

Logistik Life⁵

English Excerpt

Austrian Postal System

Messer

COOP

WANKO

Austrian Mail - Powered by Wanko

The Austrian Postal System's transport logistics are controlled by the PraCar route planning system and the PraBord telematics solution from Wanko, from dispatching to route feedback and invoicing. Even in times of crisis, the solution proved to be absolutely fail-safe since a total of about 10 years.



The dimensions are impressive: With more than 1,500 truck tours and a daily mileage of over 280,000 kilometers, Österreichische Post AG is by far the largest carrier in the Alpine Republic. All 379 branches and each of the 1,350 postal partners, every delivery base and, in addition, a number of corporate customers, are served daily within fixed time windows. To cope with this task, 10 parcel and 6 mail logistics centers have been established in Austria.



Extraordinarily Resilient

The entire scheduling logistics has been based on Wanko's Pracar route planning system since 2014. A system failure would

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have serious consequences. As far as the stability of the software solution is concerned, however, Austrian Post is very relaxed. „Even in 2020, when we were working at the limits of our capacity due to the enormous increase in parcel volumes, our Pracar transport software ran like clockwork,“ recalls Andreas Schulreich, who has been in charge of the system on behalf of Austrian Post since 2019 - at that time, the number of daily tours was still around 1,100. „So far, I have not experienced any failure that was at the fault of Wanko. I attribute this extraordinary resilience to Wanko's many years of experience with major customers,“ continues Schulreich, whose responsibilities include the logistics center in Allhaming.

There, the Austrian Postal Service put a 50,000-square-meter, 80-million-euro expansion into operation in October 2022. Since then, the maximum sorting capacity has been 30,500 parcels per hour. Allhaming is thus the largest parcel logistics center in Austria. From here alone, an average of 260 tours start every day, which are formed on the basis of blueprint tours the day before by just four dispatchers. In addition, there are 2 to 15 special tours for corporate customers, which are only created on the day of delivery.

Individual work

„Pracar is very user-friendly and easy to understand for any employee with knowledge of Outlook and Excel. In addition, colleagues can work very individually without fixed workflows and can set their screen masks according to their needs, depending on their area of responsibility,“ explains Werner Kreimer, who as transport logistics manager is responsible for the „Central“ region - consisting of Upper Austria and Styria. While the dispatchers need detailed information for each order, simplified input screens for recording quantities and loading meters are sufficient for the warehouse staff in loading.

The planning processes running in the background, on the other hand, are very complex and took up a lot of space during the software implementation in 2014. „Wanko did a lot of development work for us,“ confirms Thomas Fellner, who

manages transport logistics throughout Austria. After all, a large part of the tours is completed by articulated trains whose trailers are parked at strategic locations in between. Such stops can easily be mapped in Pracar. As a further example, Fellner mentions various constellations of encounter transports, in which sometimes the entire truck is exchanged, but in other cases only individual swap bodies with letter mail or parcels.



Österreichische Post AG

Österreichische Post AG is an internationally active postal, logistics and services group. ÖPAG bundles its business activities in three divisions: Mail & Advertising, Parcel & Logistics and Branch & Banking. Internationally, Austrian Post has a selective presence in the markets of Germany, seven countries in Central and Eastern Europe and Turkey.

more info at www.post.at



Open for Special Requests

„In any case, it is important that the handover of containers or vehicles is also tracked on the handhelds,” confirms Kreimer, who has fond memories of pro-

„The implementation of PraCar and PraBord at Austrian Post went well and we have not regretted the decision for Wanko.”

ject handling and cooperation with Wanko. „The implementation of PraCar and PraBord at Austrian Post went well and we have not regretted the decision for Wanko,” says the regional manager. He said that it play-

ed a big role in the tender that Austrian Post is seen as a very important partner at Wanko. „Wanko was willing to accommodate our numerous special requests,” Kreimer affirms.

The very complex software adjustments are not noticeable to the user: creating a tour with PraCar is simple in principle. All that needs to be done is to assign the driver and the pick-up and delivery orders. The data is then sent to one of the approximately 1,000 „Bluebird” handhelds with which all vehicles and drivers have been equipped. Each terminal is equipped with the PraBord telematics app, also developed by Wanko. The solution differentiates between Austrian Post’s permanent drivers and those of the freight forwarders. While the „own drivers” receive the tour data directly after logging in on the handheld, the drivers of

the subcontractors have to scan the respective tour report for it. „This distinction was necessary because we do not know the drivers used by the carrier beforehand,” emphasizes Günter Pfann, who is the group manager for goods transport and logistics in Allhaming. Even the 150 or so post-owned trucks are not always driven by the same chauffeur. The trucks, which are deployed in three shifts, drive for up to 14 hours a day and are driven by up to 12 different drivers.



Fast Recapture

Their tasks include not only driving, but also recording data on the handheld. This primarily involves the exact data of the parcels picked up en route, which are then immediately available in the system for further disposition. „In the past, this data entry was laboriously carried out by colleagues in the office after the driver had completed his tour,” recalls Pfann.

When the tour is running, the handheld also transmits the GPS data back to PraCar so that the actual kilometers driven

can be calculated on this basis. This value, in turn, forms the basis for invoicing the freighters, who are remunerated using the credit note procedure. Here, again, PraCar plays a key role in the entire process chain and ensures greatly simplified processes. „Drivers no longer have to manually record mileage readings, which has eliminated a major source of error,” says dispatcher Jürgen Pillinger, who is responsible for all billing with all carriers in Austria in addition to his planning activities.

For Upper Austria alone, this involves seven-digit amounts that have to be transferred reliably and quickly to the transport partners.



Quickly Amortized

Conclusion: The rational billing with the freighters and the back recording of the tours carried out via Bluebird alone has ensured a rapid amortization of the investment at Austrian Post. „Without PraCar and PraBord, we could not possibly manage our workload in Allhaming with just four dispatchers,” Kreimer is convinced. However, the project was not only about costs, but above all about quality. With the help of the data collected in PraCar, for

example, a punctuality report can be created at any time and, thanks to traceability, accusations against drivers can be quickly refuted in case of doubt.

Marcus Walter
Independent Journalist



Messer does it better: tours and billing optimization

Messer, the specialist for industrial, medical and specialty gases, optimises its delivery logistics throughout Europe with the PraGas and PraCar tour planning systems and the integrated PraBord telematics solution from Wanko. This reduces logistics costs by 3 to 5 percent and significantly speeds up invoicing.



A poached peach on vanilla ice cream: this is an obvious association when you think about the Messer Group's transport and fleet management system. The system bears the internal name MELBA, which stands for „Messer European Logistics Bulk Application“. In fact, the family-owned company has already been using the solution programmed by Wanko in 12 European countries since 2004 to optimise gas transports with tank trailers and cylinders. The list ranges comprises Germany, Austria, Hungary, France and Switzerland to Poland, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Romania, Serbia and the Benelux countries. Other countries are to follow successively.

„We want to work with a central database and comparable key figures throughout Europe,“ explains Markus Renner, who is in charge of the tour planning system in Messer's logistics department. The strategic importance of MELBA for the Messer Group is „very great, which

requires a high availability of the solution. „If MELBA doesn't work, then we have considerable problems, especially if the downtime lasts for days,“ Maik Otto, who is responsible for pro-

cess optimisation at the Messer Group, sums it up.

Who is Messer?

Messer was founded in 1898 and is today the world's largest family-run specialist for industrial, medical and specialty gases with around 11,000 employees. Products and services are offered in Europe, Asia and America under the brand name ‚Messer - Gases for Life‘. Today, the Messer family of shareholders is represented in the group in the third generation by Stefan Messer, CEO, and by his son Marcel Messer, management consultant. The international activities are managed from Bad Soden near Frankfurt am Main.

Messer Group, together with CVC Capital Partners Fund VII („CVC“), has acquired the majority of the gases business of Linde AG in North America as well as individual business activities of Linde and Praxair in South America through the joint venture Messer Industries GmbH with effect from 1st of March 2019. Over the next few years, the joint venture is to be fully integrated into the family-owned Messer Group, creating a global gases group.

More info at www.messergroup.com

„Je nach Volumen können in jedem neuen Land mehrere LKW eingespart werden“

Thanks to central database: Messer optimises delivery logistics during Covid

Each country is responsible for its own transportation, as there are specific regulations in each region for the transport of gases, many of which are classified as dangerous goods. Thanks to the central database, however, Renner has an overview of the vehicles in use at all times. „During the Covid crisis, we were able to use it to make individual trucks available for other countries in order to avoid supply bottlenecks with medical oxygen,“ Renner recalls.

MELBA not only optimises the daily routes of more than 1,000 tanker trailers, but also takes into account the assignment of orders to vehicles and their order of arrival. Elaborate algorithms are used that have already proven themselves in various industries. The goal is to minimise not only the number of kilometres driven, but also the time required and thus increase the efficiency of delivery logistics. The situation is similar with the more than 300 trucks for the transport of cylinder gases, which are controlled by the PraCar tour planning system, also developed by Wanko. Maik Otto assumes that logistics costs will be reduced by around 3 to 5 per cent by optimising bulk and cylinder transports. „Depending on the volume, several trucks can be saved in each new country,“ reports

Renner, who wants to establish the solution in Slovenia in 2023 where 10 trucks are currently active. In some national companies, much greater effects could often be achieved.

Seamlessly integrated vehicles

Messer also works with freighters, usually paid on a per-kilometre basis under long-term contracts. While the tank trailers are generally provided by Messer, the tractor units belong to the contracted freighters. In order to seamlessly integrate the vehicles into the digital delivery process, the drivers have been gradually equipped with the Prabord telematics app, also developed by Wanko, since 2015. Prabord is an integrated component of the MELBA transport planning system, which in turn is connected to the SAP merchandise management system used at Messer.

The order data is transferred directly from MELBA to Prabord. The solution, programmed for Android devices, guides the drivers step by step through the delivery process, which only ends with the delivery receipt by the recipient. Only the measurement reports and the delivery notes for the customers still have to be printed out in the truck. To record the actual quantity delivered, the driver scans the barcode printed from the measurement report on the delivery note, thus avoiding transmission errors.

Automatically generated invoices

„PraBord was a revolution for us. It gives us not only the current position data and the actual kilometres driven, but also the delivery data - and that without delays and almost completely paperless,“ emphasises Renner, who illustrates the advantages using the example of the national subsidiary in Poland with its approximately 120 trucks: „In Poland, the drivers are often on the road for a whole week. When they return, they bring stacks of delivery notes with them, which then have to be entered manually.“ As in the other countries, this process will become obsolete with the introduction of PraBord. „With PraBord, the delivery data is transferred directly to SAP, which automatically generates the invoices,“ explains Otto.

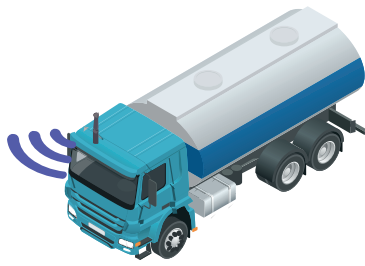
Automatic gas supply thanks to smart tanks

MELBA and Prabord not only simplify and accelerate invoicing



cing, but also the generation of orders. In the gas business, facilities and processes between customers and suppliers have always been intertwined. Many customers with large gas requirements rent the storage tanks that Messer installs at their sites. There are already more than 10,000 of these tanks across Europe. Around 70 per cent of these tanks are so-called „smart tanks“, which are equipped with level measuring devices and a SIM card: This allows for transmitting the current filling level automatically to the supplier. This function enables automated, efficient supply and optimised logistics.

Once a day, the current fill level is automatically transmitted to Messer via the mobile network. The logistics department knows the customer's consumption profile from the fill level data, which can be evaluated for optimised supply. If the system recognises, based on the integrated consumption forecast, that the customer-specific minimum quantity in the tank will be reached in the near future, MELBA automatically plans the supply to the customer in good time.



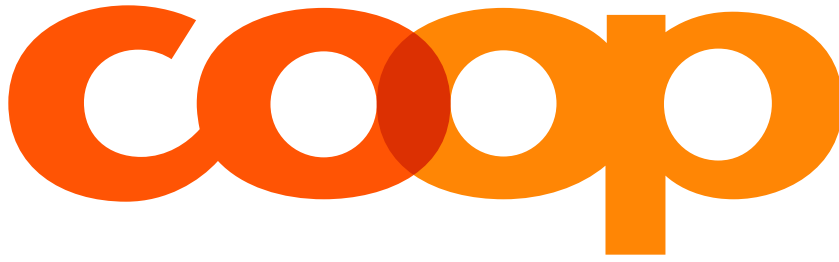
Shortest possible route

The responsible dispatcher then organises the delivery for one of the next days, with MELBA suggesting the optimal route. The tanker then travels to the various customers along the shortest possible route and with the most efficient distribution of the transported gas. „In our supply chain, we always have some flexibility for exceptional situations - for example, if unusually large quantities of gas have been consumed during an extra shift and supplies are needed immediately,“ Renner emphasises. „But we are most efficient when as many customers as possible are supplied automatically.“

Conclusion: Messer has already made great progress on the long road to the continuous digitalisation of all transports throughout Europe. Nevertheless, much remains to be done: around 3,000 remaining tanks need to be equipped with level indicators and some countries with the PraBord telematics solution. In addition, Spain, Bosnia, Albania, Bulgaria (and the Ukraine) are still dispatching without MELBA. So it will not be boring for Markus Renner and Maik Otto in the next few years. Nevertheless, they are relaxed about the tasks ahead. „We will continue to master all challenges together with Wanko in the future. Our cooperation is characterised by great trust.“

Marcus Walter
Independent Journalist





Same-day delivery At the Swiss online supermarket coop.ch, customers can have goods delivered on the same day they place their order, choosing from up to 30 time slots that are kept to the hour. Behind this is a route planning solution from Wanko.

Real shopping experiences are not only to be found in classy boutiques. At least, that's true when you order groceries, wine, spirits or everyday items from coop.ch. The Swiss online supermarket offers its customers a unique delivery service that is known to delight more than just the logistics experts among consumers. After all, since the introduction of order processing in 2013, the Coop subsidiary's sales and customer numbers have been growing significantly faster than the market. The recipe for success is fully automated dynamic route optimization using the „PraCar“ software solution from Wanko, which is constantly being further developed and improved.

During the online ordering process, customers can select a binding delivery date, which is then met to the hour - depending on the region and time of order, delivery takes place on the same day. This extremely high delivery quality is unrivaled in Switzerland. In total, customers can choose from up to 30 appointments within the following ten days for each order. For each day, there is a choice of morning, afternoon and evening appointments. Deliveries are made from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. in each case.

Permanent Dynamic Optimization

„For us, it was clear from the start that we could only implement hourly delivery on the day of the order with dynamic route planning,” reports coop.ch CEO Philippe Huwyler. „With PraCar, we were able to say goodbye to our previous concept of rigid framework tours and get optimal results with very high utilization rates of all trucks, despite extreme short-term planning,” Huwyler continues. He sees the weight control integrated into the tour planning, which prevents overloading of the vehicles, as a further advantage of the Wanko solution.

Every day, up to 5,500 customers are supplied with goods from the dry, fresh and frozen product ranges from the two logistics sites in Spreitenbach and Bussigny. The demands on central scheduling are correspondingly high. The solution concept implements dynamic route optimization for the individual tours and trucks. There is no fixed area allocation for the tours and around 250 delivery vehicles. Instead, the new orders that arrive during the course of the day are dynamically assigned to tours. The route planning server immediately

checks each desired delivery date for its impact or feasibility, even while the customer is still placing his order. As the order progresses, additional tours are opened. But there is also a permanent automatic optimization of the existing tours.

Two Dispatchers for 450 Tours

The approximately 450 tours per day are transmitted to the two warehouses in Spreitenbach and Bussigny two hours before the order acceptance deadline so that picking can start there early. In addition to the two distribution centers, coop.ch operates several distribution hubs that are supplied daily with pre-picked tours by direct transport from Spreitenbach.

But even after the start of picking, other orders keep arriving in the background. It can happen that orders have to be moved from one tour to another. In this case, PraCar automatically checks whether the change effort is worthwhile. The two dispatchers - in fact, the entire work is handled by just two employees by default - can intervene in the process at any time and set their own priorities.

Intervention possible at any time

A monitor shows for each area the utilization and the number of orders and vehicles for the next day. In addition, they can view the current tour situation on a map by selecting a delivery area. „If one of the dispatchers identifies any further optimization potential, he can manually intervene at any time and finally complete the respective tour,“ says Huwyler. At the latest after the order acceptance deadline, the tours are viewed and loading is released. In the course of this, the tours created are transferred to the SAP merchandise management system.

The degree of digitalization has been further increased in recent years: With the tour status concept, Wanko and coop.ch have now done away with all paperwork or Excel spreadsheets that are not absolutely necessary and streamlined processes. Information to be entered manually is always entered by the person who has the data. If a piece of information needs to be supplemented for the further process, the person in question is actively informed of this by the system. „It is always possible to see where we are in the process on the basis of a status and what the next work step is for a tour. Thanks to automated communication by e-mail, the persons responsible are also informed directly about the status change relevant to them,“ explains Peter Belau, who is responsible for the entire logistics software on the part of coop.

Complete route planning with one employee

For the dispatchers, this has greatly simplified the planning tasks. There is significantly less need for active communication, while transparency has increa-

sed. On this basis, the entire nationwide route planning for the household delivery business can at times be handled by just one employee.

When the order is completed, the tours are transferred to the mobile on-board computers via mobile communications. The telematics solution for this also comes from Wanko. The scanner integrated in the device ensures correct loading and unloading. The receipt is provided via signature on the display. Customers are always delighted with the „great ordering convenience and the reliability of the delivery service,“ reports Huwyler. This is all the more true since the Swiss are known worldwide for their love of punctuality. The minimal waiting times within the specified time windows are particularly positively highlighted. This makes it easier, especially for working people, to optimally plan the receipt of their delivery.

Unbureaucratic cooperation

However, the first positive impression of coop.ch is already made during the ordering process. This is because a click of the mouse and the display of the suggested time slots take place almost simultaneously. This is ensured by a road server improved in 2022, which carries out the distance and route calculations running in the background extremely quickly. These calculations form the most time-consuming process of an optimization and are also its basis. „Wanko has changed the processes so cleverly that our customers now have no waiting times at all,“ states Peter Belau.

Conclusion: The unique Pracar route planning system has been in productive use at coop.ch since the beginning of 2013. The service is very well received by customers in Switzerland and Liechtenstein. One of the reasons for this is that, apart from the delivery fee, there are no further costs for the time saved and the high level of convenience - the prices do not differ from those in the stores. Under these conditions, coop.ch's market share and sales will continue to grow.

Background Coop.ch: Founded in 2001, the online supermarket Coop.ch is part of the Swiss Coop Group. The consumer cooperative is one of the leading retail companies in Switzerland. Customers can choose online - at the same prices as in the store - from a range of more than 18,000 everyday articles and more than 2,000 special vintage wines, as well as over 450 select spirits.

With its own delivery fleet, Coop.ch offers hourly delivery on the same day as the order is placed. In many regions of Switzerland and Liechtenstein, customers can choose online from up to 30 delivery dates that are met to the hour.

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