

Heading for Industry 4.0 with smart containers

EURO-LOG is part of the “DProdLog” research project studying the digitalisation of the logistics sector

Hallbergmoos-Munich, 9 March 2017 – The Internet of Things and Services, mobile computing, big data analytics and digital social networks are converging to form a new technological infrastructure. New data-driven information services – such as the “DProdLog” project launched by the Federal Ministry for Education and Research at the beginning of 2016 – are emerging from the cloud. The aim of the research project is to develop an open, modular service platform that digitalises production-related logistics services, and to produce a prototype of and test this platform. Just-in-sequence deliveries of parts to the assembly site, providing materials for machinery and tool management are some examples of the processes covered by the platform. Containers fitted with integrated microelectronics bring transparency to these processes. The delivery hardware communicates independently with the cloud-based platform, which collects and interprets the data from the smart containers. The cargo carriers tell the system what they contain and where they are. This enables logistics service providers to better monitor movements within and between production facilities, plan them more precisely and control them more systematically. Thanks to the intelligent communication system, there is no need to record and check goods in the incoming goods department – where errors are often made – and high levels of back-up stock in the container circuits can be avoided. Container scheduling is adapted automatically.

As part of the research project, IT service provider EURO-LOG is partnering with specialist provider of joining and assembly technology Böllhoff to make digital progress in the field of logistics. Freight company GS Frachtlogistik, the University of Bamberg, Fraunhofer IIS and its Supply Chain Services working group SCS are also involved, contributing their expert knowledge of wireless sensor networks. The participants are all working in pursuit of one overarching goal: To strengthen Germany as a business and logistics location by giving it the edge as an innovator in digitalisation.

Global competition is growing for German logistics companies. Customers are increasingly demanding flexible and agile production

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processes, and there is great potential to tackle these challenges through digitalisation. Logistics service providers in particular will need to set themselves apart with new technologies and offer digital solutions for their customers, as it is these companies that are primarily responsible for logistics processes within and between production sites.

In the future, the open Industry 4.0 platform resulting from the project will be available for the logistics service providers to use in line with their individual needs, enabling them to better satisfy the requirements of their customers. With the cloud software, paper-based processes will become redundant in production. They will be replaced by smartphones, tablets and wearables, making shipment information available in any place, at any time.

The initial results of the project will be presented between 14 and 16 March at the embedded world trade fair in Nuremberg and at LogiMAT in Stuttgart. The smart containers will be on display on the stands hosted by Fraunhofer IIS (embedded world, hall 4, stand 470) and Fraunhofer SCS (LogiMAT, hall 5, stand G08).

Upon completion of the project – scheduled for April 2019 – the results of the research will be made available for product development at EURO-LOG AG.

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EURO-LOG AG

For 25 years, EURO-LOG has been providing IT services to shippers and logistics service providers who know that logistics is much more than just transporting goods from A to B. With the help of the EUROLOG SCM PLATFORM, the IT service provider connects all process partners involved in real time, creates a transparent supply chain to improve cooperation and offers managers maximum control.

The innovative IT solutions, which provide open service interfaces, are ready to use on the EUROLOG SCM PLATFORM: B2B Integration, Procurement Management, Transport Management, ONE TRACK Shipment Tracking, Container Management and Mobile Logistics Solutions. EURO-LOG's solutions are currently used by international customers operating in sectors such as automotive, ecommerce & retail, industry and logistics as well as many others.

EURO-LOG was founded in 1992 as a joint venture by Deutsche Telekom, France Telecom and Digital Equipment. The firm became a "people-owned company" in 1997 and developed into one of the leading providers of IT and process integration. Today, at the head office in Hallbergmoos-Munich with its own computer centres, more than 80 employees provide for transparency in logistic processes with innovative software applications and individual links.

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