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December 2018



04. LOGISTICS 4.0

Schweizerzug is ready for the future

07. TIME MANAGEMENT

Efficiency through forward planning

11. SERVICE EXPANSION

More connections for Frenkendorf

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Move.

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WE NEED A LEVEL PLAYING FIELD!



Dear Readers,

The biggest container terminal in Switzerland will soon be built in Basel: Gateway Basel Nord (GBN). This is where container handling in international freight traffic with Switzerland will be dealt with in future. Right in the middle of the city of Basel, which is already heavily congested. Behind the project are the Swiss government and SBB: three-quarters of the overall costs of over CHF 260 million will be subsidised by the government (from taxes). Most of the remaining quarter is to be financed by SBB Cargo as majority shareholder. According to the plans laid by the government and SBB the first phase of the giant terminal is to start operations in 2020.

I am against the project. As president and delegate of the Board of Swissterminal AG – and also as a Swiss citizen and taxpayer. The state-aided GBN project will not only destroy a competitive environment that has worked extremely well up to now, but will also jeopardise a functioning supply chain, because in the end the private operators and the existing infrastructure will be driven out of the market. GBN creates a central and state-controlled monopoly – against the interests of customers and consumers. And I have to protest.

Swissterminal is a family company in the canton of Baselland, founded by my father almost fifty years ago. The fact that Swissterminal is now one of the biggest and most successful service providers on the Swiss container terminal market is also due to the fact that we have always adapted to the de-

mands of the market and the competition ever since we started up, and we have developed with the market. I would say: we are accustomed to competition and can cope with it on account of our long years of experience.

We need a level playing field for everybody if competition is going to work. But Gateway Basel Nord creates an unlevel playing field; it puts a huge, centralist project over and above all other market players with state aid of millions. What disturbs me is that Gateway Basel Nord, thanks to its close connection with the state, has privileges that are not available to private operators – from financing to privileges in the operating field. The government has already promised Gateway Basel Nord subsidies amounting to millions, and very generously at that. Private companies can only rub their eyes.

For me, Gateway Basel Nord stands for state monopoly instead of free enterprise, for state privilege instead of fair competition. I have to protest. Thank you for your interest.

Best regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Roman Mayer". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Roman Mayer

President and Delegate of the Board of Swissterminal

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■ **AS EASY AS BOOKING A FLIGHT**

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Jürg Wiggli, COO of Swissterminal AG, is celebrating 35 years of service with the company this year. He originally intended to work there only for a short time, but it all turned out differently. Read more!



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We are delighted to be able to congratulate colleagues with long years of service behind them again in this issue. In addition, praise is due for an excellent sporting achievement.



■ **IMPRINT**

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Digital has already become a mainstay in our daily lives – whether it's from how we communicate to how we shop, from our cars to the light switches in our homes. Even our travel agent of old has long since been replaced by the digital travel office – we can take an evening to book our next trip in the comfort of our own living room.

But it isn't just our private lives that have undergone this digital transformation – it's also increasingly influencing the business world and our working lives. The advent of the digital age is fundamentally changing everything from the stream of goods to the flow of information, and offers enormous savings potential through more streamlined and efficient processes. Similar to how "Industry 4.0" is changing the manufacturing world, "Logistics 4.0" is transforming the logistics industry through the networking and integration of processes, objects and delivery chain partners and customers.

For the past several years, Schweizerzug AG has been working full speed ahead to develop innovative digital solutions for its customers. Over the next year, the Swiss-based rail container transport company will be introducing a modern online reservation and booking platform. The goal: to better facilitate and expedite the container booking process for individual trains and routes for Schweizerzug customers and partners. The new booking system will work much like one of the many popular websites we use today to book our summer vacation or next flight: customers can register by setting up their company profile in the Schweizerzug system. After the initial registration, booking a shipment will be as easy as booking a flight – freeing up customers' time and resources.

Container reservations and bookings – and more

The new platform offers more than just the tools necessary for booking a container for transport. Customers can also use the platform to purchase additio-

nal services such as weighing services from external partners such as Swissterminal AG. Document and information management is also available online – for example, forms like the customs declaration form T1 or a shipment weight declaration form can be downloaded. Similarly, uploading customs and dangerous goods documents (DGD) is just as fast and easy – which means users can finalise the booking and documentation process in one step.

Transparent transport

Alongside the advantages Schweizerzug's new system will bring in terms of more booking efficiency, it will also offer more transparency for customers. The new platform will allow both Schweizerzug agents and customers access to real-time data on the location and status of their containers and shipments. Schweizerzug's entire fleet of railcars is already equipped with GPS devices that facilitate exact, real-time tracking. Not only will customers know the exact location of their shipment at all times – they'll also be able to confirm a shipment's status – for example, if it's currently in the loading process at either an inland terminal or seaport.

Schweizerzug's digital infrastructure – from GPS trackers to the new online platform – is designed to deliver maximum performance and the highest level of services and seamless cooperation to users, whether they're internal or external partners. Whether a customer prefers to communicate via email or its own internal messaging system – the new platform can be individually tailored to each company's unique set of communication requirements.

Schweizerzug is currently collaborating with a handful of clients in a pilot project to finetune the new platform, which will ensure the highest level of usability and efficiency when the booking platform officially launches and becomes accessible for all clients in the first quarter of 2019.

HE'S COME TO STAY

Things didn't quite happen according to plan: When Juerg Wiggli, the COO of Swissterminal AG, started his first day at the company, he was just back from a long stint abroad – and already had his bags packed for the next trip. But as John Lennon once said, "Life is what happens while you're making other plans", and he decided to stay. As Juerg Wiggli marks his 35th anniversary with Swissterminal this year, he joined us for a look back.



Jürg Wiggli,
COO, Swissterminal AG

Mr. Wiggli, you were a dyed-in-the-wool globetrotter back in the 1980s. So what made you decide to join Swissterminal back then, on August 15, 1983?

JW: I had just returned to Switzerland from a longer trip abroad – in Saudi Arabia and Algeria. And actually, I was only planning on spending three months here to work, save some money up and then hit the road again. A colleague of mine told me that Swissterminal was a good place to work, and I was lucky that they hired me.

What was your very first job at Swissterminal?

Initially, I was hired to do container repair work. But back then, we also had our own vehicle fleet, so instead I started driving lorries – in addition to doing tractor and chassis repairs, and eventually added driving of forklift and cranes to the list.

Which means you learned the terminal operation business from the bottom up.

Yes, exactly (*laughing*) – but the one thing they've never let me do is get near the bookkeeping / accounting!

After that, your career with Swissterminal really took off.

I can remember it like it was yesterday: It was Christmas Eve 1997, and I got a call from then-vice director, Ueli Winkler. He briefed me on a host of different problems confronting our operations in Basel, and his marching orders were clear: he wanted me to go to Basel that very next week, and told me I wouldn't regret it. So I went to Basel. And on January 1, 2002, I took on the role of general manager for all of the group's terminals and depots.

What was the next step?

Starting in 2000, we started seeing a generational shift in the company and an overall modernisation of the corporate structure. In 2006, I was promoted to senior management. Shortly thereafter, we introduced a quality management system at Swissterminal and instituted ISO certification.

What were the main issues impacting the business back then?

When I first started at Swissterminal, the industry shift towards containerisation was already well underway. We saw continuous traffic growth – year on year, it was an average of between 10 to 20 percent growth.



Back then, we handled container traffic on-site for around 135 shipping companies. With all of the consolidation and market adjustments our industry has seen in the intervening years, that's nowadays down to only 20 companies! Parallel to that, we've also seen a reduction in the number of feeder tracks – back then, it was 70 or 80, whereas today, I can count the number of tracks on two hands.

In which aspect do you think our business has changed the most?

I would say that our business today is the product of many converging elements. A lot of industries and companies have, in the meantime, moved away from Switzerland; parallel to that, we've also seen a shift, at least in part, from rail to road transport. And then there's the still the all-mighty "greed is good" culture paired with enormous cost pressures. One example: in earlier times, when you repaired a container, you also had to ensure that the new paint matched exactly with the container's existing paint job – even if that meant repainting the edges and rims so that the container looked good. Nowadays, you couldn't imagine that a company would go to that kind of expense.

What are the key issues today?

Alongside the need to control costs, we're also seeing ever stronger pressure to consolidate everything under one roof. Regulatory pressure is increasing – there are ever more requirements guiding how we do business, and most of these make

sense – whether they're regulating for health and safety, anti-terrorism or environmental protection. But oftentimes, there's a huge amount of expense and effort involved to come into compliance with new regulations. For companies like Swissterminal that take regulatory compliance as seriously as we do, this of course directly impacts our bottom line. But we're also seeing some positive developments industrywide, too.

Could you give us an example?

Let's look at the area of communications. Today, train disposition management can be done easily via computer. Back when I started, we were working with hard copy disposition lists and documents. The digitalisation of our business comes with a lot of pluses: we can optimise processes, which overall saves money for all partners. But in order to take full advantage of this digital potential, we need to have predictability. For example – when you decide to fly somewhere, you don't just show up at the airport and hop on the plane. You have to book the flight in advance and reserve your seat. The same is true for our industry and company – timely planning in advance is advantageous.

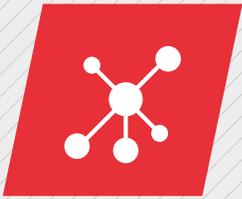
What are some of the advantages?

Whether we're talking about lorries, trains or barges, carriers profit from a faster turnover – that's in regards to both time and cost savings. And as a terminal operator, we can, in turn, better plan our resources. You need to have the ability to plan how you're going to use an expensive piece of infrastructure – and infrastructure operators need to better optimise their processes. Because one thing is clear – there was and will always be transport and trade – no matter what form it takes in the future.

Thank you very much for this conversation.

Resources can be applied more efficiently through slot booking.





EFFICIENT OPERATIONAL PROCESSES – AND ALL PARTIES SAVE ON COSTS

Regardless of whether it involves a truck, a barge or a train, waiting times and congestion at container terminals lead to extra work, loss of time and significant extra costs for everyone involved. Swissterminal AG has developed a system for faster and more reliable processes.

Efficient processes in freight handling mean that supply chain procedures can be simplified and cost savings made, and here, digitalisation of work procedures in particular can make a crucial difference. Swissterminal AG is aiming to offer its customers and partners the best possible solutions for anything concerning freight handling and is constantly pressing ahead with digitalising its work processes for this reason. The company already demonstrated its pioneering spirit in 2016 with the introduction of electronic slot-booking for truck loads. Since trucks have had to register before collecting or delivering a container, the terminals have been practically free of congestion. This practice has in the meantime also been established at major European ports, for the truck companies value the ability to plan ahead and the time savings as much as the terminal operators do.

On registration at Swissterminal the flow of trucks is regulated so that throughput time can be considerably reduced and loading stations used more efficiently. But if slot management is to be optimised in all respects, all modes of transport need to be included. Only then can information on, for example, delivery volumes, capacity at loading stations, production needs, priorities, storage capacity and transfers be incorporated in optimal planning procedures.

Time slot management for all modes of transport

It is with this in mind that Swissterminal is constantly developing all processes: what has been successfully used for trucks is now being used for barges and freight trains. To organise the handling of freight to be as efficient as possible, new standards will be in force in the future, laying the foundation for efficient slot management that takes all modes of transport into consideration. Management of time slots that covers all modes of transport will then become a projectable link between the different modes and enable a well-ordered logistic process to be created with advantages for all parties. The rules are constantly being improved on the basis of regular coordination meetings with all parties involved. This also includes the subject of extra expenses, which will be charged to the account of those responsible for impeding or preventing terminal planning.

TRUCKS

For trucks, this means in concrete terms that advance notice is obligatory at the „Registration“ booking platform for all truck collections and deliveries. Here the basic rules and regulations of the „Registration Agreement“ made between the



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transport company in question and Swissterminal AG apply, as does the information in „Instructions for Slot booking WEB“.

BARGES

Constant delays in the maritime ports and incidents with far-reaching effects such as the disruptions at Rastatt and Melzo make the planning of barge handling difficult. Both this and also the misuse of the registration procedure by no-shows have led in the past to phases when available time slots for trucks at the Basel terminal are in short supply. For this reason Swissterminal recently set up an electronic registration system for container traffic at the container terminals in Basel and Birsfelden. The company is now in a position to offer more efficient handling procedures through digitalisation also on the Rhine with the RheinPorts Information System (RPIS). By joining RPIS and accepting the terms of the generally agreed rules and regulations, the inland waterway sector is now also taking its place as a necessary element in a functional slot management system. Customers have the benefit of a uniform booking system for inland shipping, exchange of data on the location of containers in real time and electronic customs clearance.

The handling of barges is based on RPIS rules, complemented if necessary by the rules on the overall slot management regulations for carriers.

All vessels and container movements will be registered with the Swissterminal terminals via RPIS. If ships are not registered, they can only be handled when an unreserved slot is available and the resources for carrying out the handling are to hand. Inland waterway carriers who do not offer regular services to the Rhine ports terminals have the possibility of registering through the terminals as guests of RPIS.

As a rule, registration of barge services to the terminals via RPIS are handled according to the principle of first come, first served.

RAIL

Similar rules apply for the rail sector. Although the allocation of slots for the handling of rail consignments at terminals is always made according to the available timetable, depending on what slots are available, there can be delays especially on longer routes. Volatility in volumes to be carried can also affect the planning. Swissterminal combats this with fixed planning of reserve slots and more flexible shunting arrangements, and the introduction of new regulations when the timetable changes on 9 December 2018 will lead to lasting improvements in the railway sector of terminal planning. In the terminal track area, the operating regulations apply, as well as the Swiss railway act and the relevant decrees, standards, guidelines and codes of practice.

The principle of trimodal capacity management is designed so that all parties concerned can benefit by improving their ability to plan ahead. Good cooperation is based on communication – and Swissterminal AG fully appreciates the value of feedback from its customers and partners. For suggestions and further details on the new regulations, please email to sales@swissterminal.com.



More about RPIS?
Scan and read more.



Image copyright: Rotterdam World Gateway

COOPERATION TO FIND A SOLUTION

It doesn't get more state-of-the-art than this: At the Rotterdam World Gateway (RWG) terminal in Europe's largest seaport, Rotterdam, every single process from A to Z has been automated. The terminal, which launched in September 2015, operates 24 | 7. But despite modern technology: There were some operational problems earlier this year.

Automation technology is to thank for this high level of ultra-modern cargo container processing at the RWG terminal in Rotterdam. But the technology and processes that functioned perfectly in theory weren't performing as expected earlier this year. Due to a large, deep-sea service swap of THE Alliance at the start of May 2018, RWG encountered several resulting operational challenges with its rail handling activities. A large export call was replaced by a large import call at RWG. Both the terminal operator and rail operators serving the terminal had to adjust in relatively short order to this change in volume mix – less export, more import – at the terminal. Due to the resulting capacity constraints, Schweizerzug had to put an indefinite stop on im-

port bookings in July 2018. Export bookings weren't impacted by the changes and continued normal operations. One especially critical problem was the terminal's inability to process import rail cargo during this phase.

Together with RWG, train operators Optimodal and Swissterminal were working around the clock and implemented a host of measures to identify and troubleshoot the terminal's operational problems. The first step was to gain a better understanding of each partner's business processes and challenges. Partners cooperated closely to pinpoint the issues that contributed to the operational hiccups. RWG focused on optimising its overall rail programme,

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and Optimodal and Swissterminal focused on improving punctuality for arriving trains. Both companies have implemented a system in which they share a shipment's data with RWG – including the container's mode of transport – well before the arrival. With advanced knowledge of whether a container will be picked up by train, barge or lorry, RWG is now able to discharge and stow containers in separate areas, depending on their further mode of transport – which means rail cargo now has its own dedicated area at the terminal. This practice has resulted in immediate improvements and has better facilitated processing best practice for all transport companies at the terminal. However, it is crucial that companies provide information in advance on the mode of transport they'll be using to receive containers at the RWG terminal. Boxes can then be stowed from start to finish in their designated warehouse area, dependent upon whether they're shipping via lorry, rail or ship on the next stage of their journey. With

these processes in place, the issues plaguing terminal operations in the past have been mitigated.

This collaboration between partners on developing better information-sharing practices has resulted in a very competitive and stable quality of rail cargo processing performance, as well as a more reliable overall rail service to and from Switzerland. Data accuracy and timeliness play a key role in the successful operation of an automated cargo terminal – and the only way to accomplish this level of quality is close cooperation and transparent information sharing between all partners along the supply chain. Information sharing on a factor as basic as which mode of transport will be used to receive a container upon arrival at the RWG terminal has, in turn, resulted in more seamless cargo transport from the port to inland destinations. Whatever your opinion is about digitalisation, oftentimes, it still takes the human touch to make the real difference in improving service.

ABOUT ROTTERDAM WORLD GATEWAY

2.35 million TEU of freight per annum

DEEP SEA QUAY

Water depth: 20 meters
Length: 1,150 meters
Quay cranes: 11

Barge / feeder quay

Water depth: 11 meters
Length: 550 meters
Quay cranes: 3

RAIL TERMINAL

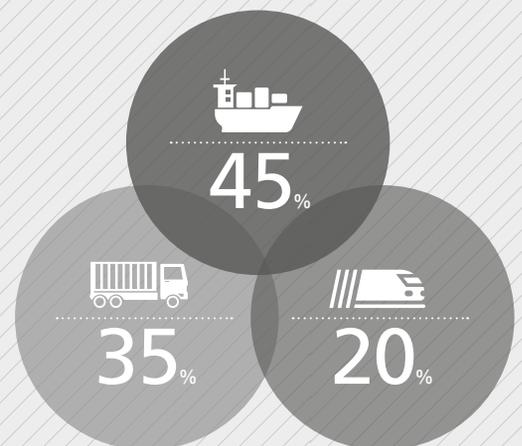
Rail cranes: 2
Tracks: 6
Track length: 750 meters

Transport

Automated guided vehicles: 59

LORRY FREIGHT FACILITIES

Automated lorry freight handling bays: 105





MORE SERVICE WITH NEW ROUTES

With a new round of expanded services and routes in Q3, it's full speed ahead for the Swissterminal AG. Starting in December 2018, Schweizerzug AG, the Frenkendorf-based rail freight operator, is increasing the frequency of its service between Frenkendorf and the Port of Antwerp – from four to six trains weekly. In addition, a new direct route connecting Switzerland with the PSA Group's seaport in Genoa has also just gone online.



Since launching its first-ever rail service in October 2016 between Frenkendorf and Rotterdam, Schweizerzug AG has continuously expanded its transport services and network. In July 2017, the Port of Antwerp was added to the route and network served via the transport hub in Neuss, Germany. A year later in July 2018, Antwerp was connected directly with Swiss depots in Frenkendorf (near Basel) and Niederglatt (near Zurich) for the first time. The increase in train frequencies to Europe's two largest seaports is part of Schweizerzug's strategic expansion plan.

Today, more than 40 percent of the inland freight being shipped to and processed in Antwerp is transported to the port via barge and inland waterways. That underscores the strong potential for further expansion of rail networks to serve the port in the future. However, Antwerp is currently faced with freight handling capacity constraints that prevent it from accepting more freight and shipments via rail. That's all set to change wi-


READ MORE ...



thin another decade: the port is targeting a modal split of 40-20-20 between lorry, inland waterway and rail transportation modes by 2030. The tracks are already laid for more rail: there are more than 1,000 km of rail tracks in and around the port that aren't nowadays being utilised at full capacity.

Schweizerzug's most recent network expansion will first and foremost offer shipping agents significant savings in time when shipping freight via Europe's second-largest port; it will also shift freight to rail, which has a lower environmental impact and overall emissions than lorry transport. And alongside the resulting reduction in emissions with the shift from road to rail, Schweizerzug's increase in frequencies to the port will help mitigate capacity crunches affecting cargo handling on the inland barge side.

Since October, Schweizerzug has been offering more connections between Neuss and Rotterdam – an increase from 14 to 22 trains per week along this route. The benefit: faster and more convenient container transport to the port than ever before. Last month also saw the kick-off for a new direct service by the Voltri Terminal S.p.A., the PSA Group's seaport in Genoa, Italy. The Voltri Terminal is now linked to Swissterminal locations in Frenkendorf and Niederglatt. The new service connects Switzerland with Italy three times weekly, and additionally offers handling for special cargo types including high-cube containers and dangerous goods.

Current weekly connections to / from Frenkendorf:

6	x	R	O	T	T	E	R	D	A	M		
4	x	A	N	T	W	E	R					
10	^	M	E	L	Z	O	for La Spezia, Trieste, Genoa					
6	x	G	E	N	O	A	Voltri Terminal Genoa					
4	x	N	I	E	D	E	R	G	L	A	T	T

"SOME REGARD PRIVATE ENTERPRISE AS IF IT WERE A PREDATORY TIGER TO BE SHOT. OTHERS LOOK UPON IT AS A COW THAT THEY CAN MILK. ONLY A HANDFUL SEE IT FOR WHAT IT REALLY IS – THE STRONG HORSE THAT PULLS THE WHOLE CART".

Sir Winston Churchill, 1874-1965

TIME FOR MORE CIVIL COURAGE

Courage is a multifaceted thing. It can be found in places of calm and silence, or in the middle of a public space; it can be quiet or loud. It can contribute to moving something forward, or ending it altogether. But no matter which form courage takes, its purpose is to accomplish something.

A particularly special form of courage is something called "civil courage". The concept can be traced back to 1835, when the term "courage çivil" was used by the French to describe an individual's trust in their own values or judgement. The term "courage çivique" was used to describe the courage of an individual as a citizen acting within a given society. "Civil courage" is a term encompassing both of these aspects, and describes the act of standing up for one's own values and beliefs, even if doing so brings with it potential risk or other disadvantages. The ancient Greeks spoke of courage in the form of valour and prowess in battle. Around 400 B.C., the Greek philosopher, Plato, named valour as one of the four cardinal virtues alongside wisdom, temperance and righteousness.

Only something for optimists

Civil courage should form the centre of all economic, social and political interactions and dealings. An important prerequisite for accomplishing this is first ensuring that a society, business or government has oriented its values to align with the fundamental values of a democratic and civil society. But it is only the individuals who have hope and faith in the ability for a certain situation to change for the better who are willing to put themselves into uncomfortable situations.

Especially for businesses and companies, it is of vital importance to take a firm stand on their values. Because ultimately, companies aren't just responsible for their own bottom line or profitability: they moreover also serve as important role models for their employees, who, in their own respective social and

political circles, also exert influence on and can proactively drive positive change and evolution.

Today, we are witnessing how this sort of attitude seems to be disappearing from the public sphere in many different quarters and locations. Some of the possible explanations for this include the growing challenges facing an individual on a day-to-day basis; problems in a person's private life or even the feeling that one cannot or does not want to take a firm stance on a particular issue. It takes a high level of conviction to engage in civil courage as well as both a strong sense of faith and the accompanying set of values. However, both taking and holding fast to a firm conviction isn't always easy, especially when it requires swimming against the current of popular opinion that is, oftentimes, embraced and enforced by more powerful actors than a "mere" individual. But nothing changes when individuals remain silent. It takes both courage and self-confidence to stand up for the values and needs of an economy or society.

Calling a problem by its real name is the first step in effecting true progress and change. The next step is taking concrete and systematic action to advance one's demands. Because it is indeed companies and "big business" that possess the resources and power to go beyond the boundaries of their own businesses to raise their voices and take on more responsibility within their respective civil societies. The key to civil courage – finding and then using your own voice!





OPEN AND AT YOUR SERVICE – FOR LONGER

The times are changing, and Swissterminal AG is moving with them. Last October, the company extended its opening hours for handling trucks in Frenkendorf and is now open from 6.00 h to 18.00 h without a break. By adding an hour at both ends of the day, Swissterminal is aiming to offer a better service for its customers and partners.

The helpdesk for registration is manned from 7.00 h to 17.00 h, with a member of staff ready to answer questions and give further information.



PREPARED FOR THE FUTURE THROUGH QUALITY

Swissterminal AG has obtained recertification for ISO 9001:2015. With this, the company demonstrates its readiness at all times to deliver products and services that fully live up to the standards defined by this qualification.

A quality management norm basically describes the requirements the management system (QMS) of a company must meet in order to comply with a certain standard for delivering quality management. Here the ISO 9001 norm is the world's leading certification and at the same time the basis for setting up a comprehensive QMS.

The seven basic principles of quality management under ISO 9001 cover customer focus, leadership responsibility and the engagement of the people involved. Also included are a process-oriented approach, constant improvement, evidence-based decision-making and relationship management for a mutually beneficial partnership.

With quality management, the question arises of how much quality is actually „necessary“ to reach the predefined level of business success. Naturally it is important above all to meet customers' expectations. This „outside“ quality defined by the customer is of course a vital requisite for the survival of a company, but it is not enough just by itself. More important is that the company must ensure from the inside that it also delivers quality at prices in line with the market.

Nobody is perfect

Companies see quality management as a sensible goal chiefly because it is much more efficient and therefore more cost-effective to avoid mistakes

from the start rather than only deal with them at the end of the manufacturing or service delivery process. Anyone who not only has full control over the quality of services provided but is also constantly improving them can minimise costs from failures with lasting effect. In addition to customer focus, three other aspects are particularly important in this connection:

Market strategy: From the market strategy viewpoint, ISO 9001 certification mainly serves as proof of the quality of its products or services for every company that is in competition with others.

Guaranteeing the future: The introduction of a QMS helps a company to further develop its poten-

tial on a constant basis. With the procedure involved in recertification, company processes and strategies are regularly put to the test. The result is a future-proof company development orientation.

Legal significance: The ISO 9000 list of standards is accepted as the only certification base of all national standardisation and certification bodies in the EU and to a large extent also worldwide.

Processes are important for creating efficient company procedures and for making Swissterminal AG fit for the future. The market environment may change, but by consistent application of quality management techniques, Swissterminal AG continues to be well prepared for a positive future.





**“WE BELIEVE IN OUR COMPANY—
AND OUR VALUES!”**

Swissterminal AG is proud to be a family-owned business – and that is doubly true in 2018 as two members of the Mayer family celebrate their decades-long journey together with the Swissterminal family. Roman Mayer, the CEO of Swissterminal AG, is marking 25 years with the company, while CCO, Tatiana Mayer, has 10 years with Swissterminal. We took the double anniversary as a chance to catch up with the couple to look back – and explore their vision for the future.

Tatiana and Roman Mayer – together, you have a lot of history with the company. Could you tell us what motivated each one of you to join Swissterminal AG originally?

RM: Well, for both of us, family has played a huge role in this regard. Right after finishing my apprenticeship with what was then known as Natural AG, I joined our company, which was operating as Container Depot AG, on 16 August, 1993. Originally, I wasn't planning to stay for very long because at the time, I wanted to move abroad. Taking over my father's company wasn't exactly my plan. Because back then, there were a lot of empty containers – as a logistics manager, I wanted to transport goods, not empty space!

But then you finally decided to come on board after all?

RM: When my father took over what was then known as Conteba (in Kleinhüningen) in 1994, my attitude towards the business changed. Following the takeover, he asked me if I would be able to look at some IT issues – and then my plans for going out into the world were done for the meantime – or at least they changed. In some way, I'm still looking at issues, though obviously (*laughing*) from a very different perspective nowadays!

Once you made the decision to stay, you jumped in with both feet?

RM: Exactly! Those were truly exciting times – and I learned a lot. Back then we called it – in good German – “learning by doing”. I learned the business from the bottom up. Everything from the terminal operations to the rail transport department to lorry transport – I worked my way up by getting to know each department first hand. I even worked as a crane operator for a while! Eventually, I took on the job of developing our Rhine transport routes. That was when Conteba was still a member of the Penta-Containerline. In total, I spent 18 years working in our inland waterway business and was able to help grow Conteba into one of the biggest players in river ship transport between Basel and Rotterdam as well as Antwerp.

Tatiana Mayer, you joined Swissterminal quite a bit later – what was the impetus behind your decision?

TM: My first day with the company was 1 August, 2008. Prior to that, I had completed my education at a commercial college and had already spent four years working in the export division with the now-defunct P&O Nedlloyd. In November 2004, I made the move to CMA CGM, where I worked in sales, and alongside working there, I completed a degree in business administration. During this phase, I met Roman at an event held by the Basel Propeller Club. We got married on 28 August,

2008. The fact that we decided to hitch both our private and work lives together is due, in part, to the fact that during my studies, marketing was an important focus for me. And it was exactly marketing that the company needed some help with back then.

Were you responsible for developing this area of business?

Roman offered me the opportunity to head up marketing and completely restructure it. Right on the heels of getting my degree, it was an amazing chance to apply everything I had just learned at school to a real-life situation. A bit later, the sales team also needed someone with my skills – thanks to my previous sales experience in shipping, I was able to provide support in this area, too. And this is where I’ve remained since then – heading up sales. For me, it’s always been of the utmost important that we work together as a family. You can’t separate the family from the business – we’re one cohesive unit.

Let’s stay in 2008 for a bit – it was the year the global financial crisis hit. How did it affect or change the company?

RM: It affected us mainly by forcing us to focus on developing our core business above all else. Alongside having to weather the crisis ourselves, we also had to grapple with the loss of business when one of our largest customers at the time filed for bankruptcy – Intercontainer-Interfrigo. This “perfect storm” of events left us with no other choice but to take the difficult step of reducing our employee count from around 150 to some 70. It was a horrible period of time that I wouldn’t wish on my worst enemy. But the storm also had a silver lining: it gave us the impetus and chance to restructure and reboot ourselves – something which we had been neglecting for many years prior to the global crisis. Between the 90s until 2008, we enjoyed double-digit growth. As your typical mid-size company, we always put our customer first – and still do. Our customers comprised the main focus of our business – so it’s totally understandable that we didn’t focus enough on our own internal structures and operations during this time.

So, what exactly did you change post-crisis?

TM: We established a quality management system. Our

goal was to install functional processes that would serve to ensure that we would never again experience the huge loss of “know how” and expertise that hit us when we had to let over half of our workforce go during the crisis. Simultaneously, we wanted to develop best practices that would allow us to provide the same level and spectrum of services to our customers at all of our Swissterminal locations. And above and beyond that, we placed an especially strong focus on teambuilding – and established cooperative agreements with local universities and schools that thrive through to this day. Our goal post-crisis was to rebuild a solid base to support our next big growth spurt in the future.

How were you able to maintain your energy and focus during those difficult times?

RM: Between 2008 and 2015, we welcomed our four children into the world. They gave us the motivation and courage again and again to keep going and not give up!

TM: My thoughts exactly – and with this whole passing of the baton between generations at the company, we were faced with a new challenge during this phase.

How did the change progress?

RM: In 2000, I assumed responsibility for our operative business. In 2012, during one of our most difficult phases, we also saw a change in the board leadership. Ultimately, I took over the role as President of the Board of Directors – alongside my other duties. It was truly a case of one thing right after another – wave after wave crashing over us. But I believe we can definitely say that despite everything, we have many reasons to be thankful, too.

How so?

RM: We’re thankful to have someone to lean on – not just the two of us supporting one another, but also the huge support we’ve seen within and from the Swissterminal family of employees. I’m still amazed to this day by the huge amount of initiative and cohesion that exists within the Swissterminal family. In our most difficult phase, we were all pulling together – our team stood behind us and we’re hugely grateful for them. We’re also grateful for our customers who stood beside us during the crisis.



TM: This very interpersonal level of sticking together – you don't see enough of this nowadays, honestly. Today, there's so much communication that happens from afar – from a distance. That's actually totally insane. In earlier times, we were a lot closer to our employees, and regaining that close connection is extremely important today. But it's not always possible, unfortunately – the personal touch has fallen victim to the pressure and ever-increasing speed of modern-day business. It's of vital importance to avoid losing touch with our inner values and the spirit of solidarity that we've built here. Above all, it's very important that we serve as examples of these values to the rest of the company.

Let's talk about some of your key milestones.

RM: Overall, we've experienced many exciting things over the years. But for me, there are three that really stand out. The first – working with the Penta-Containerline, a shipping company comprised of five partners, and each one had its own ship. The members: SRN-Alpina; Natural Van Dam; CFNR Strasbourg; Danser Sliedrecht and Conteba AG.

It was a really excellent constellation, and we were quite successful with this structure. For me as a young guy, it was an amazingly successful experience. The next highlight: the product that we developed and launched – the NCS-Shuttle (Niederglatt-Conteba-Seaport). In 2001, the LSVA [ed's note: the "Leistungsabhängige Schwerverkehrsabgabe" or heavy traffic levy] was introduced – against this backdrop, we were able to extend our services with a shuttle train between the Rhine and Niederglatt.

And what's the third highlight?

RM: That was the launch of Schweizerzug in 2016. In a very short period of time, we introduced an entirely new transportation solution to the Swiss market.

Tatiana, what would you say were the most memorable moments from your decade with Swissterminal?

TM: I would definitely say that being part of the restructuring of sales was one of my most memorable experiences. Developing both a new pricing system with a truly holistic logistics system was a thrilling challenge. The restructuring process was simultaneously a wonderful experience and also brought a lot of security and stability to our company. In turn, I'd also like to mention here that in recent years, our marketing has become a lot more active and proactive, and we've in the meantime developed a very strong brand. Of course, the introduction of slot management and taking on the task

of digitalisation have been key for us, too.

What are you focused on currently?

RM: For me, it's truly disheartening that on one hand, it seems like a privately-owned company like ours is expected by government policymakers to serve the Swiss transport market and with it, the nation's interests. While on the other hand, we're not being afforded the same benefits or support as a state-run organisation would receive when it comes to future development and growth. This support would be of huge importance for a firm like Swissterminal to remain a viable market entity. But we've realised that government policy doesn't support this. That said, we're certain that our ambition to grow and expand will be supported not only by our employees, but overall by the shipping industry here in Switzerland.

TM: Right now, we're very aware of the support we're receiving, and we greatly appreciate it. This support – from our employees and the industry – will serve as the basis upon which we build future growth. We've moved away from business as usual – reached a fork in the road, so to speak – and we are currently looking for new partners who want to join us for our next phase.

What's on the agenda in the near future?

RM: For close to 50 years, I firmly believe we have served the market as a good company with good values and service. And even if the Swiss government and policymakers don't want to necessarily cooperate or work with us, there are others who do – including international partners.

We believe in ourselves, in our company and people – and our values! As in the past, Swissterminal AG will continue to be an active player in the development of transport infrastructure in Switzerland – now and in the future. Swissterminal AG will continue to operate in transport infrastructure and our independent company allows us to continue building out our transportation business in the future – especially in regards to strengthening the supply chain. We'll be able to take advantage of existing infrastructure to realise this goal, but can also envision expanding our own infrastructure, too. Our vision: to hold onto our top spot as Switzerland's leading terminal operator for freight handling and the storage of containers – both empty and loaded. That's something we are willing to fight for!

Thank you for your time and the excellent conversation!

ANNIVERSARIES:



Tatiana Mayer (joined 1 August 2008)



Roman Mayer (joined 16 August 1993)



Jürg Wiggli (joined 15 August 1983)

We would like to offer our sincere congratulations to all our anniversary colleagues, with grateful thanks for their dedication, commitment, solidarity and loyalty to Swissterminal AG.

TOURNAMENT



In June 2018, the football team of Swissterminal AG accepted an invitation from FC Rheinfelden to play in an amateur football tournament. A total of 16 teams took part in the tournament and showed not only good sporting spirit but also a great deal of commitment. Swissterminal played against Super Team (Väter & Söhne FC Rheinfelden), Beauty and the Beast (community of Möhlin), Team X (EHC Rheinfelden), D'Ryburger Schränzfägerchnullerioldswissbabybigbandboys&girls (Ryburger Gugger) and Spitzbuebe Ryfælde (Guggemusik Kleininformation Rheinfelden).

We congratulate our team on reaching second place! The winner was FC Gasseschränzer, while Super Team came third.



MERRY CHRISTMAS & A GOOD START TO THE NEW YEAR!

Dear Customers, dear Partners,

Thank you for your continued support and partnership. We appreciate working with you and hope that the holidays and the coming year will bring you happiness and success.

Kind regards from Frenkendorf,

Your team at Swissterminal

Combine.
Move.

swissterminal 

Swissterminal AG

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www.swissterminal.com