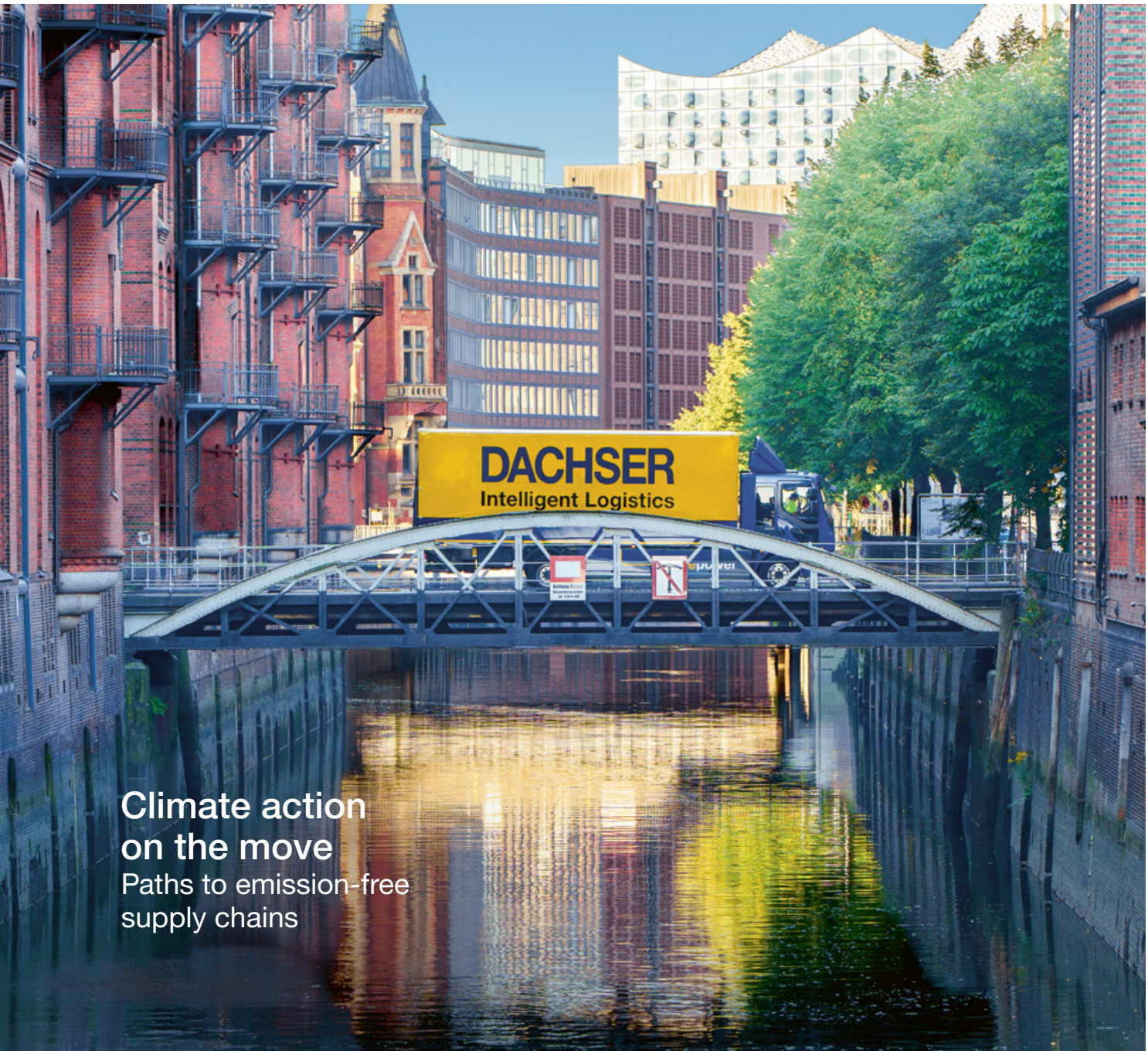
DACHSER
Intelligent Logistics

DACHSER magazine

The world of intelligent logistics



Climate action on the move

Paths to emission-free supply chains

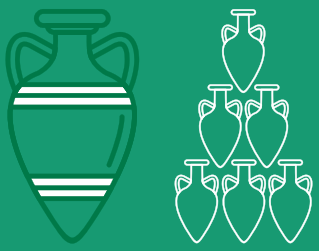
01/2025

Packing a **punch**

Flows of goods keep the world of packaging and wrapping in constant motion. The formula is simple: during transportation, functionality is everything.

200 million

beer cans found their way to thirsty throats in the US in 1937. Shortly before, the Gottfried Krueger Brewing Company in New Jersey had become the first producer to sell canned beer. It used conventional tin cans, which came with an opener for punching a triangular opening into the lid.



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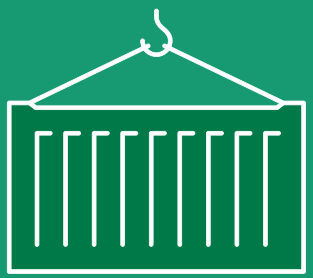
handles and a tapered body were the hallmarks of ancient amphorae. Although their shape makes it difficult to stand them upright, it does make them easy to transport within a ship's hull. The fact that the clay pots could be packed tightly against each other in several layers ensured an even distribution of load points and offered stability even on stormy passages.

7,000

variants of Tetra Pak packaging are in circulation worldwide today. It was a Swede by the name of Ruben Rausing who came up with the idea in 1951. He wanted creative packaging to simplify milk transportation. Tetra Pak packaging weighs only a fraction of glass, is easy to stack, easy to transport, and cheap to produce. The pyramid-like tetrahedron packs that gave the company its name were soon replaced by the more practical cuboid shape, but the name remained.

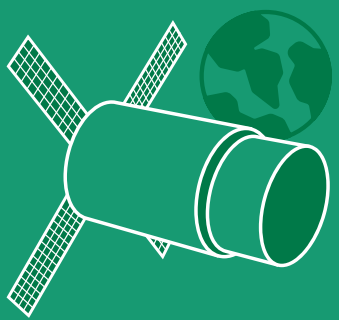


20 feet

is the measure of all things in globalization. Or, rather, 6.06 m long, 2.44 m wide, and 2.59 m high. The 20-foot standard container was the brainchild of US trucker Malcolm McLean in the 1930s. He was annoyed by the long waiting times that arose during the unloading of trucks. A pack of cigarettes gave him the idea of loading the entire truck trailer onto the ship instead of laboriously taking individual cases and sacks from the truck and bringing them aboard.

1,000 degrees Celsius

and higher is the temperature space containers will have to withstand. Developed by a German start-up, ATMOS Space Cargo containers are designed not only to transport goods—for example, for biological experiments—into space, but also to bring them back to Earth. The idea is for these autonomous space containers to make their own way out of orbit and reenter the atmosphere without damage to their valuable scientific cargo.



Message from the CEO

Dear readers,

“Always act so as to increase the number of choices.” In these times, it’s worth recalling this ethical imperative. It was the Austrian-American physicist, philosopher, and cybernetician Heinz von Foerster (1911–2002) who formulated this maxim for how to act based on what is permitted or possible within a valid understanding of values. At Dachser, everything we do is framed by our fundamental, nonnegotiable corporate values. They are an inner compass guiding the action we take—at all our locations around the globe.

At a time when politics and society are increasingly calling into question the reliability of established relationships, partnerships, and shared responsibility for a solid future, what we need now more than ever is mutual trust and respectful cooperation. Especially if we want to open up additional options for shaping the future, as the ethical imperative suggests we should.

To find out how we’re making this happen across very different aspects of everyday logistics, take a look at the stories in the DACHSER magazine, both in this print edition and now also in DACHSER magazine digital. That’s why it gives me double the pleasure today to invite you to explore the fascinating world of logistics, making discoveries both large and small, and to meet the people whose enthusiasm and innovation keep our world moving every day.

Kind regards,

Burkhard Eling, Dachser CEO

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Cover story

Forum

Expertise

Network

Discover the new DACHSER magazine digital today

DACHSER magazine has been reporting on the world of intelligent logistics for more than sixty years. It gives customers and employees alike an understanding of Dachser's strategies, innovations, and services. The focus has always been on the people who make it all possible every day: the people in our global logistics network.

Now we've opened the next chapter: DACHSER magazine digital, a new online platform for news and stories in German and English. The printed DACHSER magazine will continue to be published twice a year, with both magazines complementing and enriching each other.

The trademark of both formats is and will remain high-quality journalistic articles that have been carefully researched and produced. They allow readers to fully experience the real world of logistics at Dachser and its customers, providing information, inspiration, entertainment, and always with added value. We hope you enjoy reading and surfing!

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DACHSER eLetter:

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As here in Hamburg, Dachser is advancing emission-free city-center delivery throughout Europe

Climate **action** on the move

The economy, and the logistics sector along with it, is in the midst of a fundamental transformation. Making sustainability and climate action a part of your business is no longer optional—it is essential. Dachser has set the course for the future with a strategic focus program it calls DACHSER Climate Protection. With regard to road freight transport, this program puts the expansion of e-mobility center stage, and Dachser has been an impulse generator here for exactly ten years.

Global warming, extreme weather, droughts, floods, crop losses... The list of empirical evidence for human-driven climate change is getting longer and longer, making the need to reduce climate-damaging greenhouse gas emissions worldwide ever more urgent. The call to action extends to logistics as well. “However, there’s still a long and rocky road to decarbonization,” says Dachser CEO Burkhard Eling. In fact, the volume of road transport is constantly growing—according to estimates by the German Federal Ministry for Digital and Transport, truck freight traffic in Germany will increase a further 50 percent by 2050. The country’s transport sector is responsible for around 20 percent of CO_2 emissions. A study by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) found that freight transportation by truck, plane, ship, and train is responsible for around 8 percent of all CO_2 emissions worldwide, or as much as 11 percent if warehouses and ports are included—and those figures are on the rise.

Road freight transport is particularly challenging: according to the MIT study, it accounts for the lion’s share of freight emissions at 2.2 billion metric tons of CO_2 (as of 2021), and has so far been based almost entirely on conventional diesel, a fossil fuel. “Converting road transports to non-fossil alternatives will require staying power. As things stand, it will take two to three decades to replace our current fleet of diesel trucks with zero-emission vehicles,” Eling says. However, he continues, →

> We carefully analyze the entire environment to ensure that it suits us, our network, and the needs of our customers.
>
> Alexander Tonn, COO Road Logistics at Dachser

that involves not just procuring the right vehicles, but also expanding the publicly available charging infrastructure and non-public charging options. The grid connection capacity at Dachser locations must also be increased and the electricity itself must be available in Europe in sufficient quantities at the right place. “This infrastructure is a fundamental basis for the switch to battery-electric vehicles, which will make up the majority of zero-emission vehicles in Europe,” Eling says.

Increasing efficiency further

For Dachser, increasing efficiency was and is the primary lever in climate action. The way the company calculates this is simple: every empty-truck kilometer avoided and every improvement in capacity utilization means fewer emissions. “This benefits the climate AND profitability,” CEO Eling says. “And that makes every effort worthwhile.”

“Dachser has been working on sustainability issues for decades and is constantly confronted with new, often complex challenges,” says Stefan Hohm, Dachser’s Chief Development Officer (CDO), “be they due to legal requirements, technological developments, or changing customer expectations.” For example, Dachser launched its DACHSER Climate Protection strategic focus program a few years ago. At that time, Eling said: “We see sustainability and climate action as elementary tasks within our responsibility as a company for society and the environment. And it’s because of this deep conviction that we support the global community’s climate goals through a comprehensive climate protection strategy.” He was describing Dachser’s long-term, cross-generational approach that bundles all the company’s climate actions. Today, Hohm explains that, at Dachser, being an impulse generator also means always keeping an eye on the cost-benefit ratio and not overburdening either its own organization or its customers in this way. “To achieve our long-term goal of net zero emissions,” he says, “Dachser selects projects and partnerships to invest in that will bring alternative vehicle powertrain systems to market maturity.”

E-mobility works on both a large and a small scale

Writing e-mobility history

Dachser pursues technological development with a sense of both sound judgment and foresight. This is exemplified by the minor and major e-mobility milestones along its logistics supply chains. Dachser took the first step on the road to e-mobility exactly ten years ago with El Carrito. This small, agile electric van would leave the microhub (a public parking garage in the city center with a truck entrance) at a speed of just under 7 kph, with a full load and a turning radius of only 1.65 meters, and hum quietly through the old historic center of Málaga in southern Spain. In 2017, Dachser became the first customer for Daimler’s all-electric FUSO eCanter when it deployed two of these battery-electric light trucks in Berlin and Stuttgart. A year later, the logistics provider received an award in the German Federal Competition for Sustainable Urban Logistics for its innovation project on emission-free groupage delivery in Stuttgart’s city center.

What started out as a project would really take off with DACHSER Emission-Free Delivery. Here, non-refrigerated shipments are delivered within a defined zone exclusively by cargo bike and e-truck—making them emission-free. In 2019, the first Mercedes-Benz heavy-duty eActros trucks were added to complete the fully electric vehicle mix for Stuttgart’s city center. By 2021, Dachser had already expanded emission-free city delivery to eleven major European cities, with this figure poised to rise to 25 by the end of 2025.

Since July 2023, Dachser’s country organization in the Czech Republic has had a Volvo FH Electric in regular operation—one of Dachser’s first e-truck models for longer routes. This heavy-duty battery-electric truck covered over 200,000 kilometers in its first 16 months and can do around 330 kilometers on a single charge. Other Dachser branches use this truck model in regular operations, too. It shows how well electromobility can work even in the logistics sector, not to mention over long distances and in continuous use—as long as sufficient electricity and charging infrastructure are available.

Dachser operates more than 100 e-trucks

In 2025, Dachser put its 100th electric truck with a total weight of more than 3.5 metric tons into service in Hamburg. Since then, the 16-ton Volvo FL Electric with a refrigerated body has been reliably delivering fresh food to the city and the surrounding area.

Meanwhile, more and more large e-trucks in the Dachser network are proving their suitability for everyday use. Not only do they excel in distribution transport but, equipped with increasingly powerful batteries, they are also regularly assigned to other routes with longer driving times.

Dachser has now reached the next stage in the shift toward emission-free supply chains by introducing twelve all-electric MAN eTGX trucks, which it put into service at the beginning of 2025. These ultra-low-liner truck tractors expand Dachser's steadily growing fleet of e-trucks into the high-volume transport business with mega trailers, which can carry up to 67 pallets with double-deck loading. Added to that are the eActros 600 from Mercedes-Benz Trucks: with a range of 500 kilometers, they can be used in multiple scenarios. Delivery of the first twelve vehicles of this type to Dachser's subsidiary Brummer started at the end of 2024.

Research from everyday practice for everyday practice

"Dachser isn't trying to jump onto every e-mobility trend that comes along," says Alexander Tonn, COO Road Logistics at Dachser. "We carefully analyze the entire environment to ensure that it suits us, our network, and the needs of our customers." This is precisely why Dachser set up special e-mobility sites in Freiburg, Hamburg, and Malsch (near the southern German city of Karlsruhe) at the beginning of 2022. These locations run tests under real conditions to find out how best to operate a fleet of battery-electric vehicles: from the charging infrastructure to intelligent load management and vehicle maintenance. Their experiences get incorporated into concepts that will be gradually rolled out across the entire network over the coming years. The insight behind this is that integrated climate action starts on a small scale in order to provide the impetus for changes on a large scale. Dachser has learned this and successfully implemented it many times over.

M. Schick

Dachser implements sustainability on many levels, as the many reports and stories in DACHSER magazine digital will attest. Simply scan the QR code and experience innovations for climate action.

Steep learning curve for climate action

Climate action, social commitment, and sustainable corporate management are deeply rooted at Dachser. Dachser CEO Burkhard Eling and Stefan Hohm, the company's Chief Development Officer (CDO), talk about what has already been achieved, the current priorities, and measures to be taken in the future.

Mr. Eling, taking climate action is part of DACHSER's inclusive responsibility and is now part of a cross-company strategic focus program called DACHSER Climate Protection. How did this come about?

Burkhard Eling: A clear commitment to Dachser's core values of sustainability and inclusive responsibility has played a central role in the company's sustainability and climate actions from the very beginning. This applies in equal measure to management and shareholders, to our employees and customers. There has been, and still is, a growing interest on the part of all stakeholders to actively do their part in climate action and, of course, to meet legal obligations with practicable solutions.

Stefan Hohm: Around ten years ago, Dachser took specific steps to begin integrating climate action into its day-to-day logistics operations. Model projects for emission-free delivery in city centers then made a structured start. From 2019 on, we've expanded this commitment to include global climate action, the containment of greenhouse gases, improvements to transportation and energy efficiency, and research projects on alternative powertrain systems. After a preliminary project, we officially launched DACHSER Climate Protection in 2021 to actively shape the shift in logistics toward low- and zero-emission technologies. We also set up a separate Corporate Sustainability department at the beginning of this year, where we bundle and manage our sustainability and climate actions.

B. Eling: There's one question that overarches everything: Where in our various business fields can we achieve our climate targets and at what speed? In response, this year we'll be working on a zero-emission transition plan that is also compliant with upcoming reporting obligations.

What technologies is Dachser primarily focusing on here?

S. Hohm: In the course of our work with technologies for the transport sector, we've gained a highly specific idea of what actually works in our network and what doesn't. On the path to zero-emission vehicles, battery-electric drives based on renewables are becoming increasingly popular in short- and long-distance transport. We're also working on synthetic diesel substitutes such as HVO, and have carried out various tests with hydrogen trucks. We still have far more questions than answers, however.

B. Eling: In air and sea freight, today's alternative technology path is much less clear than it is for trucks. This is also due

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> Burkhard Eling, CEO at Dachser

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> Stefan Hohm, CDO at Dachser

to the fact that ships and aircraft have significantly longer lifecycles. By the time a model's been on the market for 20 years or more, the world has already gone through many loops of technological development, which makes investing in a technology more difficult.

S. Hohm: That's why we and the industry tend to work with bridging technologies, such as the blending of synthetic fuels—sustainable aviation fuels or SAFs, and sustainable maritime fuels or SMFs—to reduce climate-damaging emissions. In the future, green synfuels based on methanol and ammonia are to be used in shipping. The first container ships using them have already been put into service. However, both fuels still face technical and economic challenges that shipping companies will have to solve in the coming years. From today's perspective, achieving net zero emissions in shipping and aviation worldwide by 2050 seems very ambitious.

Dachser wants to be an impulse generator in climate action. How can it achieve this head start and what do customers expect?

B. Eling: Being one step ahead doesn't mean just rushing forward; it also means keeping an eye on the operational feasibility and profitability of new technologies. After all, our logistics services always have to meet customer expectations in an integrated way. That also includes the desire of some customers to agree on measurable emission reductions that they can include in their own carbon footprint. In principle, such an approach is possible if both sides develop a joint understanding of, say, the additional costs that result.

S. Hohm: It's also important to have in-depth knowledge of how to determine the carbon footprint. This applies to the calculation of all greenhouse gases in the supply chain, by which I mean Scopes 1 to 3. We need a sound basis before we can start the planning process, making targeted decisions on which measures for reducing emissions really make sense and can actually be implemented.

What other findings and experiences are you building on for the zero-emission transition?

B. Eling: We've climbed a steep learning curve in climate action, which is due largely to our well-trained and highly motivated team. But with all the know-how built up here, it's also clear that practical climate action can't be successful if it's single-handed. That's why we're constantly in close contact with our branches, the many experts from our technical departments, and a wide range of partners in our network.

S. Hohm: A good example of this are our three e-mobility sites in Hamburg, Freiburg, and Malsch near Karlsruhe, where we're working together to find solutions for the use of zero-emission vehicle technologies as well as for intelligent electricity and load management. With those branches, we make it possible to test technologies and charging infrastructures in practice over a longer period of time. It's important and helpful for us that such tests also make it clear what doesn't work. The advantage is that the mistakes we make at these locations don't have to be repeated when we implement the solutions in the network.

B. Eling: On this path to structured knowledge building, it's crucial to separate the important from the unimportant and to keep an eye on the various possibilities and starting points for the zero-emission transition. We are an impulse generator because we don't just talk about doing something; we've been taking concrete action for a long time.

People & markets

Going offline

Digitalization is shrinking the world, and the possibilities of connectivity are making life and work easier in many places. But the flipside is that constant accessibility, endless scrolling, and incessant information uptake can cause stress. What's the answer? Digital detox, or taking a break from being online. Studies show that turning off notifications for incoming news in our free time, regularly putting our computer into sleep mode, or setting our cell phone to be completely offline reduces the level of stress hormones, improves our sleep, and makes it easier to concentrate.

This explains why smartphones have long been taboo in schools in countries such as France and Italy. Calls for a ban on cell phones in classrooms are also growing louder in the UK, the Netherlands, and Germany. A study by the University of Augsburg confirms that prohibiting smartphones has a significant impact, albeit overall a modest one. While it usually improves social well-being, the same isn't necessarily true for academic performance. That's why, alongside bans, pupils should be taught how to use the technology responsibly. In an ideal world, the researchers say, children would reach a level of media literacy that would make a smartphone ban superfluous.

Wait a minute... The art of waiting

Whether waiting is perceived as annoying or relaxing depends on cultural norms. In what are known as monochronic cultures, such as those prevalent in Western Europe, the United States, or Japan, people regard time as linear and "valuable," so punctuality is mandatory and delays mean lost efficiency: "time is money." Japanese trains are timed so precisely that operators even make a public apology when a departure is 20 seconds too early. Meanwhile, polychronic cultures such as in India, Latin America, or the Arab world see time as flexible. Tasks and conversations overlap, and social relationships are more important than rigid schedules. Waiting is perceived not as a problem but as a part of life.

Cheers to doing nothing

Different countries have different relaxation rituals: whether it's Sweden's fika coffee break, the siesta in Spain, or a riposo in Italy, the key thing is the cross-cultural consensus that breaks aren't an expression of laziness, but rather make people more productive and promote mental health. Japan has a special form of switching off known as inemuri, which means "to be present and yet asleep." Short naps at work or on public transport are culturally accepted in Japan and are sometimes even regarded as a sign of diligence. The most important rule for inemuri is this: as long as you're not disturbing or hindering anyone, you can take a nap in any public place.

Small steps, big change

For many years now, people have successfully been applying the Japanese philosophy of Kaizen, or "continuous improvement," to business processes. But industrial-organizational psychologists also see it as a tool for reducing stress. "Small steps, big change" is how the health portal Medindia sums it up. Studies show that dividing tasks into smaller actions can boost motivation both at work and at home by up to 80 percent. This gives a feeling of control—and control reduces stress. But the authors do point out one thing: Kaizen works only when applied in a positive and participatory way; otherwise this continuous pressure to improve might in itself increase stress.

Japanese:
kai: "change, revision";
zen: "for the better"

Crisis? Seize opportunities!

In psychology, resilience is defined as the ability to adapt healthily even in the face of adversity. However, unexpected chaos—be it a crisis at work or a personal stroke of fate—can put this adaptability to the test. According to the European Journal of Personality, reframing an adverse situation—i.e., choosing to interpret it not as a pure threat and instead asking "What opportunity does this offer me?"—helps cope with the related stress. This is where the concept of antifragility comes into play: someone who deals flexibly with uncertainty doesn't just become more stable, they also get better. This is scientific corroboration of the saying "What doesn't kill us makes us stronger."

Panorama

Make an **impression**

Digital platforms reign supreme when it comes to contacting people quickly and communicating easily. Yet even in the age of AI and big data, impromptu face-to-face encounters still give rise to meaningful relationships—both in private and in business life.

Friend or foe, likable or unpleasant, a trustworthy comrade or a snake in the grass? Even before we've said hello, our cerebrum makes judgments about other people. Sometimes all it takes is a tenth of a second for us to pigeonhole someone. And studies have shown that our first impression is surprisingly persistent. The person we're talking to may turn out to be extremely competent and friendly during the conversation, but if our first impression was poor, we tend to give little weight to subsequent positive signals. Conversely, we generously overlook everything that contradicts a positive first impression.

Evolutionary psychology provides a good explanation as to why we make snap judgments: early human history was a pretty tough time, after all, and categorizing strangers correctly could mean the difference between life and death. But even today, snap judgments still have an enormous influence on people's lives. One only has to consider the much-storied phenomenon of love at first sight, or job interviews: hiring managers openly admit in surveys that in many cases, they know after just a few minutes whether they will offer a candidate the job or not.

Lost in the metaverse

The power of unconscious judgments doesn't really fit in with data-driven information societies. Digital platforms promise a fact-based approach: dating apps let users filter by hobbies, personal preferences, and personality traits in the search for the perfect match. In recruiting, artificial intelligence is deployed to search through the deluge of applications and find certain candidates—those who are suitable not only professionally but also culturally. Career networks entice users with the prospect that their next business partner is just a click away. And in times of Zoom, Teams, and the like, is it even necessary to meet in person anymore?

The coronavirus pandemic has provided interesting insights in this regard. As helpful as those digital tools proved to be, we soon heard complaints about how tiring all the video calls were. Researchers attribute this to the fact that many of the rules of social interaction are suspended there. For example, the body language of the other person is more difficult to interpret in a digital 2D image. You're also under the unblinking eye of the webcam, an uncomfortably short distance away on the screen, which causes just as much stress as the fact that you can constantly see yourself. The metaverse promises to do it better, but so far, hardly anyone has wanted to put on a bulky VR headset and then walk around as a cartoon character. Instead, the trend now is toward photorealistic avatars that reproduce facial expressions and gestures in great detail.

Room for chance meetings

But even if the technology becomes more sophisticated, there's still a fundamental problem with virtual meeting culture: in general, people arrange virtual meetings for highly specific purposes. Such meetings leave no room for a chat at the coffee machine, brainstorming in the cafeteria, or a quick "Have you got a minute?" in an open-plan office. But these kinds of informal exchanges often spark promising ideas in professional life. This statement is difficult to back up with numbers, but, feeling that things move faster in the offline world, companies are once again promoting office-based work—and tech companies are leading the back-to-office movement.

Despite all the digital networking options, demand for business events in the physical world is as strong again now as it was before the pandemic. For instance, trade fairs have been well attended recently, which is astonishing when you consider that the format is many centuries old: early cultures held local markets and bazaars, and then in the Middle Ages, goods from far-off lands could be admired at large regional fairs along major trade routes.

While the focus back then was on direct sales, today it's all about marketing. Knowing there's no second chance to make a first impression, companies invest a lot of time and money in their trade fair appearances to attract customers, partners, and potential recruits. Chance meetings are expressly encouraged. After all, small talk at a company booth can lead to a long-term business relationship, and you might discover a suitable supplier while strolling through the hall. Our unconscious Stone-Age thought processes help with navigation: we intuitively recognize who's on our wavelength and where it's worth our while to say hello.

S. Ermisch

You need to prepare a first impression. This means familiarizing yourself with the setting and the situation. Different contexts have different rules and expectations, and there are pitfalls everywhere. If things go wrong, etiquette coaches recommend laughing it off and trusting in the irresistible power of a smile.

Full-power charging on Dachser's company grounds

Growing **together**

Dachser has been delivering ABB's goods to markets throughout Europe for 15 years, but its collaboration with the energy and automation group goes far beyond goods transportation. Both companies are driving electromobility forward, and Dachser itself is now also using ABB's state-of-the-art charging infrastructure to keep its e-trucks on the road.

Harun Özdemir has finished work; his tours are done for today. Before he heads home, he "refuels" his truck. But this is no ordinary diesel filling station: instead of a fuel hose, there's a cable with a large plug. A signal lights up green as soon as the plug is connected to the charging socket on the electric vehicle. Özdemir's all-electric Volvo truck is based at Dachser's Malsch branch outside Karlsruhe, Germany, and he drives the shuttle route to nearby Sasbach. It takes just over an hour to recharge his e-truck's large batteries using an ABB E-mobility A400 400 kW DC ultra-fast charger, a new charging option that went into operation at Dachser in Malsch at the end of 2024.

A broad spectrum of electrical engineering

Dachser's choice of high-tech equipment from this vendor is no coincidence; the logistics provider and ABB have enjoyed a partnership of mutual trust for over 15 years. "What began as a pure freight forwarding service has gradually developed into →

The new ABB A400 charging stations used at Dachser enable high-performance e-truck charging at up to 400 kW. If two vehicles are charging at the same time, the chargers distribute the power dynamically in 50 kW increments. This all-in-one solution optimizes charging times and increases the usability of electric commercial vehicles.

a wide-ranging collaboration with various ABB business units," explains Caroline Schäfer, Key Account Manager European Logistics at Dachser. "We mainly take care of ABB's Europe-wide groupage logistics and full truck loads. These shipments depart from Malsch and two other German locations. We also transport ABB shipments from Belgium, Hungary, and France to other European countries."

ABB Electrifications is the Swedish-Swiss electrical engineering company's biggest business line. It includes ABB Striebel & John, headquartered in Sasbach, just under 50 kilometers from Malsch. This unit produces various kinds of electronic equipment here, and the daily output of new goods is very high. The range covers everything from wall-mounted and floor-standing cabinets, fire protection enclosures, and modular switchgear cabinets for commercial and industrial applications through to distribution boards, small distributors, and meter cabinets for residential buildings. Add to that ABB E-mobility's DC chargers for electromobility.

In the face of increasing demand, time pressure is always high. However, given the restricted ramp space at ABB's on-site warehouse, the timing of shuttle services between Sasbach and the Dachser branch in Malsch is crucial. That's why the e-truck makes the trip every day to ensure that goods rapidly find their way into Dachser's close-knit logistics network. "Dachser's strong focus on quality and customer satisfaction really stand out, and we value the company's reliability," says Christopher Steffens, Transportation & Trade Leader Electrification at ABB. "Sustainability is also important to us, so we've launched a joint pilot in Sasbach and are looking forward to tackling new projects together."

Focus on climate action and electromobility

In other words, there's more than just well-established logistics processes connecting Dachser and ABB. The latter's broad product and solution portfolio of electrotechnical components and energy distribution systems is also a perfect fit for both companies' climate protection strategies. In 2018, Dachser began rolling out its DACHSER Emission-Free Delivery concept with electric vehicles and cargo bikes in 25 major European cities. Since January 2023, the company has also opened three e-mobility locations in Freiburg, Hamburg, and Malsch. These locations focus on testing and researching various aspects of electromobility: zero-emission technologies as well as intelligent power and load management for battery-electric shuttle and regular scheduled services with semi-trailer trucks and swap bodies. They are also involved in setting up a correspondingly efficient charging infrastructure.

In recent years, electromobility has been gaining ground in cars, with regular launches of new battery-electric model series, some of them in the premium segment. But in heavy-duty transport, it's still in its infancy. "Electric trucks are coming onto the market only gradually. We're delighted to be testing these new vehicles and applications in practice, because it's a way for us to play a major part in developing emission-free transportation," says Bernd Grossmann, General Manager of Dachser's Karlsruhe logistics center. "Building up this experience together with our customers makes it a win-win for all sides."

More power for e-trucks

After successfully launching them in Dortmund and Nuremberg, Dachser has now put more than ten ABB E-mobility high-performance chargers into operation at a number of its branches. The A400 ultra-fast charger for trucks in Malsch is among them. It can deliver an output of up to 400 kW to a single vehicle; if two electric vehicles draw power from the CCS device at the same time, it splits its output using dynamic load distribution in 50 kW increments in line with the vehicles' different charging patterns.

"Dachser's willingness to test new technologies such as the A400 charger underlines its commitment to sustainable innovation," says Thomas Hering, Key Account Manager at ABB E-mobility. "Our partnership is based on trust and candor. The constructive feedback we receive from the Dachser team helps us tailor our technology to the needs of the logistics industry so we can further advance sustainable transport solutions."

For Steven Croissant, Sales Manager at Dachser's Karlsruhe logistics center, one thing is already clear: "The new ultra-fast charger in Malsch is another important step toward the electrification and decarbonization of supply chains."

Toolbox for electromobility

In logistics, the key thing is to be on the move 24 hours a day, so it's important to integrate recharging cycles as efficiently and economically as possible. "Focusing on certain specific routes, we can use our ABB chargers to do some really comprehensive practical testing of what works and what doesn't in everyday logistics with heavy-duty e-trucks," Grossmann adds. Dachser's aim

High-performance charging infrastructure is the key to emission-free transports

> Building up experience together with our customers makes it a win-win for all sides.
>
> Bernd Großmann, General Manager of Dachser's Karlsruhe logistics center

is to use the findings from these field trials to develop a toolbox for setting up e-infrastructure in the branches, one that does justice to customer requirements, technological possibilities, and business efficiency.

According to Croissant, this is something that Dachser's drivers appreciate as well. "Taking an e-truck out on the road for the first time is such a positive experience for drivers, especially in terms of driving comfort and workload. Once you go electric, there's no looking back." Last but not least, these vehicles have considerable potential to turn driving trucks back into a more attractive profession. Özdemir can personally attest to this. "Electromobility in everyday logistics is fun, and it has a future. But sometimes I wish things would go a little faster."

A. Heintze

Future lab

Leaping to Level 4

Scientists and engineers around the world are working on the next major milestone in the long history of transportation: autonomous driving on public roads.

Since the invention of the wheel some 5,000 years ago, transport vehicles have had a coachman at the reins or, for the last 100 years or so of motorized vehicles, a driver at the wheel. In the future, however, "virtual drivers" will join their ranks.

In recent years, researchers have used artificial intelligence to train specially developed algorithms that are now able to lead a car safely through traffic on public roads. The algorithms are fed with a wide variety of sensor data. For this purpose, modern standard vehicles are equipped with additional sensors such as lidar, radar, cameras, and microphones, all of which provide comprehensive information on traffic events. Based on this data and the behavior patterns learned while navigating traffic, the virtual driver makes its decisions for maneuvering the vehicle on the road autonomously—i.e., without further human support. The best AI algorithms have now achieved a level of safety that's statistically higher than that of the average comparison group of humans.

Different levels

Building on these results, a key step in autonomous driving was put into practice in the US last year: as of July 2024, anyone in San Francisco who wants to can hail a self-driving cab. This means that, for the first time in the history of transportation, freely bookable transport from A to B without a human driver in a large public space is now a reality.

To date, only assistance systems that allow Level 3 autonomous driving have been used in production vehicles. In Level 3, drivers can take their hands off the steering wheel for a short time to do other things. However, the driver must be able to retake control of the vehicle at any time.

The division into different levels from 0 to 5 helps indicate a vehicle's degree of automation. At Level 0, the human driver drives without any assistance, while Levels 1 and 2 rely on assistance systems and partial automation, such as adaptive cruise control with lane departure warning. Level 5 is fully autonomous, with no human behind the wheel.

Taxicabs as pioneers

Robot cabs from Google subsidiary Waymo in San Francisco have now reached Level 4 of autonomous driving. In a defined area, these vehicles can operate entirely without a human driver. If a situation arises in which the virtual driver is at a loss, it drives to a safe place to park, and a human teleoperator provides the virtual pilot with remote support.

Following a lengthy test phase, Waymo has been operating around 250 cabs as a freely bookable service throughout the city of San Francisco since last summer. Passengers simply hail a cab on the app, get in once it arrives, and then let the all-electric Jaguar's virtual driver transport them comfortably and safely to their destination. The service is currently being gradually expanded to other US cities. With this live commercial operation, Waymo has proven that autonomous vehicles with virtual drivers will be a reality of transportation in the future.

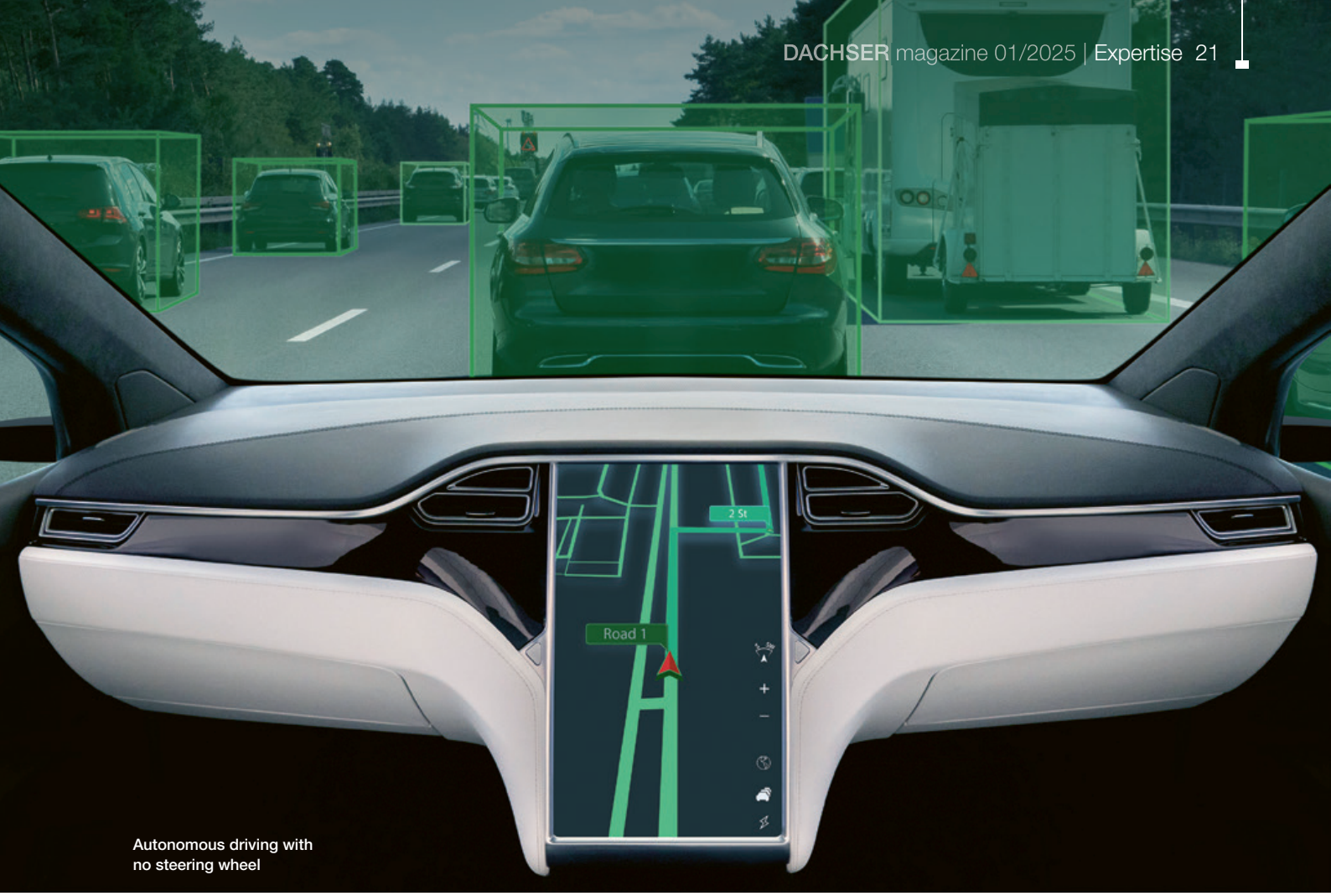
Autonomous truck in development

Start-ups such as Kodiak and Daimler subsidiary Torc Robotics are also working to develop virtual truck drivers in the US. In the next two years, semitrailer trucks will be operating fully autonomously and without safety drivers on a few selected routes on Texas highways. The focus is on hub-to-hub transports between two logistics centers situated close to a highway. The providers are convinced that they will have solved the technological challenges for true Level 4 driving with trucks by then.

Is that realistic? In general, yes, for individual highway transports under defined conditions; this is something that Dachser Corporate Research & Development confirmed during visits to the US sites. However, virtual drivers can't yet handle certain extreme situations—such as difficult weather conditions with, say, heavy snowfall—well enough to go into actual service.

Major investments

Yet the biggest obstacle to rapid implementation of autonomous driving is the huge initial investment required for the time-consuming training of artificial intelligence. Even for individual highway routes, a great many training kilometers have to be completed, so that establishing a larger number of practical, virtual Level 4 truck drivers for a wide variety of US highways will probably take a whole decade. The attractiveness of investments in this technology and thus the speed of further development in US road freight transport depends primarily on two factors: the worsening driver shortage and rising wage costs, which are already relatively high.



Autonomous driving with no steering wheel

In addition, development in the US could slow down if autonomous vehicles are involved in accidents, which can't ever be fully avoided, leading to political and legal reactions at the federal or state level.

Global research

Autonomous cars, buses, and trucks are also being developed and tested in Asia, particularly in China. The leading developers here appear to be companies such as Baidu, BYD, and Pony.ai, although Mercedes-Benz reports it is also testing Level 4 driving for passenger cars in Beijing. However, there's a lack of reliable information on the activities of the various providers in Asia, including details of the results achieved and the safety standards attained.

Europe is currently home only to isolated activities related to autonomous driving. Providers are still a long way from a major deployment of self-driving cars or trucks at Level 4. In particular, there's a lack of investors for the costly training of AI models. Sooner or later, however, the worsening driver shortage will make it necessary to use this technology in Europe as well, in order to guarantee the efficiency of logistics for the continent as a business location in the future. The question remains as to whether Europe will then have to fall back on solutions from the US or Asia, or whether European companies will play a role in supplying self-driving trucks.

Use in the logistics industry

Despite all the enthusiasm for future technologies, we must also note that virtual drivers are not a complete replacement for their human colleagues. AI models won't be able to take over the demanding work of a truck driver in Europe for another decade at the earliest, and then only on selected long-distance hub-to-hub transports. But on many long- and short-distance transports, the diverse tasks of a driver exceed the capabilities of the AI pilot. In addition to controlling the vehicle in complex traffic situations, these tasks include activities such as securing the load, unloading and delivering the goods and, last but not least, personal contact with the sender and recipient of the transported goods. This can't be done by an AI algorithm in the foreseeable future, so people will continue to play a decisive role in carrying out logistics work. However, they will be supplemented by virtual colleagues who'll help mitigate the drastic consequences of the demographically induced shortage of skilled workers and drivers.

Andre Kranke, Head of Corporate Research & Development at Dachser

The "Future lab" feature presents findings from the Corporate Research & Development division, which works in close collaboration with various departments and branches, as well as the DACHSER Enterprise Lab at Fraunhofer IML and other research and technology partners.

Dachser CFO Thomas Hiemer being interviewed at Dachser's Head Office

"Securing financial strength means enabling **investments**"

Thomas Hiemer joined the Dachser Executive Board on January 1, 2025, with responsibility for the Finance, Controlling, Tax & Treasury (FCT) executive unit. The 41-year-old family man with two children has been at Dachser for twelve years. In this interview, he talks about values-oriented management, figures, and management systems in a family-owned company.

Mr. Hiemer, what makes a good CFO? Is it a deep understanding of the figures, or more how they're embedded in communications?
Thomas Hiemer: Both are key. For me, understanding the figures goes hand in hand with their embedding and context. It's what's driving the figures that makes them interesting, and it's those drivers that give you room for maneuver and alternative courses of action. The task of a good CFO is to communicate all the options with a view to reaching qualified decisions, and that makes him or her a strategic partner on the Executive Board.

Turning specifically to Dachser, what appeals to you personally about your new role as CFO?
Dachser's success is based on a target-oriented, and values-oriented, management system. That's something I've never seen in this form at any other company. The idea behind it is as simple as it is compelling: decision-makers need experienced sparring partners who understand the operational business and can tease out individual factors from within the financial performance indicators, including the cost of capital, so as to promote investments that add value. They can then derive

recommendations for action from this for the operational and strategic levels. Our efficient financial systems, which the Finance department makes available worldwide, play a central role in this. These systems aren't just tools for managing figures; they form the backbone for well-founded decisions. Ensuring Dachser's financial strength in this way makes the job extremely appealing to me.

Before you were appointed to the Dachser Executive Board, you'd already been with the company for twelve years. What was your first impression of Dachser?
When I joined Dachser in 2013, a lot was changing: Burkhard Eling was the new CFO. With the acquisition of Azkar, Dachser had just completed its largest corporate takeover to date. The first international units had also just converted to SAP and operational controlling had been transferred to an independent unit. At the time, these were major, epochal changes and upheavals.

From a corporate standpoint, but especially from a financial point of view, Dachser was moving away for good from the systems, processes, and organizational forms of a medium-sized company and becoming a global corporation. That was exciting for me back then—and it still is today, because it's an ongoing process. My drive to optimize things from the perspective of figures and finances is just as strong now as it was on day one. The only difference is that the organization is now much more mature.

How did your career in the company, most recently as Deputy Manager for FCT, prepare you for joining the Executive Board? In what way are you benefiting from that now?
Over the years, I've been lucky enough to be responsible for issues that were close to the CFO. I know the management principles and the systems behind them in detail. The fact that I made bookings in our SAP system myself still stands me in good stead today. Accordingly, my career has certainly been the result of constant development and a maturing process. In particular, the trust that I built up with Mr. Eling over many years made it easier for me to take on the deputy role. I was able to get to know the Executive Board's work and get familiar with the role without having to be in the front row straightaway. The entire Executive Board was supportive of our collaboration during this time, which helped then and continues to help sort through these experiences and draw the right conclusions.

Geopolitical power shifts, smoldering trade and customs conflicts, and a weakening economy in Germany and Europe are the dominant issues of our time. How do they affect Dachser?
We're dealing with a highly competitive market environment and therefore very price-sensitive customers. At the same time, we have to deliver major investments and cope with higher costs. While that's nothing new for us, the momentum is increasing. Our advantage is that Dachser has already addressed these various aspects and is tackling them systematically. Based on our finances, we're in a solid position to overcome these challenges. Dachser is in excellent health and has a high equity ratio.

What does that means for upcoming investments?
In this phase, it's particularly important to ensure a balance between the financial burden and the need for expenditure. From a financial perspective, we're always happy to invest money if there's a corresponding return on investment. Investments that make our operational processes more efficient—such as @ILO, the digital twin in the transit terminal—put us in a position to invest further. This requires consistent prioritization based on a cost-benefit analysis.

What do you want to achieve as CFO at Dachser in the years ahead?
In view of the challenges ahead, it will be important to do more to pool our strengths and our expertise in the coming years. It's unlikely that the economy in our core market of Europe will recover and return to growth in 2025. But we've shown that we can deal with those kinds of market challenges and be a reliable partner for our customers. As CFO, I'd like my area of responsibility to play a major role in that. For example, by showing the branches possible alternative courses of action with meaningful analyses from operational controlling. But also by further optimizing our financial processes and becoming more efficient worldwide.

What role does sustainability play in Dachser's economic success?
Sustainability has always been deeply rooted at Dachser, long before a whole multitude of legislative initiatives, directives, and regulations were launched. As a family-owned company, we act on our own initiative to position ourselves for the long term and to operate sustainably for future generations. That means Dachser takes an economic, ecological, and social approach.

Given that we've long been committed to this of our own volition and out of a sense of generational responsibility, we're systematically pressing ahead along our chosen path despite all the bureaucratic hurdles and regulatory complications. As an impulse generator, we want to do our part to drive the development of sustainable technologies.

Profile

Thomas Hiemer, 41, has worked in Dachser's finance department for twelve years. With a degree in economics, he previously worked at DAX-listed Heidelberg Materials; he also gained relevant experience abroad in the United States and China. At Dachser, he started off as Head of Group Controlling before taking on the position of Head of Corporate Finance in December 2021. In July 2023, Hiemer was appointed Deputy Director of the Finance, Controlling, Tax & Treasury (FCT) executive unit. He became CFO on January 1, 2025, joining the Dachser Executive Board.

Opportunities in logistics

Rajnikanth Alluri has a famous namesake

Air freight **superstar**

Logistics for the pharmaceutical industry is already demanding. Rajnikanth Alluri also has to contend with being named after one of his country's all-time cinema legends. But the air freight manager at Dachser India takes it in his stride as both a challenge and an obligation.

There's nothing he can't do: breathtaking stunts, emotional journeys, pain, love, drama, jealousy, and—his trademark—flicking a cigarette in the air and catching it in his mouth. We're talking about Shivaji Rao Gaikwad, known as Rajinikanth, an acting icon of Indian cinema. For decades, he has captivated audiences with his incomparable personality and charisma. Every child across India knows and loves him. Superstar Rajinikanth is a living legend.

This short digression into Indian film history leads directly to Dachser's branch in Hyderabad in the southern Indian state of Telangana. With a population of almost seven million, India's fourth largest city (after Mumbai, Delhi, and Bengaluru) is an up-and-coming industrial metropolis with a focus on biotechnology and pharmaceutical production. More than 40 percent of the country's pharmaceuticals are produced here, which explains why the city is known as the "Bulk Drug Capital of India" and "Vaccine Capital of the World."

And that's where the Rajinikanth phenomenon comes in: Rajnikanth Alluri has been working in the air freight department of Dachser Air & Sea Logistics in Hyderabad since 2018. When he joined Dachser, this air freight manager with the famous first name already had over two decades of industry experience under his belt. But unlike his famous namesake, Rajnikanth Alluri is no brash adventurer. With his sober demeanor and his unparalleled dedication to his duties and to customer service, not to mention his in-depth operational knowledge and excellent industry and customer contacts, Rajnikanth Alluri quickly became a pillar of the air freight team.

From the subcontinent to the whole world

"We've acquired a great deal of expertise in air freighting pharmaceuticals to global destinations," Rajnikanth Alluri says. Most of the shipments are destined for countries in Europe, Latin America, and Asia. "In our day-to-day cooperation with the

airport authorities and ground handling companies, we focus on the responsible handling of all types of transports within active and passive cold chains," he says, describing his main area of responsibility. This is done using special temperature-controlled containers as well as other passive packaging solutions, such as special insulated containers, thermal blankets, or phase-change materials; the latter store a high proportion of heat and cold, and release the energy as heat in phases as required. What all these solutions have in common is the aim of maintaining the required temperature range during transportation.

Every bit the conscientious and meticulous air freight expert, Rajnikanth Alluri is just the man to deal with all this. Pharmaceutical logistics isn't an arena for stunts or for pushing physical limits—the kind of things his namesake in the film business is known for. "For the most part, pharmaceutical shipments have to be transported under temperature-controlled conditions of either +2 to +8 degrees Celsius or +15 to +25 degrees Celsius," Rajnikanth Alluri says. In this demanding air freight segment, the key is to ensure absolutely strict compliance with all guidelines. One such reference point is known as good distribution practice (GDP): this standard stipulates that the quality and integrity of medicines must be maintained throughout the transportation and distribution chain. Eleven Dachser locations worldwide bear this seal of quality. "In addition to GDP certification, Dachser's in-house quality management system, or QMS, is another reason why our Hyderabad branch is now one of five locations in the global Dachser network that's CEIV Pharma-certified by IATA," Rajnikanth Alluri says.

A job with responsibility

As an air freight manager, what Rajnikanth Alluri finds particularly thrilling about pharmaceutical transports is both how demanding they always are and how they confer a special responsibility on logistics specialists. "Pharmaceuticals often have a very high commercial value. And the fact that API—active pharma ingredient—shipments are classified as dangerous goods only adds to the complexity of handling them and ensuring smooth execution." APIs are used in the manufacture of medicines.

For Rajnikanth Alluri's Dachser air freight team in Hyderabad, it also entails strict adherence to their own QMS for subcontractor management, training, and audits (internal and external). That includes CAPA and deviation management. In quality management for the pharmaceutical industry, CAPA stands for corrective and preventive action. For the air freight experts, it's a question of having processes in place for dealing with errors and vulnerabilities or with unplanned deviations from the standards. All with the aim of systematically avoiding them.

"This setup means we can guarantee the quality and safety of our customers' products during transport and handling, while at the same time ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements," Rajnikanth Alluri explains.

What might Rajinikanth the screen hero have to say about sticking so consistently to the rules and planning? At this question, Rajnikanth Alluri has to smile. "Rajinikanth doesn't stand just for breakneck action and going over the top. He's a personality that people can identify with and admire at the same time. A real role model. And that's exactly why I'm very happy to bear this name and why I try to do exemplary work." **M. Gelink**

At Dachser, air freight managers hold a good deal of responsibility. Their role involves, among other things, handling all processes for the dispatch of air freight imports and exports (incl. dangerous goods). This means accepting incoming orders, taking care of scheduling with the airlines, as well as clearing import and export customs. In doing all this, the managers are in daily contact with customers around the world to provide expert advice and support.

A seasoned expert with a passion for logistics

Sea freight groupage increases flexibility in the Dachser network

Flexibility makes all the difference

The Lenze Group, a global automation and drive technology specialist, relies on intelligent logistics to control the flow of goods flexibly and efficiently, even in challenging times. Dachser's role is to seamlessly integrate sea freight groupage (LCL) transports from China into its European overland transport network.

Global supply chains are under pressure, and the economy is sputtering in many core markets. Restrictions along global trade routes due to wars and geopolitical conflicts, not to mention increasing trade restrictions due to tariffs, make it clear how vulnerable international flows of goods can still be. More than ever, companies need to be able to react quickly and flexibly in order to avoid supply disruptions. Logistics plays a key role here.

Global material flow

A look at the automation and drive technology sector in mechanical engineering makes this plain. As a system provider, Lenze SE is active worldwide, developing and producing high-quality mechatronic products, high-performance hardware and software systems for successful automation, as well as →

> Intelligent shipment management and traceability provide the flexibility and control we need for our material flow.
>
> Zijad Besic, Supply Chain Manager at Lenze

software and services for big data management, cloud and mobile solutions, and the internet of things (IoT). “Over the past few years, the market has gone from one driven by supply to one driven by demand. We have to react more flexibly and quickly to our customers’ requirements, and logistics is one of the decisive factors,” says Zijad Besic, Supply Chain Manager at Lenze. The company’s high-tech products must reach customers reliably at all times, even under challenging conditions, and this requires sophisticated logistics. “That’s because Lenze sources components from different parts of the world and delivers finished products on a global scale, although its focus is on the core markets in Western and Central Europe,” says Gregor Wiesinger, Sales Manager Area West Austria at Dachser Air & Sea Logistics.

As an automation company and system provider, Lenze attaches particular importance to efficiency and transparency in its logistics processes, adds Wiesinger’s colleague Markus Gerhart, Sales Executive, European Logistics Dachser Austria.

“In practice, this means that delivery routes should be as short as possible, easy to plan, and trackable at all times. Components for production must arrive on time without the need for excessive warehousing. At the same time, Lenze’s customers expect punctual deliveries of the finished machines and systems,” Gerhart says. To achieve this balance, Lenze relies on flexible logistics solutions and strong partners.

Dynamic flows of goods with LCL

Here’s where Dachser comes in: the global logistics provider offers Lenze tailor-made door-to-door transport solutions—a combination of flexible LCL groupage sea freight and efficient truck transports in its close-knit European groupage network.

LCL stands for “less than container load” and refers to groupage container loads in which several partial loads from different senders share one container. For Lenze, this concept is ideal for keeping dynamic flows of goods moving. “LCL solutions also allow us to send smaller shipments at regular intervals instead of having to wait until we can fill a container,” Wiesinger says, explaining the advantages of the concept. “This keeps the global supply chain agile and predictable, even if demand fluctuates.”

Regular departures on important routes from Asia to Europe ensure predictable transit times. The costs remain reasonable, as the company pays only for the freight space it actually uses; this also has an impact on the carbon footprint. At the same time, more frequent, demand-based deliveries reduce the need to keep larger stocks on hand around Lenze’s central production sites.

Intermodal integration

For an idea of how well Lenze and Dachser work together, here’s a look at the logistics of a typical day. Individual components for automation systems must be delivered from China to the Lenze plant in Asten, Austria, reliably and on schedule. Dachser organizes and manages an end-to-end transport chain across various modes of transport: by sea freight, rail, and truck—and even by air freight in urgent cases. First, the goods produced in China are brought to Shanghai and Ningbo, where they are labeled and then shipped to Europe in containers. Once at the port of destination, the freight is transferred: instead of being unloaded right there in a time-consuming process, it’s loaded directly onto a freight train headed for Austria. Since the port of destination for sea freight from China can be either Hamburg or Rotterdam, it’s possible to offer shorter transit times.

The advantage of this intermodal integration is that, through the linking of sea freight with rail and truck transports, containers avoid frequent traffic jams and unpredictable bottlenecks at the port. Once in Austria, the goods are unloaded from the container at Dachser’s Hörsching logistics center. There the baton is handed over to the colleagues from Dachser overland transport, who organize the transfer to Lenze’s production

LCL solutions keep Lenze’s supply chains agile

Lenze Group headquarters in Asten, Austria

plant in nearby Asten. Dachser trucks then deliver the finished products to Lenze's customers in Western and Central Europe. "Dachser Road Logistics moves around 20,000 to 24,000 shipments from Lenze's Austrian production facility every year," Gerhart explains.

"With our multimodal concept, we seamlessly integrate sea freight, rail, and truck transport," Wiesinger explains. "The big advantage for Lenze is that once its products have been loaded aboard a ship in Asia, they never have to leave the Dachser network, meaning they can be managed with maximum transparency until they reach their destination. This is an ideal one-stop-shop solution that includes customs handling."

Transparency in the supply chain

A continuous flow of data is crucial for such comprehensive and deep supply chain integration. That's why Dachser closely links its IT systems to Lenze's: orders, shipping documents, and status updates are exchanged digitally, which keeps manual coordination to a minimum. "Lenze sends us up-to-date data every hour, so there's a constant exchange of information and data," Wiesinger says. This allows both sides to track in real time where a shipment is currently located and when it will arrive. If a ship or train is delayed, a notification is sent automatically, and appropriate countermeasures can be taken at an early stage if necessary.

"Transparency in the supply chain is crucial for us," Besic says. "Intelligent shipment management and traceability provide the flexibility and control we need for our material flow." The key to resilient supply chains and competitive costs lies in optimizing processes. "We're on the right track here with Dachser," Besic continues. For example, it's now possible to prepare customs clearance while the goods are still in transit, or to prioritize certain deliveries in urgent situations.

Remaining resilient through crises

Besic goes on to point out that the advantages of this flexible logistics concept become particularly clear in difficult times. When global supply chains came under massive pressure in recent years as a result of the pandemic and geopolitical upheavals, the combination of LCL sea freight, rail transport, and truck groupage proved to be robust, stress-resistant, and resilient. Even when freight rates soared and containers were in short supply, Lenze was still able to deliver—thanks to Dachser. And in pressing cases, there's yet another option: air freight. For example, urgently needed components are sent by plane from Europe to North America in order to serve customers in the US on time.

"We always coordinate closely with Dachser. There's no substitute for going beyond the normal web conference routines and talking directly to someone you trust. Experience shows that this is the best way for the processes to lock into place," Besic says. "That way, we can keep a clear focus on quality and growth targets together."

M. Schick

Lenze depends on optimized logistics for delivery reliability: The automation specialist's entire product portfolio is always present in each of the five logistics centers in Uxbridge (USA), Hameln/Extertal (Germany), Asten (Austria), Pune (India), and Shanghai (China). That means all orders can be sent in a single delivery. This creates flexibility and helps fulfill customer requirements in target markets very quickly.

Network expertise

A digital **ecosystem**

DACHSER platform offers customers a central, digital solution for all aspects of transport and warehousing. Following air and sea freight, more and more customers from the Road Logistics business field are now working with the application. Lars Relitz, Head of Corporate Digital Innovation & Development, provides insights into the experience gained so far and the next steps in implementation.

Mr. Relitz, how does the platform differ from previous digital solutions?
Lars Relitz: DACHSER platform is our central digital ecosystem for all customer requirements. For the first time, we're combining the services of Road Logistics and Air & Sea Logistics in a standardized, intuitive user interface. As we develop it further, our focus is on meeting the different needs of our user groups, whether they're looking for quick price inquiries and bookings, track and trace, stock transparency, or access to reporting data.

DACHSER platform is being rolled out step by step. What does this mean for customers?
Air freight customers have been using the online platform since September 2023 to organize their shipments efficiently. They were soon joined by an initial batch of sea freight customers in the LCL sector. The information we get from this and the customer feedback we're constantly receiving help us refine and improve the platform. For the Air & Sea Logistics business field, the platform is now a core component of customer communication and is used for day-to-day business in 32 countries. We started connecting our first Road Logistics customers to DACHSER platform in fall 2024.

How is the migration to the new system progressing?
At the moment, we're accelerating the rollout with weekly training courses for further branches throughout Europe. As a result, we'll soon be in a position to offer more and more customers the opportunity to actively use the platform for their day-to-day business. To make the changeover to the new system as smooth as possible, we're training our colleagues in the European branches so they can support our customers during onboarding. At the same time, on the development side, we're constantly expanding the range of functions. Our goal is to migrate around 13,000 existing customers to DACHSER platform by the end of 2025. As of the beginning of 2026, we will no longer connect customers to the previous eLogistics system.

DACHSER platform has already won an award. What significance does this have for your team?
We won silver in the "Digital Services" category of the Annual Multimedia Awards, which are organized by a specialist publisher and awarded by a jury made up of independent experts. The Annual Multimedia Awards honor digital solutions and provide information on current digital standards, opportunities, and future prospects for digital brand communication. This award shows that the platform meets the highest standards of user-friendliness, security, and stability. For us, it's confirmation that we're on the right track.

Logistics for food donations

Dachser and Tafel Deutschland, a charitable umbrella organization of food banks throughout Germany, have signed a cooperation agreement that will run until the end of 2027. As part of the collaboration, Dachser will use its expertise and the network of its Food Logistics business line to collect food donations from manufacturers and deliver them to the central distribution points of Tafel's regional units. Dachser will also aid the food banks in setting up efficient logistics structures. As the third pillar of the collaboration, Dachser will help Tafel's regional units expand their networks and widen the arrangements they have in place with food manufacturers in order to save even more food from going to waste.

Leveraging AI potential

Dachser is expanding its long-standing research partnership with the Fraunhofer Institute for Intelligent Analysis and Information Systems IAIS to focus on the use of artificial intelligence for processing unstructured or differently formatted data in logistics. The experts believe that this industry offers many potential applications, for instance in optimizing and automating complex processes for goods flows and supply chains or in customer communication.

(l-r) Burkhard Eling, CEO Dachser SE, Alexander Tonn, COO Road Logistics Dachser SE, Stefan Hohm, CDO Dachser SE, Prof. Alice Kirchheim, Director of Fraunhofer IML, Prof. Stefan Wrobel, Director of Fraunhofer IAIS

A new generation of e-trucks

More cargo space for emission-free long-distance transport

Dachser has put twelve all-electric MAN eTGX ultra-low-liner trucks into operation. With these special truck tractors, Dachser has now expanded its steadily growing fleet of e-trucks into its high-volume transport business with mega trailers. These trailers boast an additional 20 centimeters in interior height, as the loading area is just under 100 centimeters above the road surface. This increases the available cargo space by 8 cubic meters while maintaining the same length and width and still keeping the overall height below Germany's limit of 4 meters. With double-deck loading, a mega trailer offers space for 67 euro pallets.

Growth from acquisitions

Dachser grew considerably in 2024, recording a 13 percent increase in revenue to EUR 8.027 billion. Its workforce grew by more than 3,300 people to a total of approximately 37,300, and the number of locations increased by 56 to 433 worldwide. This growth is largely due to the acquisitions of DACHSER & FERCAM Italia, Frigoscandia, and Brummer, which will appear on the balance sheet for the first time in 2024. For more information and background, please scan the QR code.

Being connected

Giving children a future – the focus of Corporate Citizen+ projects

For Dachser, business ethics forms the strategic framework that places its entrepreneurial activity in a sociopolitical context. And this is precisely what the close cooperation and mutual trust between Dachser and the children's aid organization Terre des Hommes stand for—and have done for 20 years. Bernhard Simon, Chairman of Dachser's Supervisory Board, takes a look back over those two decades and at where the partners are today.

Business ethics is one of the roots from which we at Dachser have been growing for over 90 years. It has always been the guiding principle for our actions and the starting point for how we understand our entrepreneurial mission. We know that entrepreneurial activity takes place in a sociopolitical context, and so one of the guiding principles of our work is to be a corporate citizen—a player in the economic and social environment that is oriented toward the common good and plays a positive role.

Against this backdrop, Dachser's now 20-year collaboration with the children's rights organization Terre des Hommes has developed into a cornerstone of how we understand business ethics—a collaboration that has since attracted a great deal of public attention from far and wide.

It all started following the 2005 tsunami disaster in the Indian Ocean, when Dachser and Terre des Hommes joined forces to implement an independent concept that helped people to help themselves. The partnership initially launched various projects in South Asia, expanding later to Southern Africa, Latin America, and most recently Ukraine. All its efforts focus on educational opportunities and improving the living conditions of children and young people—particularly those in socially and economically disadvantaged communities.

Offering guidance for peaceful coexistence

I'm often asked, by people both in and outside the company, why we as a logistics provider support projects in India, Nepal, South Africa, Zambia, Namibia, Brazil, Argentina, Peru, Bolivia, and Ukraine. These projects address children's and women's rights, education and vocational training, self-employment and entrepreneurship, as well as environmental and climate action. They also focus on overcoming trauma in conflict areas and offering guidance on peaceful coexistence. Where is the unifying idea, where is it embedded in the company's strategy? And why are these projects so far away—aren't there enough problems in Germany and Europe for Dachser to focus its activities on?

My answer is simple: Dachser is an established player on the global market. We have our own locations in 42 countries on five continents, and our networking expertise is one of the fundamental elements of our business model. For these reasons, the world is also the stage on which our corporate citizenship plays out. We think globally—both for our business and in our social commitment. In doing so, we also make it clear how wide the differences are in equal opportunities between the Global South and North.

Responsibility doesn't end at corporate or national boundaries

Especially in times like these, marked as they are by war, crisis, and uncertainty in many places, we need powerful initiatives for local development. In the age of globalization, we all live in one world. Movements of refugees and an upswell in human suffering could arise anytime and in places where they are least expected. Our responsibility doesn't end at corporate or national boundaries.

In addition, not everyone benefits from globalization to the extent that we do in industrialized and developed economies. Children in the Global South are often particularly exposed to the effects of globalization; for example, rural flight, abuse, child trafficking, environmental destruction, and the consequences of climate change.

And so it falls to us to secure a proper livelihood for more and more people, and to ensure that younger people in particular have the opportunity to unlock their potential within the community. That's why the approach of our projects with Terre des Hommes—to create environments in which children and young people can develop—is of such fundamental importance.

A step further: Corporate Citizen+

For us, corporate citizenship thus means acting responsibly worldwide, and reflecting on the question: How do we treat our employees, partners, and customers at our locations? At the same time, our activities with Terre des Hommes take us a step further, which we describe as Corporate Citizen+. Specifically, it means we are committed to improving the living conditions of many young people in poorer regions of the world. It is part of our globally oriented worldview to set an example regarding sustainable development, including beyond our company. After all, the only way we can operate successfully over the long term is if the world is still intact tomorrow. At Dachser, then, entrepreneurial activity and a commitment to development policy are two sides of the same coin.

Taking fate into one's own hands

By working with Terre des Hommes, we're also acting in the best spirit and on behalf of our family-owned company. Dachser emerged from the global economic crisis of the 1930s, when living conditions in Germany were difficult. The company built →

Bernhard Simon (r.) and Joshua Hofert with the mayor of Livingstone

Discover more about the 20 years of Dachser–Terre des Hommes partnership in a special edition. Simply scan the code and download the issue.

a future for itself through personal drive and entrepreneurship. We've learned that only by taking our fate into our own hands can we hope to see something better grow. We want to convey this certainty to other people and see them share this aspiration, which is why we're helping to lay the right foundations in our various projects.

For Dachser, social commitment isn't a question of forcing a situation or setting out to polarize, but rather is always based on consensus. In the social context, our company both takes an active role in shaping development and also serves as a sounding board. There is always an interaction, a cultural exchange, in which Dachser does not adopt a "lecturing" posture. In the Global South, we don't want to come across as though we're trying to save the world, nor do we want to make promises that we can't keep.

Embedded in an integrated sustainability strategy

Our activities with Terre des Hommes aren't an isolated undertaking within the company; instead, they are embedded in a well-thought-out ESG strategy that encompasses a broad spectrum of activities. While the development projects above contribute to the "S," or "social," part of ESG, we've also done a lot for the "E," or "ecological," part in recent years. Based on the binding goals of the 2015 UN Climate Change Conference in Paris, Dachser has made a commitment to protecting the environment and the climate. In brief: we've set an example in sustainability issues as part of our Dachser Climate Protection strategy and have learned to use resources intelligently and efficiently. We're optimizing our processes accordingly, researching alternative vehicle powertrain systems, and relying on new carbon-saving technologies. In sum, when it comes to sustainability, we see ourselves as an impulse generator in logistics. This is in line with our commitment as a family-owned company to long-term corporate governance (the "G" of ESG), which focuses on our responsibility toward employees and society (in keeping with the "S"). Our decarbonization efforts are especially important for people in emerging and developing countries, who are exposed to the negative effects of global warming. It is here that the meaningful connection between environmental and climate action ("E") and social commitment ("S"), as we do with Terre des Hommes, becomes apparent.

Education is the key to everything

Many building blocks of a larger puzzle

That's why the latest building block in our ESG strategy is our collaboration with myclimate. This nonprofit organization works with private individuals and partners from business to help shape the future through consulting and education offerings as well as its own climate action projects. In 2024, Dachser, Terre des Hommes, and myclimate entered into a long-term partnership to launch new climate action projects worldwide. The collaboration comprises two complementary fields of action: climate action projects with myclimate, which are certified according to recognized standards in South America, Africa, Asia, and Europe, and projects with Terre des Hommes, which support children and young people worldwide with an additional focus on climate action.

Since 2022, our ESG strategy has also included the "Psychosocial Support for Families in Ukraine" project. This initiative provides children, young people, and their caregivers with assistance in overcoming trauma and building stress resilience, so that the future generation continues to have the ability to create peaceful social structures of cohesion.

Conceptually, all our ESG activities fit together seamlessly like a big jigsaw puzzle. They complete the picture we want to paint as we celebrate 20 years of partnership with Terre des Hommes.

Profile

Bernhard Simon is Chairman of the Dachser Supervisory Board and a member of the Dachser SE's founding family. His experience with projects in the Global South goes back a long way: as a college student, he worked as an internal auditor for Terre des Hommes. He then spent several months working independently of Terre des Hommes in the development service in Brazil, calling that time "perhaps one of the most valuable experiences of my life."

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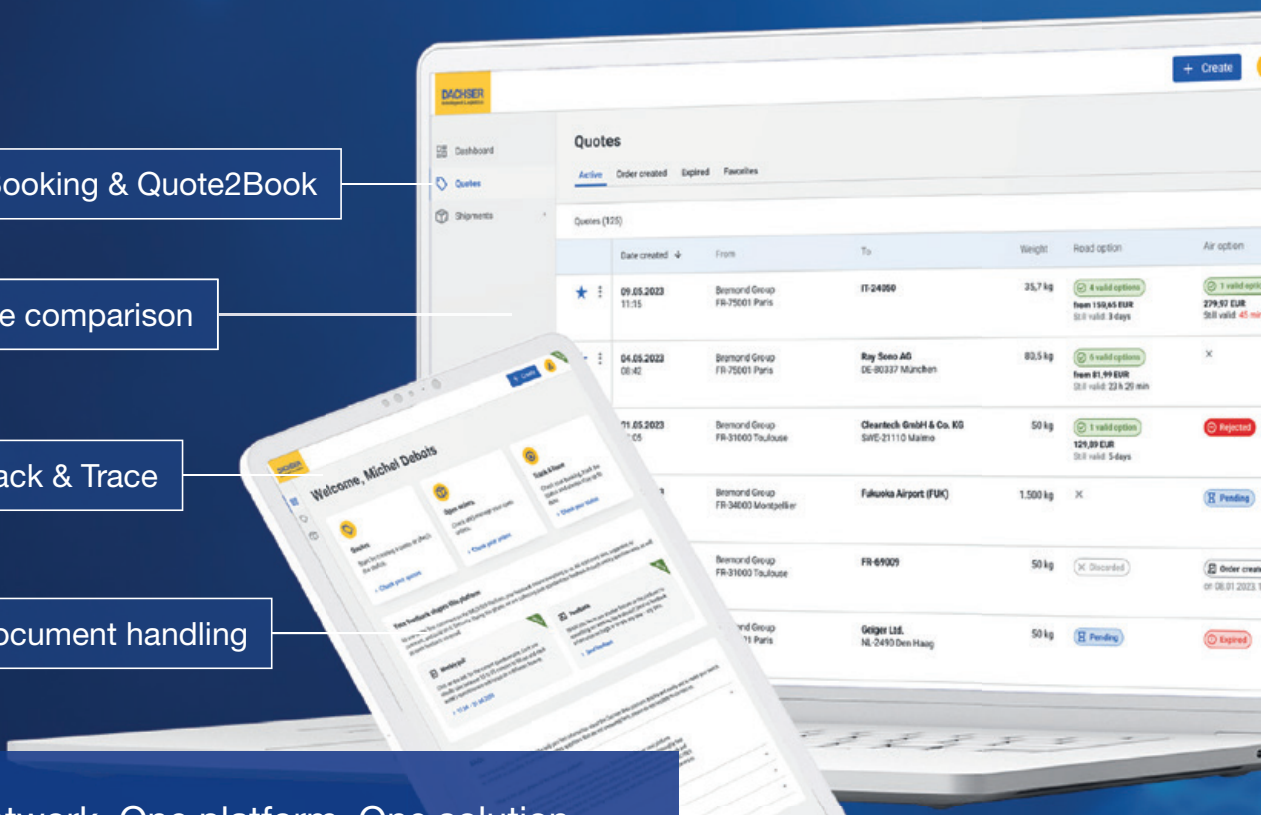

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