

### Case 3: New trailer floor solution offers big savings for large fleets

**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 in trailers eliminates the need for disposable friction mats, which could translate to millions in savings for large trucking fleets.*

CLEAR International, a UK-based consulting firm working with players in the automotive and transport markets, reported that trailer registrations in Western Europe in 2017 was just over 190 000, the third highest level of demand ever recorded.<sup>1</sup> A separate study by Roland Berger GmbH released in August 2018 said that four megatrends – new Logistics, Electrification, Autonomous trucks and Digitalisation – along with region-specific drivers are expected to lead to a rise in the number of large fleets that are able to capitalise on cost competitiveness.<sup>2</sup>

According to Colin Holthaus, technical director for the National Association of Trailer Manufacturers, reducing costs and increasing safety are the main drivers behind new technologies for trucks and trailers.<sup>3</sup> In a test done by **trans aktuell**,<sup>4</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>5</sup>

This mindset among trailer manufacturers reflect the growing competition in the trucking industry, as each player seeks to differentiate itself in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, and value for money.<sup>6</sup>

#### **A sustainable and cost-effective alternative**

For large fleets, each cost is multiplied by the number of trailers. Left unchecked, small expenses can add up and in a competitive landscape, every penny counts. Let's look for example at one of the most common solutions to secure cargo – the anti-slip or friction mat. While using anti-slip or friction mats with ratchet straps are a popular option for making sure that heavy loads are secured properly during transport, there are many downsides to using them. Safety-wise, they expose personnel to several risks, such as falling off the trailer while installing the mats or having a piece of clothing or even a part of their body caught between the mat and the cargo during loading.

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<sup>1</sup> "West European trailer registrations at 3rd highest level ever." Fleetwatch. 02 March 2018. Retrieved from the internet on 25 January 2019. [www.fleetwatch.co.za/west-european-trailer-registrations-at-3rd-highest-level-ever](http://www.fleetwatch.co.za/west-european-trailer-registrations-at-3rd-highest-level-ever)

<sup>2</sup> "Trends in the truck & trailer market: Market study". Roland Berger GmbH. 8 August 2018. Retrieved from the internet on 25 January 2019. [www.rolandberger.com/de/Publications/Trends-in-the-truck-trailer-market.html](http://www.rolandberger.com/de/Publications/Trends-in-the-truck-trailer-market.html)

<sup>3</sup> McDaniel, Jason. "Trailer trends: Technology driving change in vehicles." Trailer/Bodybuilders. 31 May 2018. Retrieved from the internet on 24 January 2019. [www.trailer-bodybuilders.com/trailers/trailer-trends-technology-driving-change-vehicles](http://www.trailer-bodybuilders.com/trailers/trailer-trends-technology-driving-change-vehicles)

<sup>4</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>5</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>6</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/)

Moreover, 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 between €15 to €20, not to mention the additional time and labour cost from inefficient loading and unloading practices. This means that anti-slip mats can cost the company up to €6 000 annually for each truck.<sup>7</sup>

Testing of the new WISA-TopGrip Evo2 trailer flooring has been carried out in the past couple of years. The new cargo securing solution helps make loading more efficient, saving fleets both time and money. Using WISA-TopGrip Evo2 trailer flooring saves an average of between 5 to 15 minutes per load. In addition, using the more sustainable WISA-TopGrip Evo2 rather than friction mats can save a company running a fleet of 7 000 trucks up to €20 million annually.<sup>8</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>9</sup> In test situations, which included testing WISA-TopGrip Evo2 floors against extreme loads, they showed no sign of damage even after a year of use.<sup>10</sup> Most importantly, installing WISA-TopGrip Evo2 trailer flooring instead of using friction mats minimises the accident risks that trucking personnel are exposed to.

Large fleets can improve their efficiency and save tons of money in the process by replacing anti-slip mats with WISA-TopGrip Evo2 trailer flooring.

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<sup>7</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)

<sup>8</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>9</sup> WISA-TopGrip Evo2 product sheet. <https://www.wisaplywood.com/siteassets/documents/brochures/wisa-topgrip-evo2-en-fs.pdf>

<sup>10</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/>