The Swiss logistics service provider Cargo Domizil provides door-to-door general cargo transports within 24 hours. Freight is transported in a combined transport system where prehaulage and last mile distribution is done with trucks while the main haul is executed on rail. There are 11 hubs in Switzerland served by the system. Currently the stakeholders PLANZER and CAMION TRANSPORT own Cargo Domizil, both family owned LSP in Switzerland.

The combined demand for rail service allows a strong bargaining power for the LSP involved to buy rail services at favorable tariffs. Transports on rail help reducing CO2 emissions and congestion on Swiss roads, approximately 57,166 truck trips were substituted in 2014 amounting to savings of: 9464 t of CO2, 25.8 t of Nox, 7.7 t of SO2 and 822 kg PM.

What was the main problem, idea or motivation that led to the development and introduction of the new practice?
The main motivation of the privatised Cargo Domizil system was to benefit from high volumes of general cargo between centrally located logistics centres. The transport by rail proves to be highly efficient, even below 300km distances (which are rarely reached in Switzerland). The negative effects of the truck charging scheme can be lowered in the general cargo transports. Also, there is a night time driving ban and thus rail transport is an important benefit for haulage overnight. Depending on tariff structures of trucking and rail costs the system can be transferred to other regions, countries or even on a larger multi-country scale.

What was the common practice before the implementation?
The involved LSP were using rail services only sporadically before acquiring Cargo Domizil. Cargo Domizil as a service was established in 1981 by SBB (Swiss railways) to combine road and rail services as an offer. 140 local transport partners were involved and 600 train stations were serviced. The system was not profitable. 35 hubs existing before 1996 were reduced to 17 after the privatisation.
Cargo Domizil was owned by state owned entities, including the Swiss railways (SBB), and operated with up to 140 private partners until 1996, accumulating a yearly net loss of about 100 Mio CHF.

In 1996 a private consortium of LSPs bought the system and restructured the organisation, reduced the hubs and involved partners. The operation of the hubs and the first and last mile logistics is in control of the stakeholders. Only the rail transport is purchased from Swiss rail operators.

Individual partners who also organise the local first and last mile logistics operate the regional hubs. An IT system connects the involved Cargo Domizil partners.

Consignments are picked up by trucks in the afternoon and delivered to the respective regional hub. There the consignments are sorted onto rail wagons which are forwarded to a central location near Olten. All rail wagons are then sorted for their destination centre and delivered there ready for unloading and last mile truck delivery in the morning.

In addition to the transport service Cargo Domizil can offer warehouse logistics for customers, where consignments can be pre-packed, stored and then be shipped within the system at any given time.

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