

Smart ways



via **LOG**

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The smart way from A to B

Smart ways 1

A man wants to cross a river with a cabbage, his goat and a wolf. He only has a small boat that can fit himself plus either the wolf, the goat or the cabbage.

As a result, he needs to make several trips. However, if the goat and the cabbage were left alone on the shore, the goat would eat the cabbage. If the wolf and the goat were left alone on one shore, the wolf would eat the goat. How can the farmer bring the wolf, the goat, and the cabbage across the river without one eating the other?

You probably came across this well-known logistics problem when you were at school, and solved it brilliantly. It's the famous story of the man who wants to transport his goat, a wolf and a cabbage across a river, but can only take them one by one in his small boat.

The riddle has some of the same characteristics as modern logistics, such as heterogeneous goods, limited resources and the need to prioritise. There is another key point, though:

The only way to ensure that you will not have to learn from your mistakes is by sufficiently analysing a logistics problem in advance, developing a specific strategy based on the analysis, and then consistently implementing that strategy.

This is where viaLog sees its first important task. Our customers are only superficially concerned with 'better logistics'. The real objectives are transparency and an understanding of the reality of logistics, vision and implementation of logistic plans, and outbound delivery service and internal cost efficiency.

For this reason, viaLog aims to provide its customers with customised paths developed with sound business judgement, specialist expertise and resourcefulness. In other words, we look for smart ways.



Looking at logistics simply – smart or not smart?

It all started out quite simply with just one single warehouse. Why should one view things as more complicated now? Well, other locations were soon added, then maybe new products, customers and suppliers. Logistics technology and warehouse management systems were brought in for optimisation, and service providers replaced the internal transport fleet. Yet the whole problem comes down to incoming and outgoing goods. Right?

In reality, smart logistics has, at its core, nothing to do with technology or data processing. Everything is just a means to an end. This end is the same for all companies:

- working efficiently,
- remaining competitive,
- achieving organic growth through satisfied customers and motivated employees.

Given the above, it is better not to think of logistics as a whole. Instead, it is essential to precisely pinpoint the potential for optimisation in the company. For example:

Ways into the company (procurement logistics)

Ways in the company (warehouse/production logistics)

Ways out to the customer (distribution logistics)

Many intelligent work steps are required to make use of the potential in each area, from defining the suitable strategy, planning logistics concepts and creating a specification profile for the logistics data processing right through to tendering and implementing logistics technology and distribution services. When a smart approach is taken to coordinating the steps, this promises to deliver one decisive benefit: The value is greater than the cost!



Internal employees should solve logistics problems – smart or not smart?

Smart ways 2

The labyrinth of Knossos on Crete was notorious for two reasons: not only because of the terrifying Minotaur that lived there and ate many young men and maidens every year but also, and more importantly, because of the confusing structure of the labyrinth, which made it practically impossible to escape!

How the story begins and ends is a thrilling tale of sex and crime. The only thing that interests us here, though, is the smart way: Only one man, named Theseus, managed to escape the labyrinth after killing the Minotaur. Before Theseus entered the labyrinth, his lover Ariadne gave him a long ball of thread. He unrolled it when he entered the labyrinth and found his way back out by following the thread.

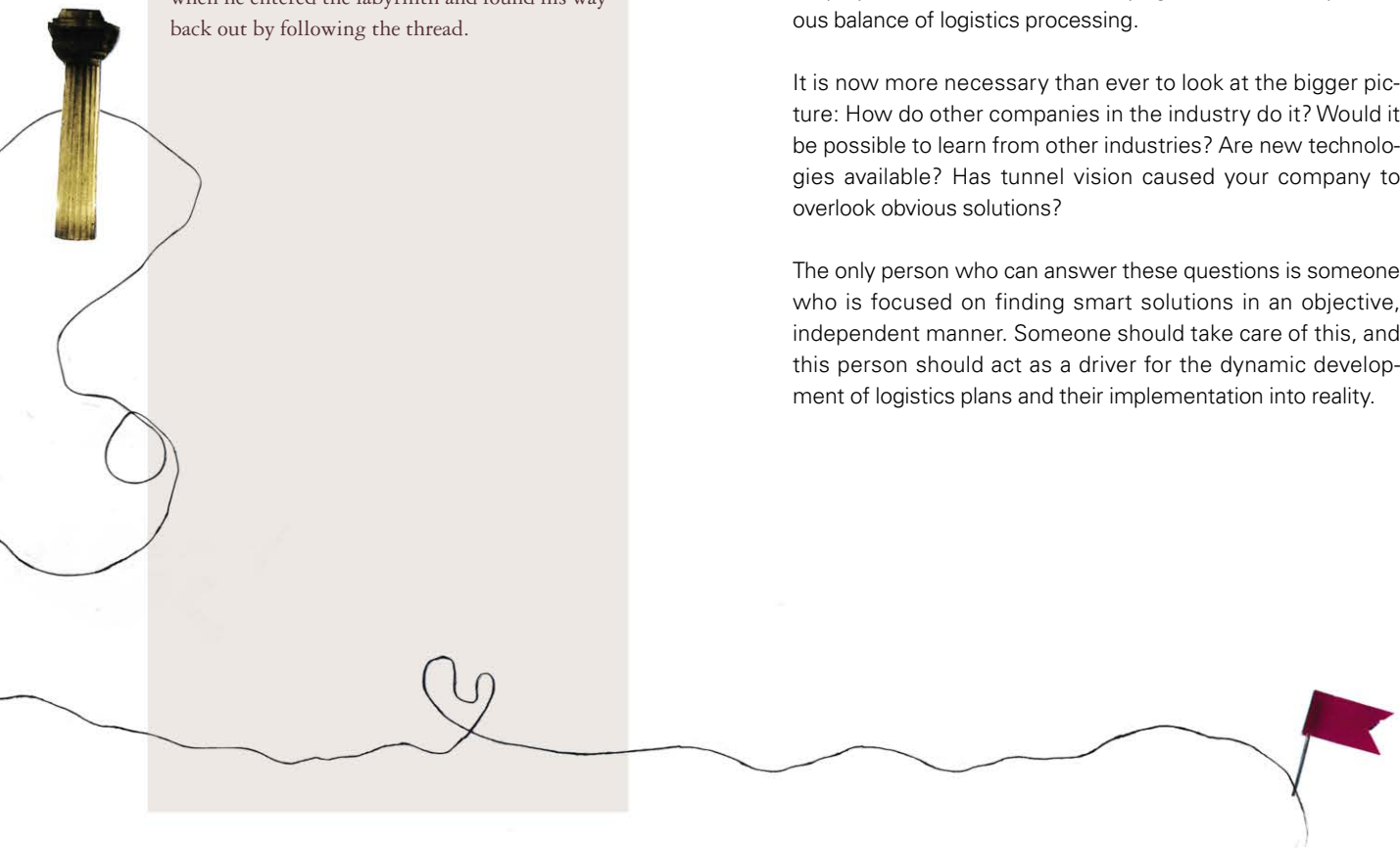
The level of logistical expertise has increased in many companies on account of the importance of logistics for company growth. This suggests that internal employees are the right people to overcome new challenges and solve all existing problems.

However, the essence of the word 'growth' presents an obstacle. The organic growth of company logistics goes by in a time-lapse sequence similar to an entire city over long periods of time. New districts develop, building sites pop up on every corner and there are different approaches as well as pragmatic, stand-alone solutions and 'political' concepts.

Only over time can we see how some things that actually belong together have grown apart. Stand-alone, partial solutions make the situation more complicated, but not any better. Employees have their hands full trying to maintain the precarious balance of logistics processing.

It is now more necessary than ever to look at the bigger picture: How do other companies in the industry do it? Would it be possible to learn from other industries? Are new technologies available? Has tunnel vision caused your company to overlook obvious solutions?

The only person who can answer these questions is someone who is focused on finding smart solutions in an objective, independent manner. Someone should take care of this, and this person should act as a driver for the dynamic development of logistics plans and their implementation into reality.



Talking to manufacturers
right from the very start
– smart or not smart?

Business people often feel like the man at the bank of the river with his three 'passengers'. They are surrounded by boat sellers and believe that their logistics problem lies in choosing between high-speed boats, sailing dinghies and motor yachts.

The truth is, it will one day be necessary to decide on the technology that is best for you. But does it have to be something new? Perhaps the boat that you already have is more than adequate? Or maybe you even need to charter an aeroplane or build a bridge?

Whether or not it is sufficient to expand your existing technology or if you should aim to fully automate storage, transport and commissioning can only be fairly judged by someone without any links to specific manufacturers or technologies. When the time comes, this individual selects the best suppliers, commissions them and oversees implementation.



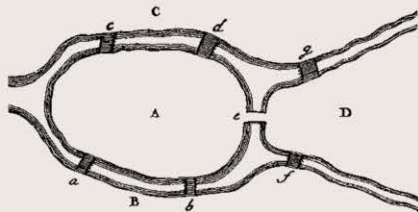
Everything from a single source – smart or not smart?

Smart ways 3

The seven bridges of Königsberg posed a mathematical problem that became a popular subject of discussion in the 18th century, yet no one was able to provide a satisfactory answer.

“Kneiphof island is part of the city of Königsberg, Prussia. The river Pregel flows around it in two arms. Seven bridges cross the arms of the river. The question was whether it was possible to travel through the city and cross each bridge only once.”

The famous mathematician Leonhard Euler was the man who finally solved the problem.



Let's assume that one day you will implement a major logistics project. It will include everything from supplier development for procurement logistics, production layout, installation planning for production logistics, and the design, commissioning and set-up of a new warehouse right through to perfectly organising the transport of your goods to customers all over the world.

Would it really be smart to negotiate with a large variety of possible suppliers, which you later have to cooperate with and coordinate? Why not get everything from a single source!

On the other hand, does the construction company even have sufficient knowledge of logistics technology? What about a situation where a logistics technology supplier has a proven track record of building high-quality conveyor equipment: Does that make him a skilled planner of commissioning processes and designer of warehouse management systems?

The solution here is to contact a general planner. A general planner is a company that provides expert support in all of the tasks outlined here, yet is still fully independent from suppliers, as it does not function as a general contractor.

As a general planner, viaLog is responsible for all of the individual subprojects and phases of a project, takes care of all permits and conducts implementation, from the feasibility study right through to live operation tests. However, all commissioning is carried out independently of manufacturers. We generate intensive competition before awarding a contract and strictly monitor the budget during implementation.

Tooting your own horn

– smart or not smart?

Being modest in the world of business is not really smart – or is it? We have shed our inhibitions and are proud to claim: You will have a hard time finding a better logistics consultant than viaLog! But why take our word for it before getting to know us? We have asked a select group of customers as references to come forward and discuss their experience with us:

Marc Basten,
Cito Benelux (electronics)

“viaLog took care of us and our logistics during the implementation of our logistics project. Our project was successful thanks to viaLog’s expertise, project work and pragmatic approach.”

Wolfgang Riegel,
EugenTrost GmbH & Co. KG

“Eugen Trost Logistik GmbH has made a quantum leap forward over the past six years. After initially providing us with strategic consulting, viaLog went on to act as a project manager responsible for implementing our central warehouse. The company is currently managing an expansion project for the central warehouse. During this time, we came to appreciate viaLog as a competent, reliable and fair partner. We like that viaLog possesses sound business judgement and avoids relying too heavily on technology when developing logistics solutions for us. What’s more, viaLog offers planning and consulting in construction, logistics technology and logistics data processing from a single source.”

Gunnar Elias,
Phoenix Contact GmbH & Co. KG

“Phoenix Contact is a fast-growing company. We turn time and again to viaLog to support our own logistics expertise. In particular, they help us find solutions for complex issues in global logistics. viaLog also designed the new warehouse in Harrisburg in the U.S. and worked together with us to develop global standards. viaLog is a solid member of our logistics team.”

Dr Timo Winkelmann,
Milchwerke GmbH

“As an SME, we place high requirements on our logistics – and our logistics consultants. Together with viaLog, we are gradually and successfully developing efficient logistics well-suited to our priorities and resources.”

Frank Schröder,
ROFU Kinderland Spielwarenhandels GmbH

“viaLog has been by our side for many years. In addition to conducting specialist work, it’s important to us that viaLog acts as a facilitator for our project work in logistics, is committed to achieving consensus and places great importance on communication.”

Find out more about the work we have done for our customers under ‘References’ at <http://www.en.vialog-logistik.com>. We would be delighted and honoured to feature your company as a reference one day!



Smart ways 4

The Silk Road – the most important connection between China and Europe for centuries. Spices, silk, glass and porcelain were transported across scorched land, waterless deserts, icy passages and deep gorges.

Trade also led to the spread of religion and culture. This is how Buddhism spread to China and Japan. And this is also how Christianity made its way to the Chinese capital. Inventions like paper and black powder likewise travelled the Silk Road to arrive in Arabic countries and later in Europe. And finally, the Silk Road also paved the way for communication for many centuries.



More about the smart ways

Have you forgotten how the man at the river bank solved his dilemma? Or did it slip your mind how Leonhard Euler solved the bridge problem? What else is there to know about the silk road? And how does the story with the Minotaur begin and end? You can find all of the answers and links to further sources here: <http://www.en.vialog-logistik.com>

You can also visit the viaLog website to access detailed, specialist information that goes beyond the scope of this brochure. This includes our approaches to distribution strategy, construction and expansion of logistics centres, logistics controlling, standardisation and complexity management, warehouse management systems, logistics tuning and much more.

Links from a comprehensive reference list direct you to information on special industry expertise and numerous detailed case studies. Of course, you can also find information about the viaLog team and collaboration with our customers. In a nutshell, you can learn about all aspects of your logistics project, from smart planning right through to perfect implementation. Welcome to viaLog!

Smart ways 5

The quick, anonymous option:
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