

## REICHHART LOGTALK

Answers to questions that are of concern to the industry:  
Our experts regularly answer questions about current logistics topics in interviews and provide tips and tricks on how to deal with logistics challenges correctly.



Interview with

**Benedikt Kössinger**  
Innovation Manager and Deputy Head of Contract Logistics Germany and Austria

*From intelligent supply chain solutions to e-mobility and sustainability concepts – in logistics, the ability to innovate plays a critical role. The surge in innovation in recent years is shaping the industry and providing numerous opportunities for optimisation and development. Many companies are wondering how they can withstand the competitive pressure and drive their own innovative capability. For long-term business success, this requires holistic interdisciplinary planning as well as implementation of new ideas – alongside managing business operations and dealing with existing challenges such as disruptions to supply chains, rising energy and fuel prices and the shortage of skilled workers. In this interview, Benedikt Kössinger, Deputy Division Manager and Innovation Manager at REICHHART Logistik, talks about the importance of innovation management and outlines current challenges and approaches to solutions at REICHHART.*

**Why is smoothly functioning innovation and idea management more important than ever for the logistics industry?**

I am convinced that the ability to innovate plays a central role in the long-term success of the company. As part of our growth strategies here at REICHHART, we define an innovation as a planned change based on a new idea or technology. The area of new technologies has developed particularly

rapidly in recent years due to factors such as the use of artificial intelligence, blockchains and robotic systems. As a logistics service provider, we aim to keep pace in this area in order to remain competitive, position ourselves for the future and enhance our efficiency still further. At the same time, there is always a long road between the initial idea and the actual innovation. This requires thorough idea management – and smooth, close interaction between all areas. In our newly formed Innovation Group, we scrutinise every idea in detail before implementing it and putting it into practice.

### **What are your tasks as Innovation Manager at REICHHART?**

As Innovation Manager, I bring together all the technology-based ideas submitted to us from the different departments of our company. I see my role as a constant driver of innovation, monitoring current developments on the market and providing information about new technologies and their potential fields of application in the company. My tasks also include following up on specific individual implementations. In the past, there have always been innovative approaches that were not followed up consistently and across the board. For this reason, this year we set up an interdisciplinary Innovation Circle to strengthen synergies and look at the proposals from different angles. Colleagues from IT, Contract Logistics and Transport Logistics, as well as Business Development, Purchasing and the Integrated Management System, discuss the most promising approaches here. Cross-location collaboration also promotes communication and the exchange of new ideas, so that they are not just designed for a single application but – in the best case – benefit everyone.

### **What actions can be taken to anchor the ability to innovate in our company philosophy and operations?**

We promote innovative strength and ideas "outside the box" with our REICHHART think tank, an internal tool for voluntary use that was created by our personnel development team. All employees can submit or present suggestions for improvement here. We have digitalised the process behind it, so that ideas can easily be submitted on a computer or smartphone app, anywhere and any time. In my opinion, personal participation is what smooths the way for achieving effective transformation in the company, and usually also starts where the innovation is needed most. On Team REICHHART, everyone has the chance to actively shape the company and be involved in the development of new processes or the introduction of new technologies.

### **What innovative approaches are you currently working on?**

We are currently examining the use of driverless transport systems at various locations, and are in promising talks with several suppliers on this topic. We are also testing new scanner technologies and have recently started using a new planning and simulation tool in the field of tender preparation. In addition, we are investigating the possibility of automating manual processes, both in new projects and at existing locations. And our colleagues at REICHHART digital logistics are working together with our logistics experts on the continuous advancement of our in-house logistics software, motus.