Courier (OBC)
- ➔ Next Flight Out (NFO)
- ➔ Air Charter
- ➔ White Glove Services
- ➔ Customised, complex special solutions
- ➔ Flexible network combinations
- ➔ Special runs with a lead time of less than three hours

Further information on the special services offerings can be found in the adjacent article or on our website.



bit.ly/tof_special_service_en



If a personal accompaniment of the consignment is not necessary for security or speed reasons, the Next Flight Out (NFO) service may also be an option. In this case the goods travel in the hold of the next available scheduled flight operating on the desired route. Due to strict regulations regarding size, weight or packaging, or if no scheduled flights are available within the required time frame, an Air Charter is often the only option instead of NFO. Cirimele: "Sometimes, even within Germany, that is the method of choice. For instance, before an car manufacturer's production line comes to a halt, it is definitely more cost effective to charter a helicopter to transport the necessary parts from one plant to another."

More than just transport: delivery with additional services

Where the White Glove Solutions, which trans-o-flex Special Services also organises, are concerned, the focus is less on the immediate set-up of a logistics chain with the shortest possible transit times. It is more about ensuring that the goods are not only transported but handled in a particular way. For instance, this is evident in the assembly and stocking of retail displays in pharmacies." Specially trained drivers deliver the displays to pharmacies, set them up, stock them with the goods they have also brought, collect all the packaging materials afterwards, and as a final step take photos of the completed display for documentation purposes.

Customised special solutions



ON BOARD COURIER // In the case of the On Board Courier (OBC) service, urgent or important consignments are accompanied by a courier to ensure they reach their destination quickly and directly anywhere in the world. As a rule the couriers carry the consignments directly with them during the flight or in their hand luggage.



NEXT FLIGHT OUT // Your freight is booked on the next available flight to the destination country. This rapid and efficient solution ensures that time-critical consignments are delivered on schedule worldwide. If further transportation is required upon arrival at the destination airport, this can be arranged additionally.



AIR CHARTER // When road transport is not fast enough or the distance too great, or if the goods are too bulky or heavy for an OBC service, an aircraft can be chartered. This is the ideal solution for rapid and reliable time-critical deliveries, even to remote areas where no scheduled flights operate.

COURIER SERVICE // Need your road transport to start without delay? trans-o-flex offers dedicated courier services, with an ideal vehicle provided within 90 to 120 minutes of order confirmation. This ensures that time-critical consignments are transported directly from A to B.

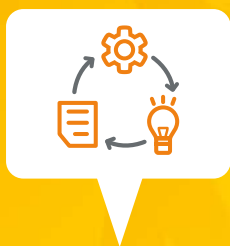


Consultancy requirements: there is always an alternative

“This example helps to illustrate two unique features that distinguish trans-o-flex Special Services from other providers,” explains Cirimele. “On the one hand, we can sometimes leverage synergies within our networks, which makes the overall solution significantly more cost effective.” For instance, the displays and their contents can be distributed nationwide via trans-o-flex Express. Only then, at the branch offices, do specially trained drivers take over the material and complete the service. “Secondly, it becomes clear that special services is not just about booking a special trans-

port, but primarily about advising the customer: What does the sender or recipient need to resolve their problem? Which service variants are most likely to be suitable?”

The respective transport services are procured on a job-specific basis from the market. “This way, we can take advantage of the best offer for the desired level of service. The fact that trans-o-flex has a large pool of transport contractors whose capabilities we know well. And abroad, it sometimes also simplifies our work that, as a subsidiary, we can rely on services from GEODIS.”



CUSTOMISED COMPLEX LOGISTICS SOLUTION // The name says it all. This is about bespoke, complex solutions for logistical challenges. These range from pre-prepared emergency concepts that can be implemented without delay, to the organisation of product launches, for instance, when a pharmaceutical patent expires, to scheduled deliveries of a gaming console that must be available for sale nationwide at the same time.



FLEXIBLE NETWORK COMBINATIONS // We offer a flexible network combination to ensure maximum efficiency for customised logistics solutions. Part of the transport runs via a reliable standardised express service. For instance, a separate pre-transport/post-transport service, such as overnight delivery, can be combined to reliably meet specific requirements such as special handling, late collections, earlier delivery times, or individual transport arrangements.

WHITE GLOVE & VALUE ADDED SERVICES

// Here, goods are not only transported according to customer specifications, but are also handled in a certain way during or after transport. Examples include the special handling of fragile, valuable, or sensitive goods, as well as value-added services such as scheduled deliveries and shelf stocking.





Interim review

Won a tender – what happens next? This is how the first year went

The last articulated lorry of the day leaves Zeulenroda in East Thuringia at 9:30 pm. Although trans-o-flex still collects Bauerfeind's medical products so late in the day, more than 95 per cent of the customer consignments are delivered nationwide the next day. "The high next-day delivery rate, even for our standard shipments, was one of the reasons why we won the tender from Bauerfeind," says Eugen Günther, Chief Sales Officer at trans-o-flex. Since last year, trans-o-flex has been working nationally and internationally for the company, which, apart from its products, became known through the basketball player Dirk Nowitzki, who was appointed as a global brand ambassador in 2016.

"Only a few weeks elapsed between our tender submission and the final integration," recalls Julian Musiol, Head of Logistics at Bauerfeind. "During this time, proposals were drafted, discussed, negotiated, finalised, operational processes coordinated and, above all, the IT integration was implemented. It was evident that there was an excellent blend of management intent, pragmatism and a willingness to execute on the part of both partners."

When Julian Musiol, Head of Logistics at Bauerfeind, became more familiar with trans-o-flex, he was 'very positively surprised' by the quality of the consignment information he receives via the mytoflex portal.



In the first year of the collaboration, trans-o-flex transported several hundred thousand consignments for Bauerfeind within Germany to medical supply stores, orthopaedic technicians and pharmacies – the vast majority of which were standard consignments. Additionally, the company makes use of express services such as delivery by 8, 9, 10 and 12 o'clock, Saturday deliveries or collection services. The express consignments differ not only in their particularly rapid and precisely timed delivery compared to the standard service but also through the proactive provision of information. Günther: "We provide Bauerfeind with a personalised customer service that, in addition to the daily standard notifications and reports, also offers tailored reporting for express consignments."

Musiol had not anticipated such a high level of transparency for both express and standard consignments. "I was very pleasantly surprised by the access to consignment information," says the logistics manager. "Via the mytof portal, we have access to far more data on our consignments than is possible with a standard tracking system."

In addition to national shipping, trans-o-flex transported several tens of thousands of international consignments for Bauerfeind in the first



Bauerfeind has set up an automated small parts warehouse for the storage of numerous items, in which the products can be securely stored and transported in reusable boxes.

year of their collaboration. These were dispatched to neighbouring countries such as Benelux, France, Poland, Austria, and the Czech Republic, but also as far as Sweden and Finland. Overall, Musiol's interim conclusion is as follows: "The collaboration is in a spirit of partnership, which is highly professional on both sides, and we are learning from each other. In trans-o-flex, we have a partner that enables us to meet our customers' needs."

German-German economic history

Founded in 1929 as a rubber knitting mill in eastern Thuringia, the history of the medical device manufacturer Bauerfeind is closely linked to Germany's development over the past 100 years. This is because, due to the business-hostile conditions in the Soviet occupation zone at the time, the family left their original location in Zeulenroda in 1949 and relocated to West Germany. New production sites were established first in Darmstadt, and later in Kempen following a takeover. From 1984 onwards, more than 20 distribution compa-

nies were added worldwide. Following German reunification, Bauerfeind returned to its founding location, and still has one of its production sites there today. Around half of the company's more than 2,000 employees worldwide are based in Zeulenroda. Bauerfeind manufactures medical aids such as braces, compression stockings, insoles, and orthoses. The company thus recently generated turnover of in excess of € 400 million.

WiBU

Cooperative hands over entire parcel volume to trans-o-flex



Anastassia Reese is responsible for procurement at WiBU.

The tradition that the Wirtschaftsverbund Sozialer Einrichtungen (WiBU) can look back on is impressive. The cooperative was founded in 1920 by various companies from the independent welfare associations. From the very start, the goal was to ensure the good, rapid, and cost-effective supply of goods through joint bulk purchases. "Due to its strong levels of cost-awareness, WiBU did not initially believe we would be able to offer competitive prices," says Eugen Günther, Chief Sales Officer at trans-o-flex. "This situation did not change until, during the COVID-19 pandemic, their previous parcel service provider struggled and built up a backlog of no less than 14 swap bodies." Since WiBU's goods could not be collected or delivered, trans-o-flex was consulted to save the day. "Within two days, we implemented a data interface at the customer's premises, collected the goods shortly afterwards, and cleared the backlog in a short period of time," says Günther.

"Given their previously verifiable levels of efficiency, we consciously invited trans-o-flex to participate in our next tender," recalls Anastassia Reese, Procurement Officer at WiBU. "That was in September 2023, when we put the parcel business in Germany and to Austria out to tender for our three companies PflegePlus, TextilPlus and ServicePlus." And trans-o-flex was indeed awarded the contract. "It wasn't the lowest price that swayed

our decision, but the fact they offered the best value for money," explains Reese.

Since February 2024, trans-o-flex has therefore been WiBU's largest transport service provider. "We now distribute 360,000 parcels per year in Germany alone and around 16,000 in Austria," Günther happily exclaims. "And due to the product structure of the WiBU companies, these are by no means just standard consignments."

WiBU PflegePlus GmbH sells a range of around 9,500 products for medical needs. They range from disinfectants to personal protective equipment for care workers, such as gloves. "Disinfectants fall under Hazardous Goods Class 5 and thus require special handling," explains Günther.

WiBU TextilPlus sells textiles ranging from professional clothing to table linen. Both companies sup-



The transport of the 20-kilo canisters of liquid bleach and disinfectant requires trans-o-flex's hazardous goods expertise. The materials fall under Hazardous Goods Class 5.

ply retirement and nursing homes, day-care centres, residential homes, laundries, nurseries, schools, kindergartens, clinics, hospitals, rehabilitation centres, in addition to hotels, restaurants, and office buildings.

The third WiBU company, which trans-o-flex works for, has a completely different requirements profile. That's because ServicePlus specialises in the testing, maintenance and repair of medical devices. Here trans-o-flex is responsible for the supply of more than 100 service technicians in Germany and Austria with spare parts.

In addition to standard B2B deliveries, WiBU therefore also uses services such as in-house delivery (e.g. to nursing homes) or express deliveries by 10 am and 12 noon. Where necessary, returns are managed via collection orders, ensuring that goods are returned to WiBU's respective locations. "Before collaborating with trans-o-flex, our deliveries often took two days. Now, we achieve a next-day delivery rate of 97%," reports Reese. "And not least one of our key requirements was GDP certification. While we do not need temperature-controlled shipments, we highly value the cleanliness and security standards associated with GDP guidelines, and we are very satisfied with this arrangement."

Günther adds, "In my opinion, customer satisfaction hinges on the overall package being right. This certainly also includes personal support from our Customer Service, the Seevetal branch, and our sales team, as well as our well-functioning and user-friendly IT solutions." The TOP online entry system is thus available for the rapid transmission of collection orders and all customers can view all consignment and delivery data, including proof of delivery, at any time via the mytof access. "At the same time, customers are increasingly recognising

us as an international service provider. In addition to the consignments to Austria, we now also already handle deliveries to the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, France, Italy, Poland, and Hungary for WiBU."



Full-service provider for the nursing and healthcare market

WiBU employs more than 600 staff across ten locations in Germany and Austria and serves over 12,000 customers as a full-service provider for the nursing and healthcare market. The five business divisions offer a one-stop service: ranging from property furnishings and medical products to textiles, prescription supply, and extending to medical devices along with their maintenance. WiBU operates three warehouse sites – two in Ahrensburg near Hamburg and one in Bad Wünnenberg in the Paderborn district. trans-o-flex collects the WiBU consignments at all three locations using trailers and integrates them within the network via its Seevetal branch. For more information, visit www.wibu.care.



Service from one source

Global logistics solution for medical cannabis

The collaboration between Pharmadrug Production GmbH and trans-o-flex began with a relatively simple question. “Can you collect a cannabis package in the Netherlands and transport it in compliance with GDP at a temperature range of 15 to 25°C to a warehouse near Freiburg?” That was in early August 2020. The equally straightforward response from trans-o-flex’s sales team was: “Sure, and when should we get started?” That same month, trans-o-flex took on its first delivery from the Netherlands to southern Germany.

Since then, trans-o-flex has become an integral part of Pharmadrug’s global logistics chain, offering a variety of services. “In trans-o-flex, we have not only found a specialised partner who fully understands and adheres to the quality requirements of pharmaceutical products, but also one whose flexibility and service options provide tailor-made solutions for

our needs,” stated the Customer Support, Logistics, Purchasing and Procurement department at Pharmadrug. And since trans-o-flex became part of the GEODIS Group, the collaboration has expanded to include intercontinental sourcing. But first things first.

For its shipments from the Netherlands to the warehouse in southern Germany, trans-o-flex has been using direct routes using an actively temperature-controlled and monitored lorry since 2020. Once the raw materials have been refined, trans-o-flex collects the finished products that are packaged individually, and delivers them throughout Germany to pharmacies via its ambient network at temperatures of 15 to 25°C. In the case of particularly urgent orders, Pharmadrug also utilises express deliveries by 10 am or 12 pm on the next working day, or even Saturday deliveries.



When Pharmadrug enquired whether trans-o-flex could support the procurement logistics from Canada, GEODIS became involved. The French, global logistics group acquired trans-o-flex in 2023, and since then both companies have been working intensively to combine the services of their various networks for the benefit of customers. This is also the case with Pharmadrug: GEODIS now organises air freight from Canada to Frankfurt, manages the customs clearance,

and oversees the transportation to a German warehouse of the cannabis specialist. In order to ensure that GEODIS can clear the goods in Frankfurt without delay, trans-o-flex collects the customs documents from Pharmadrug's head office in Rostock and delivers them in time for the arrival of the goods. Procurement from further non-European countries is also under consideration.

GMP-certified manufacturer and wholesaler

Pharmadrug Production GmbH has been operating worldwide for over 40 years as a manufacturer and wholesaler of pharmaceuticals and active ingredients. Today, the company is part of Khiron Europe GmbH – based in Frankfurt/Main – which was founded in October 2019 with the goal of improving the supply of patients with high-quality (GMP-certified) cannabinoid-based pharmaceutical products. In Khiron, Pharmadrug says it has gained a European manufacturing and distribution centre for pharmaceuticals and narcotics and a specialised pharmacy sales force to go with its already established medical sales force.



Process optimisation with AI

Digital twin gains additional siblings

With the modules for long-haul transport, local distribution, and terminal handling, virtual representations now exist for every one of trans-o-flex's core operational areas. Together, they form a unique strategic planning and operational control tool.

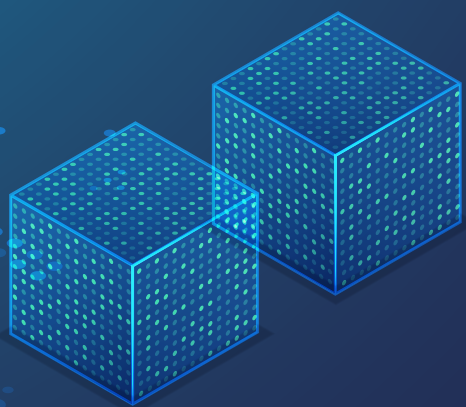


Following the digital twin for scheduled shipments, which was extensively featured in last year's spring issue of this magazine, two further digital twins have now seen the light of day in the trans-o-flex world. "We have now created three virtual images of our central operational processes," reports Stefan Thömmes, Managing Director of trans-o-flex IT-Service GmbH. In addition to the scheduled transport module, these are the local transport and terminal handling modules.

The reasons behind this commitment: "Digital twins can significantly further improve optimised products and processes. That's why we are continuing to invest decisively in digitalisation and AI." Meanwhile, a ten-member team in the Data-X department (the abbreviation stands for Data Experience) is working on developing and continuously advancing models and solutions based on artificial intelligence (AI). Their main goal is to interlink all three digital twins in such a way that trans-o-flex's customers can benefit from this. Thömmes explains: "Then we will have a unique tool with which we can set new benchmarks in the logistics industry. This is because through the introduction of the interconnected digital twin, we are creating a dynamic, data-driven representation of our entire transport and logistics process. This is a genu-

ine innovation in the area of supply chain transparency and efficiency enhancement." This could be realised as early as the end of the year. But even now, the existing twins or their preliminary stages are already providing a wide range of optimisation approaches.

"The mapping of a core process cannot be developed in a single step, but is assembled from the mapping of individual sub-processes. We already benefited from these parts last year," recalls Thömmes. "One of the biggest advances we have achieved is increased planning reliability for our collection and delivery routes." Based on historical data that has been recorded, stored, and analysed, the system now makes reliable predictions regarding the quantities that a location will need to collect or distribute in the next two weeks. This makes it easier for the trans-o-flex branches to allocate the right number of vehicles for the respective daily volume. "The system also recognises here that, over the past five years, a particular calendar week has always seen two major customer campaigns resulting in a precisely measured increase in volume – and it accurately factors in such seasonal fluctuations. Moreover, the longer a digital twin exists, the larger its data base and the more accurate its predictions or recommendations become." >>



The two younger digital twins in the trio do not yet offer their own recommendations; future upgrades of the AI solution will enable this. However, a dashboard based on historical data can already be used for the purpose of analysis and simulation by those responsible. Thömmes explains: “It helps us, for example, to get closer to providing ideal sorting each day. Ideal sorting means that we sort and load all consignments by the set time, employing exactly as much staff as is necessary – no more, no less.”

In order to achieve this, the warehouse manager can, for instance, now already simulate the ideal operating time of the sorter based on the number of consignments. “If the sorter is running very quickly, we require more staff to load and unload the goods – and if there isn’t enough volume, the staff may have periods of inactivity. Conversely, if a sorter runs too slowly, it may save energy, but there is a risk that not all the goods will be processed in time.” In order to determine the ideal combination, decision-makers can adjust parameters such as staff numbers, the sorter speed, shift start time, or volume on the terminal handling digital twin’s dashboard – and immediately see how the other values change, and how the optimum levels are reached. “In order to be able to do this reliably on a site-specific basis, each site was mapped individually in this twin, for instance with regard to the number of loading gates, the speed of the sorter, the number of sorting points or the available storage space.”

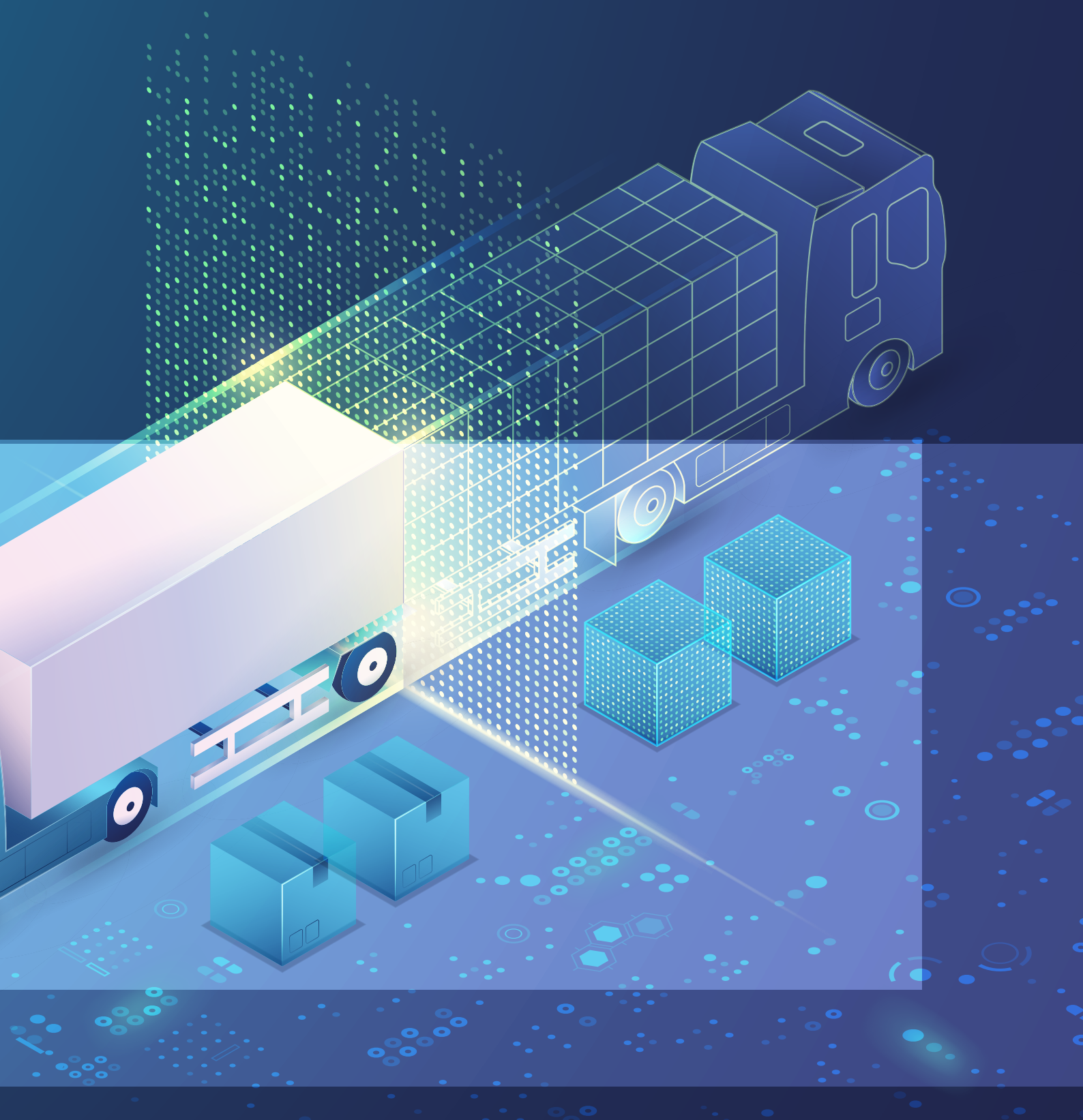
While each digital twin now stores additional data in daily practice, the Data-X team is working on the networking of the various sub-solutions. “This then represents a huge leap to the next, holistic level of optimisation,” says Thömmes. This is because each individual digital twin has so far helped to optimise the processes in its own area, as the integration of all three twins should make it possible to optimise the overall process. “This might mean, for example, that the long-haul module uses two delivery vans instead of a 7.5-tonne truck because they are faster. The increased output for the shipment could be more than offset due to the fact we potentially need fewer staff for the sorting process.”

Thömmes believes that trans-o-flex is already at the forefront of the development of AI-controlled solutions in the logistics sector thanks to its digital twin solutions for individual process areas. “By linking the individual solutions, we are moving into pole position.” The goal is to achieve holistic process optimisation in order to simulate the entire logistics process in real time and make well-informed decisions based on real data. “We can then precisely predict what impact a new location will have on the flow of consignments in the network or how a delay to a lorry will affect the entire network – and take immediate countermeasures based on this.”



The improved transparency and holistic optimisation of the logistics chain, which is made possible by linking the individual digital twins, ultimately not only serves to improve the internal planning, but also has consequences for the service and cus-

tomers. “Through more precise forecasts and improved capacity management, we can optimise delivery times, reduce costs, and simultaneously further improve our levels of service quality.” ■





No temperature control

Pharmaceutical shipping: problems with returns and strikes

The most recent strike in postal services at the beginning of the year has once again underscored the problems associated with improper pharmaceutical shipments. Furthermore, pharmacists are complaining about returns that, despite recurring supply shortages, are destroyed, and for which they also do not receive any reimbursement. One pharmacist therefore contacted the specialised news portal for the pharmaceutical and pharmacy market, Apotheke Adhoc. “We had a return with a request for a credit note which was not granted and was destroyed because we sent it back via the post instead of using trans-o-flex,” the portal quotes the pharmacist.

Eugen Günther has also heard of such cases. “The reason for the destruction is usually that an incorrect service provider or the wrong service was used,” explains trans-o-flex’s Chief Sales Officer. “If medicines are simply returned via a normal parcel service, all forms of temperature documentation are then absent. The manufacturer therefore has no way of knowing what conditions the goods have been exposed to and in many cases is forced to destroy the goods. This is because its efficacy may have been limited during transport.” Only if temperature documentation is available can the manufacturer compare the stability data with the transport conditions and decide on this basis whether the efficacy could have been impaired by transport or not.

Günther's tip is therefore: "To avoid any risks, pharmacies should always consider whether they are shipping pharmaceuticals that require cold chain transportation, and then commission the trans-o-flex service Thermo Express." In this case, the consignments are actively temperature-controlled at 2 to 8°C during transport. "If the goods are not subject to cold chain requirements, then the Ambient Express service, where the goods are transported at temperatures of between 15 and 25 degrees Celsius, should be used." In both service variants, regular temperature mapping is used to determine and document the temperatures to which the goods were exposed during transport. If it is a collection order from the manufacturer or shipper, however, the pharmacy is relieved, adds Günther. "In that case, the manufacturer automatically selects the required service variant."

In another article, Apotheke Adhoc reported that "due to the strike by the Deutsche Post, parcels in delivery vehicles were left in the cold. Customers not only received their medication with a delay, in some cases liquid medicines even froze in the sub-zero temperatures – with fever syrups being particularly affected." The specialist portal backs this up with specific cases of patients, before adding: "In terms of the pharmaceutical safety, it is fortunate that the postal strike occurred in winter

rather than at higher temperatures. If medications are not kept sufficiently cool during transport, they can have their efficacy altered or even lost. The problem is that heat damage is not externally visible on most preparations."



Read the complete article on the impact of strikes on pharmaceutical shipping here: bit.ly/artikel_adhoc
(only available in German)



"If medicines are simply returned via a normal parcel service, all forms of temperature documentation are then absent."

Eugen Günther, Chief Sales Officer

Steinach, Bavaria

March 2024



April 2024



May 2024



June 2024



September 2024



New location in Bavaria

Capacity increased, further synergies created

Work on the construction of a new trans-o-flex site in Bavaria is now entering the final stages. The main contractor handed over the sorting centre to trans-o-flex in a turnkey condition in November. The final step involves the installation of the parcel sorting system, scheduled for completion in April, followed by extensive testing of the system. The operations are scheduled to start in mid-May.

The new site is located in Steinach, directly on the A3 motorway between Regensburg and Deggendorf. "By means of the investment in the transshipment hub we not only increase our capacities, but also generate further synergies between our two networks," explains trans-o-flex CEO Martin Reder. "In Steinach, trans-o-flex Express and trans-o-flex ThermoMed will operate under one roof." In the fully temperature-controlled transshipment hub, a larger area is designated for ambient shipments (15 to 25°C) and a smaller area for refrigerated goods that are handled and transported at temperatures of 2 to 8°C.

Parcels are sorted on an automatic conveyor system designed for up to 4,200 parcels per hour, which simultaneously measures both the volume and weight of the consignments. 29 gates for lorries and 79 gates for delivery vans facilitate the simultaneous loading and unloading of more than 100 vehicles.

December 2024



Emergency preparedness

ThermoMed pledges further support

trans-o-flex ThermoMed has once again confirmed its commitment to supporting the Federal Republic of Germany in the area of civilian emergency preparedness. Earlier, the Federal Office for Logistics and Mobility (BALM) had routinely in December sought commitments for such support. BALM, on behalf of the Federal Government, compiles the logistics capacities available in the event of war or crisis to supply the population and the armed forces.

trans-o-flex ThermoMed is especially important in the supply area due to its nationwide refrigerated transport capabilities with active temperature control, and at the end of 2024, it was listed as one of BALM's approved providers. trans-o-flex Express is also a partner in civilian emergency preparedness. However, the status is reviewed by the authority at another time.



Security

Four sites are awarded new TAPA certificates

trans-o-flex has already received new TAPA certificates for four sites this year. Cologne, Driedorf, St. Ingbert and Nuremberg were successfully re-certified in February according to the rigorous standards of the global shippers' organisation. The certificates confirming compliance with the TAPA FSR 2023 C standard are now valid for a further three years. The Transported Asset Protection Association (TAPA) developed its FSR security standards specifically for the handling of goods that are susceptible to theft or of very high value. The Facility Security Requirements (FSR) are based on proven practices and successful methods from various industries in order to enable the highest security standards in the field of logistics. They demonstrably reduce the risks of damage or theft of transported goods.



Companies that support the Federal Republic of Germany's civilian emergency preparedness as partners receive a certificate like this.



European network expanded

Making use of major growth opportunities in Turkey!

Through EURODIS, the European transport network for parcels and pallets, trans-o-flex customers can now also export consignments to Turkey. "In Aras Kargo, we have gained a new partner that covers the entire country, allowing us to help our customers tap into the Turkish market with its significant growth potential," says Kerstin Böhm, Head of International Sales at trans-o-flex. In addition to transportation, the majority-owned subsidiary of Austrian Post AG also handles customs clearance for shipments.

According to its own figures, Aras Kargo employs 16,000 staff in Turkey and operates 5,000 vehicles. The backbone of its physical transport network consists of 28 hubs and 50 distribution centres, ensuring nationwide consignment distribution. One of the company's key features is the fact that Aras Kargo has built up a network of 4,600 out-of-home delivery locations, including 1,000 Aras branches,

more than 2,300 Aras Burasi shops, and Aras Burasi parcel lockers. Recipients can collect their orders and drop off their own shipments or returns at these stations. This network represents an especially vital service given Turkey's rapidly growing e-commerce sector.

With a population of approximately 85 million, Turkey has roughly the same number of inhabitants as Germany. However, the country is more than twice as large in terms of area. Despite its considerable size, 97% of the country enjoys internet coverage. This, combined with one of the youngest populations in the world and around 100 million active credit cards (more than the total population!), makes Turkey a highly e-commerce-friendly market. Moreover, nearly one-third of the population lives in just three major cities: Istanbul (16 million), Ankara (6 million), and Izmir (5 million). This urban concentration facilitates



Aras Kargo handles the transportation of both parcels and palletised goods.



Aras Kargo operates Turkey's largest fleet of electric vehicles. The first vehicles were purchased in 2011, and the fleet has been growing ever since.

rapid and efficient delivery to a significant share of the population. As a result, e-commerce in Turkey grew by 43% in 2022 and by 22% in 2023.

In addition to a rapidly growing B2C market, Turkey also offers huge opportunities for B2B trade. Most exports from Turkey go to Germany, while Germany ranks third behind Russia and China in terms of imports. "The entire customs clearance for consignments usually takes no longer than a day," explains Böhm. Including customs clearance, a EURODIS consignment from Germany to Turkey (or vice versa) takes about seven days on average. In the case of deliveries to eastern Turkey, the standard transit time can be up to ten days.

"This allows us to achieve a highly competitive transit time for road transport, which we can further reduce as shipment volumes increase and more direct routes are established." Right from the start, customers could benefit from the significantly more favourable transport prices compared to air freight. Böhm is convinced: "Our solution is particularly attractive for customers shipping heavier consignments, parcels, pallets, or bulky goods."



Carsten Wallmann leads Aras Kargo

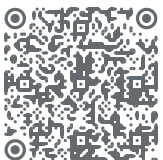
Carsten Wallmann has been CEO of the Turkish company Aras Kargo since October 2020. Born in 1973, Wallmann studied law in Freiburg and earned a doctorate in corporate law in Heidelberg. Before joining Austrian Post as Head of Strategy and Corporate Development in 2011, he worked as a consultant at McKinsey for eight years. Since April 2014, he has been Vice President for Turkey and

the CEE countries (Central and Eastern European countries) at Austrian Post. In 2013, Austrian Post AG acquired a 25% stake in Aras Kargo. Through a purchase option, Austrian Post was able to acquire a total of 80 per cent of the shares in Aras Kargo a few years later.

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