

SUCCESS STORY



COTRA
AUTOTRANSPORT AG

COTRA and INFORM Optimize Used and Finished Vehicle Logistics

Going forward, COTRA Autotransport AG will be relying on INFORM's IT solutions at its vehicle logistics center in Studen in the canton of Bern, Switzerland.

COTRA Autotransport AG

COTRA Autotransport AG was established in 1965 as part of the corporate group Lagerhäuser der Centralschweiz AG. As a leading provider in Switzerland, COTRA operates across eight sites, providing automobile manufacturers, parking garages, subscription services and start-ups with services in the areas of vehicle transport, vehicle logistics, and vehicle preparation, as well as other innovative services. With 250 highly trained employees, around 100 vehicle transporters, internal rail access, and 6,000 open and covered parking spaces, COTRA delivers mobility closer to its customers' doors.

www.cotra.ch/en

This is the first time that the vehicle logistics systems developed by the global software company from Aachen will be used in Switzerland – following successful projects in seven other European countries, as well as the USA, Mexico, Saudi Arabia and Chile. The digitalization and optimization project aims to ensure full transparency of all vehicle logistics processes, greater efficiency based on algorithmically optimized work sequences, and improved flexibility with customers.

As a specialist for vehicle logistics and vehicle transport, COTRA in Switzerland counts among its customers not only car manufacturers but also dealerships, second-hand dealers, vehicle subscription services and other companies, providing these with a very broad range of upstream and downstream services.

At its vehicle logistics center in Studen alone, the company processes over 50,000 new and used vehicles annually. This includes handling the return of used hire cars, company, leased and subscription vehicles, as well as inspections, technical and optical preparation, maintenance, and customer-specific PDI (pre-delivery inspections), customs clearance, cleaning, storage and transport of vehicles. The new systems from INFORM, which are based on operations research and artificial intelligence, are set to make complex logistics processes even more flexible and transparent

Individual workflows tailored to customer requirements

According to Hartmut Haubrich, Vehicle Logistics Director at INFORM: "Vehicle logistics in general and the high-growth used car market in particular are known for having to meet customer requirements that often change at very short notice. In many cases, our customers need to be able to map new process steps for all vehicles of a particular manufacturer or for specific models within just a matter of days. Our algorithms are designed for dynamic process planning and optimization in real time."



At COTRA, the INFORM's vehicle logistics system will, in the near future, take care of the optimized allocation of vehicle movements to employees, selection of parking spaces and the sequencing of selected tasks in the workshop. Vehicle movements or the unloading of trains are, for example, planned according to priority, availability of required resources, and impact on adjacent processes. If, say, an employee drives a vehicle from A to B within the parking space, this person is next assigned a task (where possible) that begins close to the last parking spot so as to minimize walking distances.

A variety of other optimization logics are integrated into the system, while COTRA can also configure and implement its own workflows at any time. Each task is documented by the employees themselves using a mobile application, which ensures that transparent data is available for subsequent planning, as well as controlling, billing, and communication with customers.

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Future-proof and resilient

With over 180,000 vehicles transported each year, around 45 percent of all cars on Swiss roads have, at some stage, passed through the hands of COTRA's more than 250 employees.

According to Remo Sollberger, Works Manager of the Vehicle Logistics Center in Studen: "One of our unique selling points is that we've been making all of our customers' individual requirements a reality for 55 years. Changing customer requirements motivated us to rethink our processes and systems and to consistently drive digitalization forward. This is how we came into contact with INFORM GmbH and, after a pilot project, we were satisfied that their software solution was the one for us. Once it is implemented, we'll be in a position make our processes even more customized, dynamic, and transparent to plan, control, and analyze. This allows us to create even more significant added value for our customers and supports our forward strategy in vehicle logistics."

If you would like to know more, we look forward to hearing from you:

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