

## Case 1: Independent Owner-Operators benefit from new trailer flooring solution

**Summary:** Before WISA-TopGrip Evo2 trailer flooring was launched on the market, its performance has been measured not only in laboratory tests but also in user tests under demanding road conditions in Northern and Central Europe. Installing WISA-TopGrip Evo2 eliminates the need for disposable friction mats, helping small businesses and owner-operators save thousands yearly

A little over three-quarters of freight in the EU is transported over roads. This figure was more than four times the amount of freight transported by rail in 2016, while only about 7% of freight was carried on inland waterways.<sup>1</sup> The transportation industry is seeing more competition as each player seeks to differentiate itself in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, and value for money.<sup>2</sup> For independent owner-operators, this translates to added pressure to maximise the profit for each load.

Small independent owner-operators, who operate domestically with less than five trucks or semi-trailers and few additional drivers, are especially limited by their fleet's size as well as the operational cost for each truck. In a test done by **trans aktuell**,<sup>3</sup> which tracked seven vehicles over a period of two and a half years, the annual average total cost of operation (TCO) per truck was €165 000.<sup>4</sup>

For independent owner-operators, one way to increase profit is to cut costs. In the trucking industry, safe work practices cannot be sacrificed in order to save a few cents. Trucking companies of any size make safety a priority. Safety concerns take an even bigger significance for small owner-operators. They may not have a quick remedy to replace employees who are injured. They might also be more vulnerable to financial challenges if assigned loads are not delivered on time.

### A safe and cost-effective alternative

One of the riskiest situations for trucking companies happens when cargo is being loaded and secured. Together with the ratchet strap, one of the most common solutions to secure cargo is the manually installed anti-slip or friction mat but it exposes personnel to several risks. They could fall off the trailer while installing it or risk having a part of their clothing or body caught under the cargo.

While using anti-slip or friction mats is a popular option for making sure that heavy loads are secured properly during transport, there are many downsides to using them, apart from the safety risks already mentioned. Anti-slip mats have a fairly short lifespan and need to be replaced constantly. Considering that anti-slip mats cost about €0.50, each truck load can cost a business owner between €15 to €20, not to mention the added time cost from inefficient loading and unloading. For purposes of calculation, assuming a small business runs only two tractor trailer trucks three times per week, this translates to an annual cost of between €5 000 to €6 000, or about €17 000 per truck over six years.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> "Freight transport statistics." Eurostat, retrieved from the internet on 20 January 2019, [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Freight\\_transport\\_statistics](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Freight_transport_statistics)

<sup>2</sup> Callahan, Amanda. "Competition Heats Up in the Trucking Industry." *Shipping & Logistics Blog*, Lilly & Associates, 9 April 2018, [www.shiplilly.com/blog/competition-heats-up-in-the-trucking-industry/](http://www.shiplilly.com/blog/competition-heats-up-in-the-trucking-industry/)

<sup>3</sup> Braun, Markus. Fehrenkötter-Test nach zweieinhalb Jahren Sieben Kandidaten ziehen Bilanz. *trans aktuell*. Retrieved from the internet on 29.01.2019. [www.eurotransport.de/artikel/fehrenkoettertest-nach-zweieinhalb-jahren-sieben-kandidaten-ziehen-bilanz-8604459.html](http://www.eurotransport.de/artikel/fehrenkoettertest-nach-zweieinhalb-jahren-sieben-kandidaten-ziehen-bilanz-8604459.html).

<sup>4</sup> The figure cited was taken from the study done by *trans aktuell*, which included a Total Cost of Operation (TCO) Ranking and a separate file on the Calculation of Operating Costs. The trucks followed in the study were from different manufacturers. Figures are from 2016.

<sup>5</sup> Check estimated savings via the calculator at [http://campaigns.wisaplywood.com/WISA-TOP-GRIP\\_LandingPageWisaTopGrip.html](http://campaigns.wisaplywood.com/WISA-TOP-GRIP_LandingPageWisaTopGrip.html)

The new cargo securing solution helps make loading more efficient, saving small owner-operators both time and money. Using WISA-TopGrip Evo2 trailer flooring saves an average of between 5 to 15 minutes per load. In addition, using WISA-TopGrip Evo2 saves the company from spending up to €6 000 on friction mats annually for each truck.<sup>6</sup>

The second generation WISA-TopGrip Evo2 trailer flooring has performed well in laboratory testing measuring its friction coefficient when used with paper reels, EPAL pallets and gitter boxes.<sup>7</sup> In test situations, which included testing WISA-TopGrip Evo2 floors against extreme loads, the floors showed no sign of damage even after a year of use.<sup>8</sup> Most importantly, installing WISA-TopGrip Evo2 trailer flooring instead of using friction mats minimises the accident risks that trucking personnel are exposed to.

Independent owner-operators and small trucking companies stand to save thousands of euros by replacing disposable friction mats with WISA-TopGrip Evo2.

---

<sup>6</sup>“Durable and sustainable high-friction coating on trailer floors with WISA-TopGrip.” WISA Plywood, retrieved from the internet 18 January 2019, <https://www.wisaplywood.com/news-and-stories/stories/durable-and-sustainable-high-friction-coating-on-trailer-floors-with-wisa-topgrip/>

<sup>7</sup> WISA-TopGrip Evo2 product sheet. <https://www.wisaplywood.com/siteassets/documents/brochures/wisa-topgrip-evo2-en-fs.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> “Transportation companies are convinced about the top performance of WISA-TopGrip Evo2 floors.” WISA Plywood, retrieved from the internet, 16 January 2019, <https://www.wisaplywood.com/news-and-stories/references/transportation-companies-are-convinced-about-the-top-performance-of-wisa-topgrip-evo2-floors/>