

Information sharing and common freight reception in shopping centres – is there a business case?

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Deliveries to retailers in shopping centres are often challenging. Trucks occupy freight reception areas for long times because the norm is that the driver has to accompany the goods from a shared unloading area to the individual retailers. Moreover, in many cases retailers neither know when they will receive their goods nor have information on the amount of goods they receive. To improve the efficiency of deliveries to shopping centres, GS1 Norway initiated a demonstration to show how the supply chain can benefit from automatic data capturing, enabled by proven and new technology solutions. The demonstration was a part of the STRAIGHTSOL project (Strategies and measures for smarter urban freight solutions), co-funded by the European Commission through the 7th Framework Programme. More information is available from www.strightsol.eu.

The GS1 Norway demonstration, which took place in Oslo in 2012, showed that information sharing contributes to more efficient and predictable deliveries for the consignee as well as shorter delivery times for the transport operator. The information sharing solution was combined with a buffer storage concept at the shopping centre, which allowed the truck driver to leave the pallets at the freight receipt instead of bringing them to the individual stores. Evaluation of the demonstration has showed that there are clear economies of scale, and benefits seem to compensate for the costs of the solution. However, further implementation requires mechanisms for the distribution of costs and benefits between stakeholders, which is challenging from an organisational point of view. Therefore, even though various stakeholders were positive about the solution, there has not yet been a permanent implementation. Statements from some of the stakeholders involved suggests however that the experiences from the demonstration are so positive that they will make parts of the demonstrated solutions permanent within the next few years.

This presentation looks into possible business models that could facilitate permanent implementation of the demonstrated solution. Particular attention is paid to the possibilities to transfer benefits from those who gain from the solution to those who have to invest. In the presentation we also discuss learning points from the planning, execution and evaluation phases of the demonstration, and reflect on the role of conducting pilots and demonstrations of initiatives within urban freight transport and last mile distribution.

The contributions of the presentation are firstly a quantification of effects and a better understanding of the roles of the stakeholders involved, which include logistics service providers, shippers, retailers and the shopping centre manager. Secondly the presentation contributes with experiences from a demonstration-based research project and gives advice on organisation of future research initiatives.