



Partners for all things wood

The round trips for Maresch, the Austrian sawmill company, have been a success story. DB Cargo is therefore continuing to increase the number of wagons.

Rapid, reliable rail transports unlock international markets. For the past four years, DB Cargo Logistics has used a sophisticated round-trip model to provide competitive transports between the sawmill company Holzindustrie Maresch GmbH and its clients in Germany and northern Europe. “Over the past four years, we’ve continually increased the number of wagons,” says Clemens Pflästerer, Head of Sales & Operations Center Timber at DB Cargo Logistics. Deutsche Bahn now connects Maresch to more than a dozen clients who receive its goods in northern Europe.

Smart single-wagon transports

Located in Retz in Lower Austria, Maresch exports the bulk of its products to southern Europe on the other side of the Alps, but the market is shifting. “Our clients in Germany and northern Europe have become increasingly important for us,” says Dieter Preiss, who is responsible for IT, logistics and sawmill by-products at Maresch. Companies in the German states of Baden-Württemberg, Saxony-Anhalt and Lower Saxony manufacture flooring and furniture from fresh, rough-cut saw wood. At the same time, an increasing number of British, Scandinavian and Baltic companies are purchasing Maresch products, which are delivered via the German cities of Cuxhaven and Wismar. “We have many clients with a diverse array of production workflows and precise planning schedules. We have to account for all of that in our transport model to ensure our clients’ manufacturing processes run as smoothly as possible,” says Preiss.

Good communication between DB Cargo Logistics and the sawmill company helps make this possible. “Drawing on all our experience, we are

able to respond quickly to new requirements,” says Pflästerer. “In addition to operational communication between our dispatchers and the employees at Maresch, we meet three times a year in a small group to discuss the current status.” At an annual strategy meeting, plans are made to tackle future issues and tasks.

A network grows beyond borders

With its round-trip transports, DB Cargo Logistics reduces the number of empty runs and can also offer the company precise scheduling on a weekly basis. “Our wagons carry logs to Austria”, says Pflästerer. Maresch can access the wagons there if it needs to. “The system is very flexible and has been tailored to accommodate Maresch’s logistics processes. The sawmill can customise its production to fit a certain client and immediately load its product”, says Pflästerer.

The model’s success hinges on the availability of wagons that can be used right across the timber business. Thus far, DB Cargo has been using Rnoos stanchion wagons and Snps and Rbns wagons for timber.

Now its fleet is being expanded: 50 wagons are scheduled for conversion, and new wagons are slated to arrive by the end of 2021. “We want to make our wagons more flexible for the long term and to allow them to be used universally so that our round trips become even more efficient,” says Pflästerer.

More rail is possible

This helps meet customers’ needs. Maresch is continuing to expand and the company has long considered rail transport in its plans for clients both old and new. A new sawmill is currently being built in the Czech city of Mondi Štětí and, like the one in Retz, where Maresch has its headquarters, it will have its own private siding. “We’re still transporting too much by lorry – for instance, almost half of our transports to Germany are done this way”, says Preiss. That’s about to change.

Because many customers lack their own private siding, Deutsche Bahn supplements its conventional wagon-load transports with multimodal

transport solutions to shift more traffic onto the rail network. To do so, DB is using railports and timber ports – the Group recently began operating a timber port facility in Ehrang near the German city of Trier. Logs destined for the wood processing industry can be stored here temporarily and loaded onto freight wagons. ●



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1 — Timber is loaded onto wagons for the return journey.

2 — Logs are delivered and sawn timber collected at three private sidings.

“We’re still transporting too much by lorry.”

DIETER PREISS

IT, logistics and sawmill by-products
Holzindustrie Maresch GmbH