

## Logwin's textile logistics: Crease-free to their destination

### How experience gave rise to the "AirTextainer"

**Grevenmacher (Luxembourg)** - "I don't really see myself as an inventor", says Werner Sander with a laugh. "When you come to think of it, anybody could have come up with the idea of taking a standard wooden pallet and fitting it with a metal frame and a covering." And yet why should anyone come up with the idea at all?

Stuttgart, January 1993. Werner Sander has been manager of Logwin's air freight location there for six months. The experienced fashion logistics specialist faces a huge problem: "At the beginning of the 1990s no logistics service provider in the world was in a position to supply fashion businesses in China or Central and South America with garments on hanger (GOH)", remembers the 58-year old. "In those days we could only use the airlines' GOH equipment just for air transportation. The destination airport was, in a manner of speaking, the end of the line. The use of the equipment was also dependent on the airline in question, and there were only a few who had the appropriate equipment."

#### A multi-talent takes shape

Werner Sander was not satisfied with this state of affairs. His vision was to enable any shop anywhere in the world to receive hanging garment shipments without the need for time-consuming transshipment and without being dependent on a specific airline. At the time some logistics service providers were already using self-made wooden crates with metal frames, but these had considerable disadvantages. Differences in temperatures and inadequate ventilation during transport meant that the untreated metal could corrode, resulting in garments arriving at their destination with rust stains. It was also then labor-intensive to dismantle the bulky crates with their welded frames and to dispose of them. What was needed was an innovative, high-quality system for transport.

In collaboration with a packaging company Logwin started the development of a special box. The requirements were extensive. It should above all be suitable for air transportation, robust but not too heavy, and should also be easy to assemble and disassemble. At the same time the garments were to be transported with minimum space requirements and yet protected and with adequate ventilation for the entire journey. The solution was a modular system. After a year's development the "AirTextainer" was

born and now ready to go into serial production. Its impractical predecessors were now a thing of the past - at least for Logwin.

The floor of the new special box consists of a wooden pallet with insertable fastening lugs. Bars and rods anchored there form the frame, and fourfold reinforced corrugated cardboard and weather resistant film make up the covering. There are no screw connections required, which makes assembly and disassembly child's play. Compared with a wooden structure, the modular system is extremely robust. Loading is simple since the box can be served from all sides. Variable clothes rails allowing cord to be fastened for hanging the clothing mean that the space inside can be used flexibly. Long coats and dresses as well as blouses or trousers can all be accommodated.

### **Clever transportation for branded clothing**

The first AirTextainer made its maiden flight in 1994. "At that time we were shipping high-quality suits, trousers, jackets and coats to Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand for a well-known fashion label", reports Werner Sander. "The response to our pilot project was very positive. And the fact that we have now been transporting high-quality fashion articles for our customer in this manner says it all."

The benefits of the AirTextainer vis-à-vis shipment by flat pack are obvious. Items of clothing that tend to crease are transported over long distances from source to destination as hanging garments and thus in a very gentle manner. It is not necessary to invest in labor-intensive preparation at the destination. A further advantage is that, compared with standard containers, space utilization is around 15 per cent higher with the AirTextainer. Logwin transports small packages with accessories on the floor of the AirTextainers at no extra cost. Originally developed for air freight, the AirTextainer is multi-talented, being suitable for transport by ship, train or truck. It is simple to transship to another mode of transport with a forklift truck. The AirTextainer also achieves top scores with regard to security since there have never been any cases of theft from the transport box.

Today, Logwin sends around 5,000 AirTextainers around the globe each year on behalf of its customers. There is strong demand for transportation between Europe and Asia in both directions and between Asia and South America. The AirTextainer is also being increasingly used on routes to and from Australasia. Werner Sander explains, "Demand for high-quality fashion articles continues unabated. And last but not least, the garment manufacturers have increased the number of collections over the course of time.

Whereas at one time it was usual to produce two collections each year, some fashion companies nowadays bring out up to twelve. And fashion articles must reach the customer."

### From Stuttgart throughout the world

The home of the AirTextainer is still located at the place where it all began 18 years ago - Stuttgart. Logwin operates its own warehouse at the airport with approx. 1,500 m<sup>2</sup> of storage and logistics area. There is a permanent stock of around 200 AirTextainers there and a further 50 of all sizes are stored at the manufacturer's facility in Neuburg. The special boxes are dispatched from Stuttgart and from there circulate around the world. Logwin holds its own stocks at international locations - in particular at important textile production centres.

However, today's AirTextainers differ from the first prototype since a new version entered the market in 2000. Improvements were made to the covering, to the fastening mechanisms and locking devices. Moreover, since that time the logistics specialist has made the special box available in four sizes (S, M, L and XL) with different capacities. What remains is the robust material. The wooden pallet and frame can be re-used up to 50 times, the corrugated cardboard approximately four times. "It is remarkable how efficiently, reliably and securely this basically simple system works", is how Werner Sander, the "father" of the AirTextainer, sums up his invention. "The simplest ideas are always the best."

### The Logwin AirTextainer

Type / Size	S	M	L	XL
<b>Dimensions</b>	120 x 100 x 158 cm	180 x 110 x 158 cm	230 x 150 x 158 cm	230 x 150 x 220 cm
<b>Tare weight</b>	42 kg	92 kg	136 kg	160 kg
<b>Freight weight</b>	316 kg	521 kg	910 kg	1,265 kg
<b>Capacity</b>	approx. 90 men's suits / 360 blouses	approx. 150 men's suits / 590 blouses	approx. 260 men's suits / 1,030 blouses	approx. 365 men's suits / 1,430 blouses

**About Logwin AG**

As an external partner, Logwin AG, Grevenmacher (Luxembourg), develops a comprehensive range of logistics and service solutions for trade and industry. In 2010, the group generated sales of 1.4 billion euros and currently employs over 5,600 staff. Logwin operates in all main markets worldwide and has approximately 250 locations across all continents. With its two business segments Solutions (customer-focused contract logistics solutions) and Air + Ocean (global air and sea freight activities), Logwin AG is one of the leaders in the market.

The Logwin business segment Air + Ocean is represented at over 200 locations, of which 115 are wholly-owned, on all five continents. Around 2,000 employees provide air and sea freight transport as well as specially tailored and complex logistics solutions. The focus of our international engagement is in Europe, Asia, Australia, South America and South Africa. The global network is reinforced by partnerships and cooperation agreements, which include membership of the sea freight cooperation Group 99 and the air freight cooperation FUTURE.

Logwin AG is listed in the Prime Standard of the Deutsche Börse. The majority shareholder is DELTON AG, Bad Homburg (Germany).

**Your contact at Logwin:****[www.logwin-logistics.com](http://www.logwin-logistics.com)****Volker Hoebelt**

Director Sales + Marketing in business segment Air + Ocean

Phone: +49 6021 343-9000

Fax: +49 6021 343-9008

[volker.hoebelt@logwin-logistics.com](mailto:volker.hoebelt@logwin-logistics.com)