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A black and white photograph of Michael Jordan in a basketball jersey, leaning forward with a focused expression. The background is dark and out of focus.

**THERE WAS BASKETBALL.  
UNTIL THE DAY THERE WAS MICHAEL JORDAN.**

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**THERE WAS GSSA.  
UNTIL THE DAY  
THERE WAS ECS GROUP.**

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**ECS**GROUP



The weekly newspaper for air cargo professionals



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No. 1,289 22 July 2024

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### Voice Of The Industry

French air cargo industry has faced significant challenges and transformations in recent years. With the surge of e-commerce, shifts in demand ...



### Transforming e-commerce

Staying ahead of regulatory changes and ensuring seamless operations is paramount in the logistics sector, especially when handling goods like ...



### 60 Seconds With ...

I'm Kyle Patel – President and CEO of Bitlux. I describe myself as an inherent builder of things with a focus on private aviation ...



In pharmaceutical logistics, it's crucial for all stakeholders to recognise the extensive and costly nature of pharmaceutical production processes. This awareness drives the focus on closing transportation gaps and minimising potential losses.

With over 30 years of experience in pharmaceutical logistics, Turkish Cargo operates with this acute awareness, allowing the carrier to anticipate evolving customer needs and swiftly adjust to the high quality and standards demanded by this industry.

"At Turkish Cargo, our approach revolves around products and industries. That's why we've constructed SMARTIST, a facility that stands as one of the largest in the world, boasting robotic storage systems and an annual handling capacity of 2.2 million tonnes," Ali Türk – Chief Cargo Officer, Turkish Airlines, stated.

"Within SMARTIST, we offer dedicated and specialised storage and operational areas customised for each unique cargo product, including those specific to the pharmaceutical and healthcare sectors.

"Throughout the construction phase of SMARTIST, we meticulously adhered to IATA CEIV Pharma and GDP regulations to meet the requirements of these industries. At Turkish Cargo, we've also formed a specialised pharma operation team and successfully obtained the prestigious International Air Transportation Association (IATA) CEIV Pharma certificate.

#### Tiered approach

Turkish Cargo has recently introduced three new sub-products as part of the TK Pharma product line: TK Pharma Standard, TK Pharma Extra, and TK Pharma Advanced, aiming to enhance its service.

To achieve this, the carrier began by categorising pharmaceutical shipments based on their sensitivity and transportation requirements. Subsequently, the airline developed new industrial solutions tailored to each category, leading to the creation of its new structures.

"TK Pharma Standard adheres to industry standards, offering expert handling, priority loading, dedicated temperature-controlled storage, a trained operations team, and 24/7 customer service across the entire TK Pharma Network under Turkish Cargo's assurance," Türk explained.

"TK Pharma Extra goes above industry standards by utilising temperature-controlled dollies during tarmac operations and continuous monitoring through our 24/7 Pharmaceutical Control Tower from departure to destination."



#### Above and beyond

At Turkish Cargo, the carrier is clear in its adherence to a strict audit programme aligned with IATA CEIV Pharma and GDP standards to maintain the quality of TK Pharma high-quality stations.

Through audits and assessments, the carrier identifies stations capable of delivering top-notch service in pharmaceutical shipments. Additionally, trend analysis and monthly performance checklists are utilised as part of this process. Monthly performance of stations is closely monitored, and training is provided to enhance awareness. Regular re-audits are conducted to ensure that suppliers comply with the necessary standards.

In addition, features of TK Pharma Extra and TK Pharma Advanced offer active and hybrid/advanced passive container solutions sourced from multiple suppliers. These containers effectively shield pharmaceutical shipments from the effects of environmental

conditions during transportation. This allows Turkish Cargo to accommodate pharmaceutical shipments within a wide temperature range, spanning from -70°C to +25°C, ensuring the integrity of the cold chain throughout the journey.

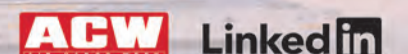
"At Turkish Cargo, we continue to invest in temperature-controlled "Flying more countries than any other airline, our primary focus lies in enhancing quality not just at our hub, but also at our outstations. We're actively urging our subcontractors to elevate their operational standards, a move that will facilitate the expansion of our TK Pharma High-Quality Stations," Turk stated.

"Beyond operational enhancements, we're making substantial investments to enhance the visibility and digitalisation of the pharmaceutical transportation process. These investments will reinforce our capacity to track and monitor shipments in real-time, offering our customers enhanced transparency and peace of mind.

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Credit: AFKLM Cargo

## GIVING KOALAS THE VIP TREATMENT

BY Anastasiya SIMSEK

AIR France KLM Martinair Cargo has a long history of transporting animals, dating back to 1924 when they carried their first breeding bull.

"Despite our extensive experience in transporting various species, each shipment comes with its unique set of complexities and requires meticulous planning and coordination to ensure everything goes smoothly," Mirjam Scherer, Global Head of Special Logistics at Air France KLM Martinair Cargo, said. "These shipments always bring a little extra excitement."

Recently, the carrier was approached by the Ouwehands Zoo in the Netherlands to transport three koalas from the San Diego Zoo - a significant event as koalas had never set foot on Dutch soil before.

Such operations are not just about the airline but involve a multitude

of stakeholders.

"We can't do it alone. There are so many different parties involved when transporting such vulnerable species, from local authorities and customs to health officials and the Royal Military Police," She explained.

"Additionally, specialised freight forwarders play a crucial role. All these entities must work in unison to ensure the safe and smooth transportation of the animals, and their cooperation is invaluable to our success."

Transporting koalas is particularly challenging due to their unique needs. "I always thought they were chilled animals, hanging in trees, but they're actually quite stress-sensitive," Scherer explained.

To mitigate stress, the koalas underwent crate training weeks before the journey. Their travel crates were also specially prepared with mesh covers to reduce visual stimuli, creating a more calming environment.

"We require great training for our staff and the animals. If the animals aren't accustomed to the crates, they can become highly stressed," Scherer noted.

The logistics of the koalas' journey involved careful planning at both the departure and arrival points. In San Diego, the koalas were kept in a quiet corner of the warehouse until final preparations were complete.

On arrival in Amsterdam, they were taken to KLM Cargo's animal hotel at Schiphol Airport, where they were greeted by veterinarians and handlers from both the San Diego and Dutch zoos. This handover process was essential to ensure the well-being of the koalas.

"Preparation is crucial. From ensuring proper ventilation and temperature control to handling the meticulous paperwork involved, every detail must be accounted for well in advance," She added.

One key to the success of such operations is clear and constant communication among all parties.

"We always include the authorities from the beginning," Scherer said.

"This involvement helps in addressing any potential issues promptly and ensures all necessary paperwork is in order. For the koala shipment, a dedicated security officer, customs officer, and veterinarian were involved throughout the process, making sure every step was handled with the utmost care and precision."

## In Memoriam: Alan Stocks

ALAN Stocks, a stalwart of the British air cargo industry for many decades, has died peacefully at home aged 94.

After successfully integrating the Bristol Britannia into Transglobe Airways in the 1960s, he went on to form IAS Cargo Airlines in 1970. Operating the type primarily on routes into Africa, the company was the first British cargo airline to be awarded the Queen's Award for Export Achievement, as well as the first to subsequently place a DC8 aircraft on the British register.

In 1981, he started African International Airlines, which became a significant operator of DC8-54 freighters on a worldwide basis, including services on behalf of several national carriers. Retired for more than a decade, he continued to keep in touch with developments throughout the industry.



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Annual subscription rates: Print issue: £150 • € 180 • US\$195  
(20% will be donated to our NGO sustainability projects)  
Digital issue: Free-of-charge

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# PROUD WINNER OF THE 2024 ACW WORLD AIR CARGO AWARD

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We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to all our customers and partners who voted for us this year. Your trust is the cornerstone of our success, and we truly appreciate your ongoing support. We would also like to express our appreciation to AIR CARGO WEEK and the sponsor for this year's award, Air France KLM Martinair Cargo. Together, we continue to work towards excellence in the industry.

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# HOW BATTERIES WILL SEE CARBON EMISSIONS FALL FROM THE SKY



BY **Kevin BRUNDISH**, Chief Executive Officer, LionVolt B.V.

"HOW can we convey goods from A to B quickly, cheaply and at minimal cost to the environment?"

This trio of questions is front-of-mind when reviewing transportation and logistics strategies.

Or is it? That last point – environmental impact – is often lower in priority. In this iron triangle of considerations, in which it's rarely possible with the current technology to optimise more than two of the three – speed, money and carbon emissions – guess which consideration is usually the compromise?

Of course I'm not suggesting that airfreight is a bad thing; it isn't. Nor is it alone; we make similar decisions on an everyday basis in our personal lives for instance. So it's no surprise that in many scenarios customers have very good reasons to prioritise these first two factors over the third. And the airfreight industry is well placed to cater for these requirements – so it makes sense that you do.

But we all know and can't escape the stark facts: exact estimates vary, but experts agree that, on average, cargo ships, one of the chief rivals to aviation, emit roughly 10 to 40 grams of CO<sub>2</sub> per metric ton for every kilometre travelled, whereas the equivalent figure for air freight is about 500.

But that's with the current technology, technology that's reliant on fossil fuel and internal combustion engines.

What if there were another way, one that could alleviate that lingering sense of guilt that you and your customers might feel when reflecting on green issues?

For the experienced professional, you'll have heard it all before: battery-powered planes will save us all. Of course they will, you might say with a sigh. But when, exactly, will the technology be ready?

Sooner than you think is how we'd address that query because what insiders generally haven't reckoned on is the rise of 3D solid-state batteries.

Could these represent the future of air cargo, and aviation more generally?

Let's look at the lie of the land – and the air.

The automotive industry has been leading the pack when it comes to the adoption of electrical power for some time. According to a report by The International Energy Agency, nearly one in five cars sold in 2023 were electric, and this figure is rising.

What's stopping it from rising at a faster rate, though, is known as range anxiety – and there are at least 30,000 high-altitude reasons why this issue is even more important in aviation.

A big part of the answer for longer-range electric cars lies in innovations that are being made in lithium-ion batteries. 3D solid-state batteries are in design and, along with being able to fast charge, these advanced lithium-ion batteries will be able to extend range, essential to overcoming adoption challenges

and accelerating the shift towards electrification.

The key to the science behind this technology is energy density, which is how much energy can be packed into each battery. To achieve higher density a sulfur-based material is used in the battery cell. The production process also involves switching the flammable liquid that's common to old-style batteries with a solid medium that's non-flammable; this will dramatically increase safety to boot

Not only is this the holy grail of battery technology, it's a holy grail that's within reach, ready to revolutionise electrification in years rather than decades.

Extending the range of electric cars could push up adoption rates, resulting in radically lowered carbon footprints which are the two most obvious benefits to customers and the planet alike. But the advantages don't stop there: less reliance on an increasingly volatile energy market represents a huge incentive to make this work.

How might this work in aviation, and more specifically airfreight – a complex question as aircraft design is a complex challenge. It's clear that existing lithium ion batteries are not of sufficient energy density for long-range large aircraft, although they can, perhaps, play a role in smaller aircraft and drones, an emerging opportunity in the distribution of cargo. So, do these more advanced technologies offer a solution to larger aircraft? The potential is there. As with cars, perhaps hybrid approaches will be required

in the first instance, unloading the propulsion engine or improving efficiencies even further than available today, not only lowering emissions but also driving down fuel usage (and, of course, cost). Could long-range large aircraft go all electric – time will tell but, with the ever improving performance of lithium-ion batteries, I wouldn't bet against it.

But this move to long-range aviation won't happen on its own, and the journey comes with its own set of obstacles, such as establishing reliable supply chains for some of the more unusual ingredients in these new batteries, decommissioning or converting old aircraft, the knock-on effect on other technologies, industries and GDP, and incentivising airfreight operators to overcome any natural inertia and fear of unknown expenses they might feel in the early days of industry adoption.

But these are addressable. Of course, the remedy isn't neatly packaged into one simple pill. But if industry (customers, suppliers and the whole infrastructure) works closely and holistically with friendly governments – ones that might offer subsidies or tax-breaks for the many enterprises that would feed into this initiative – we could pull this off.

Given that over 100 countries agreed at last year's COP to a goal for significant emission reductions from the global aviation industry by 2030, there is a will.

With a fair wind over our tail fins, there might now be a way.

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# Voice Of The Industry

## STRONG DYNAMIC AMONG THE FRENCH AIR CARGO COMMUNITY



05

BY **Danielle PARRA**, Secretary General of the Air Cargo Association France

FRENCH air cargo industry has faced significant challenges and transformations in recent years. With the surge of e-commerce, shifts in demand and the increasing need for sustainable practices, French air cargo players have had to adapt quickly. Among them, Charles de Gaulle Airport (CDG), country's primary cargo hub, has shown remarkable resilience and dynamism.

With almost 1.9 Mt of cargo in 2023, CDG airport has performed better than many other airports in the world in a turbulent period for the air cargo business following two years of euphoria.

Decrease in the demand and rise in the capacity have impacted the results of many airlines in the world, thus creating some sort of anxiety and new strategies among big players.

Despite these challenges, 2023 has been a very particular and exciting year at CDG.

CMA CGM has increased its activity, Air China Cargo and Emirates

have resumed cargo flights after a long period of absence; Central Airlines, a Chinese airlines focused on e-commerce, started to operate beginning of 2023 and then strongly increased its flights by July 2023.

Today, compared with 2019, the number of full freighter flights at CDG has almost doubled, offering more capacities from Paris and the French market, thus enabling the reduction of trucking towards/from other European airports. On the trade lane France-Asia, trucking has been reduced by at least 50 percent!

As e-commerce focuses on fast deliveries to the final customer and France is an important market of consumption, this increase in the number of full freighter flights allows more competitiveness for CDG in this specific market, which everyone has seen evolving and booming in the last months.

The fast adaptation of the French cargo community (airport authorities, forwarders, handlers, customs,...) to the new emerging trends has been key to the success: coordination between operators, need for space, custom clearances, evolution of the processes...The cargo community has understood the opportunities created by e-commerce and thus keeps adapting to meet the needs of the customers.

Besides e-commerce, the main sectors of excellence of the French export market (luxury, pharmaceuticals, fresh products, live animals...) are not forgotten. Investments keep on being made to create new warehouses with state-of-the-art equipments. Last in date (end of 2023) was the new Kuehne Nagel warehouse at CDG, offering 10,500 m<sup>2</sup> of storage, including 4,500m<sup>2</sup> of temperature controlled.

In recent years, the French air cargo community has strengthened its relationships. The ACFA (Air Cargo France Association) has been structured to increase its coordinative actions through different "Clubs": "Security Club", "Ground handlers Club", "Club for promotion of the profession", "Green Club".

Through these clubs, operators can exchange on best practices and work together on settling more efficient processes.

The environment is high on the priority list of the air cargo community. At CDG all the operators are fully involved in enabling the goal of net zero CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 2050. Electrification of the GSE's, use of other alternative energies, reduction of energy consumption - many investments are being made by operators and the airport authority to achieve this purpose.

Common actions are also being conducted to increase the rate of recycled plastic in the stretch plastic films and to reduce the use of plastic wrapping, replacing it, when it is possible with reusable blankets.

Another goal is to increase the waste recovery rate among the cargo community to reach at least 70 percent in the next years.

A notable development in sustainability efforts is the focus on Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF). The French government has implemented policies to encourage SAF integration into the aviation fuel mix. This initiative not only supports environmental goals but also enhances the competitiveness of French air cargo on a global scale.

Boeing anticipates an average annual growth of the world air cargo activity of 4.1 percent till 2041.

The French cargo community aims to benefit from a share of this growth and is working on a long-term adaptation of the processes and infrastructures to achieve this goal, also taking into account the necessity to reduce its environmental footprint.





# TELEPORT RAMPS UP OPERATIONS

BY Edward HARDY

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2024 is expected to be more positive for cross-border logistics in general, given a renewed pick-up in trade and consumer demand. Air cargo has posted its fourth month of double-digit growth in March, according to IATA. So the industry is already seeing a strong first quarter. An uptick in global and regional demand is translating well for cargo and the e-commerce delivery sector.

Data shows China is now exporting more to Southeast Asia than to the US. In 2023, the total export value from China to SEA in 2023 was US\$523.7 billion. The industry can expect to see this economic trend continue, which presents a big opportunity for logistic players in the region.

Furthermore, key e-commerce lanes between China and the top five Southeast Asia countries are expected to grow to US\$3.8 billion in freight value in 2025. This is, therefore, an opportune moment for airlines and logistics players to create more capacity to be able to cater to the incoming e-commerce volume, especially from China to Southeast Asia.

“For Teleport, China is a key focus market over the next five years as we seek to ramp up our capacity by creating more key high-volume lanes,” Jagedeswaran Nadrajah, Head of Air Partners, stated.

“Our Air Partners programme is a win-win solution for both Teleport and our partners in terms of us respectively growing our network and capacity by maximising the utilisation of existing assets in the sky.

“Budget carriers are the dominant airline model in Southeast Asia, and their cargo capacity is only 30 percent utilised, on average. This means most planes in the air are flying ‘empty’ in their cargo hold to most destinations within the region today.

“It is a model that allows our partners to combine their network with our largest Southeast Asia air network, in turn mutually benefitting towards growing our respective reach and capacity by air. Furthermore, our air partners get to maintain a lean organisation with consolidated resources, while growing their cargo revenue.

### Growth strategy

For the first quarter 2024, Teleport delivered 63,945 tonnes during the quarter, a 79 percent increase from the same quarter in 2023. Utilisation rate rose 5 percent YoY to 16 percent during the quarter, even though capacity rose 25 percent.

The carrier delivered over 15.6 million parcels in Q1 2024, a 175 percent improvement from the same quarter in 2023, and also achieved a new average of 172,000 daily deliveries.

“We remain focused on our key three strategies this year, which is anchored on growing our network, capacity and end-to-end operations to strengthen our next-day proposition in Southeast Asia,” Nadrajah explained.

“Growing our Air Partners network with more strategic partner airlines, so we don’t fly empty. We have over 40 partners to date, and more are coming soon. We’ve recently inducted VietJet Air Cargo, and Pakistan International Airlines into our partners programme.

“Extending and strengthening our end-to-end operational capabilities with a multi-modal, first-to-last-mile capabilities in key markets - to enable us to better deliver reliable, affordable, next-day cross-border logistics solutions in Southeast Asia.

“We are also developing a pioneering next-day e-commerce solution between China and Southeast Asia, where Teleport can help businesses in China as the first point of contact for their e-commerce volumes moving into Southeast Asia.

“We continue to seek new avenues to grow our core network beyond AirAsia.”





## HOW THE COOL CHAIN IS EVOLVING

BY Anastasiya SIMSEK

REFLECTING on the last 20 years, Nick Finbow, Perishable Sales Director at International Cargo Logistics Limited (ICL), has seen significant advancements in the cool chain and handling of temperature-sensitive cargo in the logistics industry.

"There is now a much higher degree of understanding of the need to ensure the freight is kept in the correct temperature regime from farm to end user," he explained.

"The majority now pre-cool the product as soon as possible after harvesting and transport it to the airports in temperature-controlled conditions, maintained during transit using a combination of gel packs and cool guard.

As the industry has progressed, certain cargo types have seen notable growth, particularly berries.

"Blueberries are leading the charge," Finbow explained, underscoring the need for tailored services, as "these products are very susceptible to heat, making it imperative that temperature control is maintained from field to fork."

The dynamics between sea and airfreight for temperature-controlled goods have also developed: "Sea freight is seeing some extremely interesting developments, allowing for more highly perishable products to be moved by sea."

However, airfreight will continue to be indispensable for highly perishable items like raspberries and strawberries due to their sensitivity and short shelf life. Geopolitical challenges are also pushing exporters towards airfreight: "It's a more attractive option

due to the additional costs and time associated with sea freight."

As the cool chain sector continues to evolve, ICL's strategic initiatives and partnerships position it to navigate the complexities of the industry, ensuring the highest standards of service and reliability for its clients.

### Challenges and opportunities

Capitalising on the expanding cold chain market, ICL is positioning itself to meet evolving demands.

"Although airlines can profit from this offering with options like 2-8 and enviro containers, handling agents are often unable to capitalise on these requirements," Finbow outlined, stressing that managing these costs and enhancing infrastructure is crucial to maintaining a competitive edge.

"We are in the process of expanding our refrigeration footprint to ensure our growth does not outstrip our cold chain offering," Finbow stated.

"We are also in the process of gaining industry certification to give our customers confidence that what we say we really do."

The primary issue facing airlines is reducing non-profitable routes, which are "adding so much to the cost of freight, making these overpriced and no longer attractive to customers."

Despite these hurdles, ICL is exploring alternative solutions, such as moving products into the EU and trucking them to the UK: "We all know this comes with its own challenges, but ICL is fully equipped to assist and make these new routes viable for current and future customers."

Partnerships play a pivotal role in bolstering ICL's operations. Finbow underscores the importance of collaboration, citing the recent partnership with FreshLinc.

"These collaborations are a must. Many companies boast that they are asset heavy, but I firmly believe working with the right partners can ensure you offer the same if not a better service," he highlighted.

"Companies with a different offering, such as haulage, are specialists in their area. The lesson here is to not try and do everything and fail but to ensure that the customer receives the best solutions based on both you and your collaborative partners' strengths."

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# SWISSPORT TARGETS E-COMMERCE OPPORTUNITY

BY Edward HARDY

08



**“Our goal is to become the global leader in ground handling solutions for e-commerce operators, which requires us to be extremely flexible and agile.”**

**T**he global e-commerce landscape has been dramatically reshaped by China's manufacturing prowess, with a ripple effect extending across the Asia-Pacific region and beyond.

It's undeniable that the engine of the global e-commerce boom has been, and continues to be, China's enormous manufacturing capacity. However, e-commerce is a highly dynamic sector, with new opportunities and trade lanes that can open up overnight.

“For the entire industry, the e-commerce boom has been a godsend. Currently, more than 10 percent of globally flown air cargo volumes is e-commerce,” Swissport's Global Director of e-commerce Nikolai Schaffner stated.

“This is about ten times the volume seen as recently as 2019, marking a monumental shift. Post-Covid, as passenger wide-body capacity, has been ramping up slowly and freighter capacity has remained relatively constant, the industry would have faced a substantial supply-demand gap without e-commerce, so this boom has been extremely fortunate for us, providing much-needed support.

“Some of the forecasts for 2024 indicate a potential 40 percent annualised growth rate for e-commerce volumes. It's clear that such high levels of growth aren't sustainable indefinitely; eventually, the industry will hit capacity limits. However, e-commerce as a phenomenon is extremely sustainable and will be with us for many years.”

## Changing habits

Evolving shopping behaviour plays a significant role in the growth of the e-commerce segment. Many buyers, especially in Western markets, have become accustomed to quick delivery, real-time tracking, and the ability to demand refunds if there's a delay, all at a reasonable price. As such, when dealing with e-commerce, it is critical to take a proactive approach, engaging with the entire cargo ecosystem to meet the consumer's needs.

“To succeed in working with an e-commerce operator, you must demonstrate not just a plan B, but also a plan C and maybe even a plan D. This level of preparation requires interaction with the entire supply chain,” Schaffner explained.

“We've shifted our mindset from being a ground handler focused solely on airlines to delivering solutions for the entire ecosystem.

“Our goal is to become the global leader in ground handling solutions

for e-commerce operators, which requires us to be extremely flexible and agile”

“Three factors—stability, efficiency, and speed—are all crucial to our e-commerce customers. Providing this balance is our daily bread and butter, ensuring we offer solutions that can handle the significant amount of cargo coming in.”

## Enhancing operations

e-commerce now sustains activity throughout the year, much like the broader air cargo industry. The volumes speak for themselves, as exports from e-commerce in China and Hong Kong alone reach around 10,000 tonnes per day. These are substantial figures, ensuring that even on slower days, activity remains robust.

While ground handling and carrier services will always remain the core of Swissport's business, the company is always looking at how they can enhance the scope of their services in specific sectors, such as e-commerce, to reflect the growing opportunity.

“I think the ongoing e-commerce boom has been incredibly beneficial for the air cargo industry as a whole. This disruption has driven us to evolve our standards and meet the needs of end consumers,” Schaffner outlined.

This move has provided a significant motivational boost for the entire air cargo industry to develop solutions and upgrade technological interfaces, which will have a lasting impact on the industry beyond the e-commerce sector.

“We are certainly investing, driven by robust expectations of the commercial opportunities available in the e-commerce space,” Schaffner outlined.

“Once we build these advanced tools, we can leverage them for various other solutions as well.

“This approach will have a tremendous knock-on effect on the products we offer, benefiting not just e-commerce-oriented agents but the entire air cargo ecosystem.

“In the long run, the disruption and innovative approaches that e-commerce operators bring will help us develop air cargo products that benefit not just e-commerce but the entire industry.

“This will be a transformational shift, and I believe that in 20 years, we'll look back at this time as the beginning of a significant change.”



# TRANSFORMING E-COMMERCE LOGISTICS

BY Anastasiya SIMSEK

**S**taying ahead of regulatory changes and ensuring seamless operations is paramount in the logistics sector, especially when handling goods like e-commerce. Through its x7trade platform, Feeport is seeking to deliver this, addressing the unique challenges faced by e-commerce logistics and setting new standards in the industry.

"Our motivation stemmed from witnessing the significant challenges businesses encountered with EU import customs clearance, coupled with the absence of a truly neutral technology provider in the market," Luís Pimentel, CEO of Feeport, stated.

"When the EU adopted a new VAT regulation for imported low-value e-commerce back in 2021, the founders decided it was a turning point for the supply chain, also presenting an opportunity to offer the market a neutral technology that helps with customs clearance of low-value e-commerce goods.

"We saw how companies were struggling to navigate the complex regulatory landscape, often facing delays and increased costs due to inefficient processes. This spurred us to create a solution that would not only simplify these procedures but also ensure full compliance with the latest regulations."

"Feeport was created to bridge this gap, offering innovative solutions designed to simplify the intricate customs processes and ensure compliance with evolving regulations. Our mission is to empower businesses with the tools they need to navigate the complexities of e-commerce customs clearance efficiently and transparently".

## Addressing challenges

The x7trade platform targets three key areas in e-commerce logistics: regulatory compliance, efficient customs processing, and supply chain interconnectivity and visibility.

"In an industry where regulatory compliance and operational efficiency are paramount, Feeport developed the x7trade platform to tackle the most pressing challenges in e-commerce logistics," Pimentel said.

The platform automates the preparation and submission of parcel declarations for customs clearance, enhancing real-time communication across the supply chain and ensuring seamless logistics operations.

"By integrating real-time tracking and seamless data sharing, we provide our clients with unparalleled visibility into their operations, allowing them to make informed decisions quickly," he explained.

## Ensuring compliance

Compliance with new EU import e-commerce regulations is a cornerstone of x7trade's functionality. The platform automates the entire customs clearance process, including Entry Summary Declarations (ENS) submissions, and ensures full compliance with both the Import One-Stop Shop (IOSS) and Non-IOSS systems, as well as the Import Control System 2 (ICS2) requirements.

"x7trade is uniquely tailored for e-commerce operations, addressing the specific needs of low-value goods and parcel-level declarations," Pimentel emphasised.

"With the increasing complexity of international trade regulations, it's crucial for businesses to have a reliable system that ensures they remain compliant without compromising on efficiency. Our platform offers that reliability and more."

While many platforms attempt to address various aspects of logistics, x7trade is specifically engineered to handle the unique demands of low-value e-commerce imported into the European Union. "

"Real-time tracking and seamless data sharing across the supply chain offer our clients unparalleled visibility into their operations," Pimentel noted.

Additionally, the x7trade platform supports e-commerce logistics by automating customs clearance processes, including ENS submissions, at the parcel and item level. This significantly boosts efficiency through real-time tracking and transparency across the supply chain.

"Our platform streamlines ENS submissions and supports both IOSS and non-IOSS systems, directly connecting with customs for H7 declarations of low-value goods," Pimentel explained.

## Support in a diverse sector

The x7trade platform serves a diverse group of business users, including customs brokers, logistics service providers, integrators, and postal companies. Customs brokers leverage x7trade to automate intricate customs clearance processes, ensuring compliance while significantly reducing manual workload.

Logistics providers and postal companies benefit from enhanced efficiency and transparency, particularly in handling increased shipment volumes with greater accuracy and speed.

"The platform's ability to handle increased shipment volumes with greater accuracy and speed is invaluable," Pimentel continued.

This level of transparency ensures that all parties have access to the most current information, improving customer satisfaction and streamlining logistics processes.

"With x7trade, the seamless flow of information across the supply chain enhances collaboration and responsiveness," Pimentel emphasised.

## Market presence

Companies that previously focused on a fulfilment model are now considering shifting to importing directly from manufacturers to end customers. Feeport also observes a growing trend of global e-commerce shippers who are looking to directly inject e-commerce into local European markets instead of relying solely on major European air logistic hubs.

This presents capital and other major airports in every EU member state with an opportunity to attract airlines and cargo volumes in the form of e-commerce.

Local airports and their supply chains need the right and neutral technology to handle e-commerce shipments containing thousands of parcels.

"Our continued expansion will enable us to support even more businesses in navigating the complexities of e-commerce customs clearance, ensuring they can operate efficiently and compliantly in a rapidly evolving market," Pimentel emphasised.

"Feeport's market presence spans Estonia, Finland, Lithuania, Latvia, Greece, the Netherlands, Hungary, and Romania, with plans to expand into Slovakia and Poland.

"These strategic locations allow us to support a diverse range of e-commerce logistics operations, ensuring compliance and efficiency across various regulatory environments.

"We are focusing on supporting our clients' growth, building new partnerships, and investing in advanced technologies to manage increased volumes," Pimentel stated.



**"By integrating real-time tracking and seamless data sharing, we provide our clients with unparalleled visibility into their operations."**



# COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE AND CUSTOMER TRUST

BY Max SAUBERSCHWARZ, Head of Global Air Freight, DHL Global Forwarding

At DHL Global Forwarding, our top priority is to deliver the best transport solutions and logistics services to our customers, whether by air, ocean, or land. This commitment is guided by our company's purpose of "Connecting people. Improving lives." A recent testament to our dedication is the successful attainment of the global IATA CEIV Pharma Certification. This certification from IATA recognizes our expertise in life sciences and healthcare transportation within the air freight industry on a global scale, which fills us with immense pride.

However, what makes us even more proud is when our customers and partners acknowledge

our ongoing dedication and commitment. This year, we are thrilled to be recognized as the Airfreight Forwarder of the Year for the second consecutive time at the ACW World Air Cargo Awards. What makes this recognition even more special is that it is solely based on the votes of our customers and partners. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to all those who voted for us this year, as their trust forms the foundation of our success.

We would also like to extend our appreciation to AIR CARGO WEEK and Air France KLM Martinair Cargo, the sponsor of this year's award category. This recognition is not merely about our company name; it rather acknowledges the unwavering dedication

and commitment of our employees. Therefore, we want to express our heartfelt thanks also to our employees. It is not DHL Global Forwarding that has been recognized as the Airfreight Forwarder of the Year, but it is the collective effort of the entire team at DHL Global Forwarding, specifically within the airfreight organisation. Every individual in the airfreight organisation plays a crucial role in providing our customers with best in class transport solutions and logistics services. We take great pride in having such a strong team of freight forwarders and logistics experts in the industry.

At the same time, receiving such an award serves as an encouragement for us to persist in our work with dedication and passion, and to continually strive for improvement. It was not long ago that our personal and professional lives were disrupted

by a global pandemic. It took time for supply chains and trade routes to stabilize, with flight schedules gradually returning to a certain degree of normality. Our team has shown great resilience during this time.

However, even today, volatility continues to dominate the sentiment and market, with factors such as the situation in the Red Sea, the war in Ukraine and the Gaza Strip, as well as trade tensions between different economic blocs. In such challenging circumstances, having a reliable and resilient partner who can provide appropriate solutions to address volatility and complexity is crucial. This is what motivates us - to be the trusted partner that helps us navigate through difficult situations. The recognition we have received through this award further encourages us to remain steadfast in fulfilling this mission.

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# 60 Seconds With ...



**KYLE PATEL**

President and CEO of Bitlux

BY Anastasiya SIMSEK

Kyle Patel is President and CEO of Bitlux, a global private aviation company that focuses heavily on logistics in the air and on the ground. He founded Bitlux in 2018 to offer unparalleled service and raise the bar for the industry's ethical standards and business practices. Based in Boca Raton, Florida, he leads a team of 17 globally scattered professionals.

**How did you get into airfreight/logistics?**

In 2013, I applied to be someone's assistant – who, unbeknownst to myself, was involved in private air logistics. After a few months, we found out that this person was stealing from the company, and I took his place.

**What quote has most resonated with you?**

"What is behind you, doesn't matter" – Enzo Ferrari. As humans, we tend to carry a lot with us instead of just the lessons of the past, we like to carry the entire thing and relive it instead of living fresh experiences.

Plus, I do race cars as a hobby – so truly, if I'm in front, my line matters and it's up to the rest to catch me.

**What's the best piece of advice you've ever received?**

"What is in your head determines what is in your hands" A lesson from my father – who picked it up from a book called Psycho-Cybernetics. The power of the human mind is beyond comprehension and rather inspiring. We can put ourselves where we want to be, most of the time, and private aviation is the fastest way to do it.

**What is the most adventurous thing you have ever done?**

Well, I do race cars as a hobby – which is extremely exciting. It is, by definition, an adventure of a career as a hobby.

**If you could have dinner with any three people, living or dead, who would it be and why?**

First, I'd love to sit with George Washington – out of the bravest men in history, our American Forefathers hold the title.

Second, Javier Milei – a modern conqueror of bureaucracy and inefficiency that has been built over several decades – regardless of political stance, making drastic changes to a large political complex takes some serious gall.

Third would likely be Leonidas – he ruled a group of people in Sparta that had a never-before-seen culture of combat superiority. Not just a warrior but a leader of a giant family – that promoted brotherhood from the smallest person to the oldest and most frail. I've not read about such comradery in other leaders.

**What's something we wouldn't know about you from your CV?**

I have very Southern tendencies. I enjoy large open spaces, woodworking, driving tractors and large machines, and tend to a few acres of my own and have some honeybees.

**What hobby have you always wanted to try but never got around to?**

I can safely say when it comes to hobbies that I want to try – I have none that I don't do immediately. Life is short. I'm very blessed to be in a position where I have been able to pick up hobbies quickly, get into them the right way, and determine whether it is worth the journey to master.

**If you have not pursued a career in airfreight, what other field would you have liked to go into?**

I had two other businesses – one was a personal training and fitness training company. The other was a clothing brand. Both failed,

however, I really enjoyed both, and I'd likely have stuck with the apparel brand – it had a great mission, incorporated philanthropy, and the image was very unique.

**If you could have any superpower, what would it be?**

Truth-Vision. Our world has gotten so clouded with inflated, false, or omitted information that it can be very difficult to navigate. If I could, I'd absolutely love to see reality as it happened, along with the intent to provide a better place for the next generation.

**What's your proudest moment and your biggest regret?**

Regrets – I have none. Ask me when I'm a few moments from death – but I believe that by that time, even if tomorrow, I did the best I could for the people I love and my little slice of industry.

Proudest moment? Currently, the payroll is approach US\$1 million. I think it's absolutely awesome to have a company that is able to pay team members that much money to improve their lives.

**If there was a movie made about your life, who would you like to see play the lead role?**

Jason Statham – except with hair and a tan.

**Looking back over your career, what would your message be to someone considering a career in logistics?**

The only way to win – and I mean win – is by maintaining a customer-focused approach. In all areas. The key question to ask, in every decision, even ancillary events, "is this going to improve our customer experience?" If the answer is no, it is a waste of time in my opinion.

**How do you motivate your team?**

Our team is great. One of the best things I feel like we've done is implement a code of conduct – both inside and outside of the office. We read this every week, we review implementation, and we hold one another accountable. Working with a group of people who see themselves as elite goes further than any dollar will.

**What is the one item you can't travel without?**

Sweatpants.

**Who is your role model?**

Depending on the day, I have many. It's actually a collection of people, small slices from each person, both professionally and personally.

**What would your autobiography be called?**

"From the depths of shallow living to life above the airliners."

**Cats or dogs?**

We have both in our home.

**Early riser or night owl?**

I work in logistics – we all work both, depends on the schedule.

**What's the best and worst purchase you've ever made?**

They are both the same. Race cars and supercars. I absolutely love them to death, but when something goes wrong – it goes really wrong. Talk about voluntary heartache and overwhelming joy and bliss – you can go from one to the other in a split second – sprinkle some danger in there as well to make life really exciting.

**If you could only eat one meal for the rest of your life, what would it be?**

My wife's "Fiesta Bowls" – Jerk Chicken, brown rice, corn, jalapenos, black beans, some sour cream. It has all the nutrients of a sustained meal and provides energy, recovery, and stamina.

**What's your most used emoji?**

👉👉👉

# View From The Maindeck



## 200 RIDERS AND 600 HORSES

BY Michael SALES

**T**he 2024 Olympic Games in Paris are set to rock the world as the sporting spectacle arrives in the French capital.

Hundreds of contenders will have been working hard to qualify, and now the moment has come for it all to burst with light and sound. Thousands will descend on the City of Light from all over the world to witness some of the most ancient sports – archery, running, weightlifting and wrestling to modern events such as cycling, skateboarding and breakdancing. But the most ancient and traditional is equestrian.

The Olympic and Paralympic 2024 equestrian events will take place between 27th July and 6th August at the historic Château de Versailles, the same venue as the first official equestrian meeting back in 1900.

A logistical feat has been required to allow for the estimated 200 riders to perform in dressage, eventing, jumping, para-dressage, and more in front of the 20,000+ seating arena on the Etoile Royale esplanade, situated within the Palace's gardens.

### Ancient and modern

Although the ancient Games were staged in Olympia, Greece, from 776 BC through 393 AD, it took 1,503 years for the Olympics to return. The modern version of the games was first held in Athens in 1896.

Nowadays, many airlines regularly fly horses and other live animals in specially equipped aircraft, and this sector is an important part of their cargo business. KLM was the first to start back in the 1920s and is still a major player in the live animal trade.

Bernard de Boer, veteran live animal expert of Air France/KLM/Martinair Cargo has many years of hands-on experience in this special category: "KLM has long tradition in flying animals, from cats to horses, even lions, but horses are an important sector. Although we have much

competition, we are still a leader for horse transport from all over the world.

"Many of the competitors for the Olympics will have spent the winter in Florida and would have taken part in events throughout America and Latin America. In March and April, many horses are transported to Europe, to take part in various events in France in Italy, in Germany, in the UK and Scandinavia before eventually arriving in Paris for the Olympic equestrian events. Most will be assembled at animal hotels or equestrian centres such as Liege in Belgium, Peelbergen in the Netherlands, Frankfurt, Ostend, and Paris CDG being the main one in Europe."



### Massive logistics operation

A veritable army of grooms, attendants, vets, ground handlers and airline experts will care for the transport and maintenance of hundreds of highly strung horses from across the world, assuring their safety and good condition throughout the games.

Each competitor may bring up to three horses for different events. Each horse weighs between 500 and 600 kilogrammes and in addition to the animals themselves, 12,000 to 15,000 kilogrammes of special feed plus 14,000 kilogrammes of equipment will also be moved to

Paris within a space of a few days. After the events, the entire process will be repeated for the journey home. These horses are extremely valuable, some estimated to be worth between US\$500,00 to \$15 million, an enormous responsibility for the airlines, road operators and handlers who take on the task.

### Fresh air is essential

Apart from the Olympics, thousands of horses are flown around the globe for events such as - the Grand National, Royal Ascot, the Melbourne Cup, the Dubai World Cup, Saudi Cup, as well as special events and various breeding programmes.

The international love of equestrian competition has generated a huge business sector for the air cargo industry.

"The animals will be transported in special freighter aircraft such as B777 or B747, each freighter carrying several horse boxes which may contain up to three horses each. As the animals consume a large amount of air and generate considerable heat there is a limit on the number of horses that can be carried in one aircraft. The horses will be stabled for several days before the event," de Boer explained.

"To speed up the arrival process, those horses arriving by air will have all the necessary documentation, ready in advance for customs and medical examination. After the long flights from around the world, each horse will require fresh air before any further proceeding and the handling process at the airport, it takes between 2 to 2.5 hours for each horse and then they are placed in air-conditioned vehicles, ready for transport to the site at Versailles.

"If there is any delay, even in the quarantine areas when necessary, the horses can still be ridden and exercised, but overall this is normally a smooth well practised process. All international transport of animals, including equines, must follow the regulations set by the International Air Transport Association, as well as any specific national rules."