

EFFICIENCY THROUGH EXPERIENCE AND TECHNICAL EXPERTISE



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Patrick Kox, CROSS Project Leader, Air Liquide Deutschland GmbH



THE TASK

Around 100 trucks travel on German roads daily on behalf of Air Liquide for the Cylinder business unit. From 18 shipping locations, they deliver to customers and sales partners across the country. To ensure that the product arrives at its destination on schedule, 15 dispatchers plan each individual trip. In doing so, they take into account customer time windows, required loading equipment, driving times and rest periods, the products loaded, individual vehicle sizes and route profiles. "Before PTV Smartour was

introduced, we planned trips with the aid of a trip planning tool which we had developed ourselves as a stand-alone solution and which had grown rather out of date", recalls Patrick Kox, CROSS Project Manager at Air Liquide Deutschland GmbH. "In addition to actually introducing it, the challenge in switching over to a new system was to unify the different parameters used until then and to integrate the dispatchers' knowledge into the system", he says. The objective was to create transparency in order to have specific control over trip planning.

THE SOLUTION

The company decided on the PTV Smartour trip planning software, which was first used at the end of 2013 in the standard version. The first phase of the introduction, the so-called "pilot" for Germany, France and Belgium, has already been completed. Air Liquide is introducing the software in Western Europe to begin with, with the option of also establishing it in other European countries and even other continents. The second step involves customisation, the customer-specific, individual adaptation of the software, for example to a direct



Air Liquide in Germany produces and supplies technical and medical gases and offers associated services and innovative solutions and technologies for more than 50 different industries. The product range includes several hundred gases and gas mixtures. These are supplied by pipeline, liquefied in tank containers or in steel bottles, but are increasingly also produced on the customers' premises. Air Liquide delivers customised solutions in all branches of industry, in medicine, research and development – whether for workmen on-site or for multinational corporations.

SAP interface and connection to a telematics interface to enable immediate response in the case of delays, such as traffic jams or unplanned wait times. "We specifically chose these two steps of introduction in order to gain initial experiences with the standard tool and then to allow the feedback from the dispatchers to influence the customisation," explains Patrick Kox.

THE RESULT

Three months after the introduction of PTV Smartour, Air Liquide planned the first trips in Germany with the software. "Thanks to the new trip planning software and the new server solution, completely new opportunities have opened up for us, enabling us to carry out realistic planning together with our dispatchers," says Patrick Kox, and adds: "Before using PTV Smartour, there were frequently large differences between planning and reality". The daily planning at Air Liquide broadly consists of three steps: first the orders are preplanned using the software and checked for urgency. PTV Smartour then creates the trips automatically. In the final step, the

dispatchers release the trips. "With PTV Smartour, we can respond very flexibly," says Patrick Kox. "We can view data individually and even recalculate. This makes it possible to cater specifically for different requirements and to reduce and optimise planning work." Patrick Kox sees another advantage in the user-friendly interface: "PTV Smartour is very quick and convenient to use. Positive feedback was also received from the dispatchers, who seemed very satisfied with the precise and informative data, as well as the user-friendliness and the support. "The experience of our dispatchers and drivers, coupled with the performance of PTV Smartour, gives us a complete package of planning certainty which has become indispensable."

PTV GROUP

Haid-und-Neu-Str. 15
76131 Karlsruhe
Germany
smartour.ptvgroup.com

INTERNATIONAL

Phone: +49 721 9651
8100
sales.newmarkets@
ptvgroup.com

UNITED KINGDOM

Phone: +44 121 781
7242
sales.uk@ptvgroup.com

AUSTRALIA

Phone: +61 2 9698
1292
sales.au@ptvgroup.com

USA

Phone: +1 503 297
2556
sales.us@ptvgroup.com