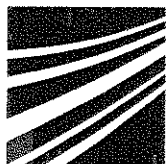


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Table of Contents

Foreword.....	III
Committees.....	IV
Acknowledgements.....	V
A short view on CIRP.....	VI
Key-notes.....	1
Should CIRP develop a Production Theory? Motivation • Development Path • Framework	3
<i>H.-P. Wiendahl, P. Nyhuis, W. Hartmann</i>	
Manufacturing Systems Sustainability Through Perfect Co- evolution	19
<i>H.A. ElMaraghy</i>	
Production & logistic networks.....	29
A Production Planning and Scheduling Architecture for Networked- manufacturing System based on Available-to-Promise.....	31
<i>Wenhao Wang, Jie Zhang</i>	
Adaptive evaluation method for relocation activities in global production networks.....	38
<i>S. Lohmann, P. Ponton, M. Jaehne, R. Riedel, E. Mueller</i>	
An Approach for Systematic Production Network Configuration	45
<i>A. Kampker, G. Schuh, B. Schittny, D. Kupke</i>	
Analysis of Lead-Time Regulation in an Autonomous Work System	53
<i>N. Duffie, H. Rekersbrink, L. Shi, D. Halder, J. Blazei</i>	
Collaboration in Value Creation Networks to improve Material Cycles	61
<i>S. Heyer, M. Grismajer, G. Seliger</i>	
Development of organizational models for cross-company transport bundling	69
<i>Margarethe Prochazka, René Leitner, Felix Meizer, Wilfried Sihn</i>	
Impact of influence factors on logistics planning in the Automotive Industry	77
<i>D. Palm, W. Sihn</i>	

Table of Contents

Improving the distribution of value-added activities in complex business networks considering qualitative factors	85
<i>A. Prinz, S. Ost, J. Mandel</i>	
An Integrated Approach to Sustainable Multimodal Transportation in Logistics Networks	93
<i>G. Confessore, G. Galiano, G. Liotta, G. Stecca</i>	
Concept of transport-oriented scheduling for reduction of inbound logistics traffic	101
<i>M. Florian, J. Kemper, W. Sihn, B. Hellingrath</i>	
Internet Based Collaboration in the Manufacturing Supply Chain	110
<i>D. Mourtzis</i>	
Nearshoring, Sustainability and Free Trade Facilitation for Global Logistics Networks	121
<i>Eleftherios Iakovou, Dimitrios Vlachos, Maria Chatzipanagioti and Ioannis Mallidis</i>	
Networked Manufacturing Control: an Industrial Case	129
<i>P. Valckenaers, H. Van Brussel, B. Saint Germain, J. Van Belle</i>	
Use of the real options analysis to value new supplier development – a South Korean case study	137
<i>G. Lanza, S. Weiler, J. Möhlmann</i>	
Self-Configuring Service Network for Decision Support in Sustainable Smart Logistics	145
<i>A. Smimov, N. Shilov</i>	
Sustainability	153
A modular LCA framework for the eco-effective design of production systems	155
<i>C. Brondi, E. Carpanzano</i>	
Environmental Assessment of Automotive Joining Processes	163
<i>J. Pandremenos, J. Paralikas, A. Fysikopoulos, K. Salonitis and G. Chryssolouris</i>	
Fostering sustainability using Sustainable Supply Chain Networks (SSCN)	171
<i>H. Winkler</i>	
Green supply chain management in Korean major industries	179
<i>S. Sim, J. Oh, B. Kim, J. Choi, B. Jeong</i>	

Impact of Manufacturing Supply Chains on the Embodied Energy of Products.....	187
<i>S. Kara, S. Manmek</i>	
Integrating sustainability into supply chain management – a stakeholder perspective	195
<i>N. Vojdani, M. Knop</i>	
Life Cycle Approaches on Product Realization: meeting the challenges of future production research	204
<i>M. Wiktorsson, G. Sivard, T. Kjellberg</i>	
Main drivers of ecological innovation performance	212
<i>M. Zwainz</i>	
A Framework for Modelling Energy Consumption within Manufacturing Systems	220
<i>Y. Seow, S. Rahimifard</i>	
A new Approach for Controlling Disassembly Systems	228
<i>G. Zülch, J. Hrdina</i>	
Polymer Water as Optimal Cutting Fluid - Technological Analysis	236
<i>C. Herrmann, A. Zein</i>	
Industrial Smart Metering – Application of Information Technology Systems to Improve Energy Efficiency in Manufacturing	244
<i>C. Herrmann, G. Bogdanski, A. Zein</i>	
Tactical planning of sustainable transportation by logistics service providers for the automotive industry	252
<i>M. Preuss, B. Hellingrath</i>	
Product and service development/management - special session: IPS²	263
Analysis of Optimization Algorithms' Usability for the Operational Resource Planning of Industrial Product-Service Systems (IPS ²)	265
<i>H. Meier, B. Funke</i>	
Approach for intelligent design and manufacturing of footwear for diabetic persons	273
<i>M. Germani, M. Mengoni, E. Montiel, R. Raffaeli</i>	
Design Method for Life Cycle Oriented Product-Service Systems Development.....	281
<i>K. Kimita, F. Akasaka, S. Hosono, Y. Shimomura</i>	

Table of Contents

Industrial experience with Life Cycle Costing and the potential of Product-Service Systems.....	289
<i>J. Van Ostaeyen, J. Dufflou</i>	
Intelligent Process Data Management for product-service-systems in the European Tooling Industry	299
<i>Günther Schuh, Wolfgang Boos, Moritz Rittstieg</i>	
Managing Uncertainties in Life Cycle Evaluation of various Manufacturing Alternatives for a Product.....	307
<i>D. Janz, E. Westkämper, S. Rahimifard</i>	
Product Development Strategy in Markets with Network Externalities	316
<i>N. Nishino, T. Takenaka, K. Ueda</i>	
Reference Model for IPS ² Service Supply Chains.....	324
<i>H. Meier, O. Völker</i>	
Production systems – special session: SPECIES	333
A Method for the Joint Design of Quality and Production Control in Manufacturing Systems	335
<i>M. Colledani, T. Tolio</i>	
A novel method for the development of modular product architectures	343
<i>J. Pandremenos, A. Natsis, G. Chryssolouris</i>	
A Web-services oriented workflow management system for integrated production engineering.....	351
<i>K. Alexopoulos, S. Makris, V. Xanthakis and G. Chryssolouris</i>	
Cognitive Controlling Systems for Tolerance Optimization	359
<i>R. Schmitt, C. Wagels, N. Matuschek, M. Isermann</i>	
Developing Sustainable Competitive Edge for Small to Medium Size Businesses through Realizing Agility	367
<i>M. Gadalla, A. Deif</i>	
Development of a Manufacturing Equipment Configurator and an NC Simulator	375
<i>I. Németh, J. Püspöki</i>	
Evaluation of RFID implementation in manufacturing systems. A case study in automotive industry.....	383
<i>I. Baffo, M. Carlino, G. Confessore, G. Stecca</i>	

Maintenance of Intralogistics-Systems – Introduction of the Pilot Installation “Log CoMo-Tec Lab”	391
<i>S. Wenzel, A. Wötzel, G. Bandow</i>	
Production System for the Automated Finishing in Die and Mold Making	399
<i>C. Brecher, R. Tuecks, C. Wenzel</i>	
Ramp-up of hybrid manufacturing technologies.....	407
<i>F. Klocke, H. Wegner, A. Roderburg, B. Nau</i>	
Rule-based Engineering Change Mechanisms in Production Systems	416
<i>R.C. Malak, J.C. Aurich</i>	
Simulation-based Assessment of the Productivity of Adaptive and Selective Production Systems	425
<i>C. Hermann, P. Halubek, J. Stehr, J. Kayasa</i>	
Step-NC Compliant Approach for Workpiece Setup Planning Problem on Transfer Line	433
<i>S. Borgia, S. Pellegrinelli, T. Tolio</i>	
Lean Engineering & Assembly	441
A new methodical approach to increase productivity in production-logistical processes.....	443
<i>P. Kuhlmann, T. Edtmayr, W. Sihn</i>	
Analyzing Production Systems: Combining Perspectives of ‘Process’ and ‘Work Activity’	452
<i>Klaus-Peter Schulz</i>	
Development of a “convergent” order control for small and medium-sized production companies in the context of a turbulent market environment.....	461
<i>E. Okhan, T. Denner, M. Schubert, W. Sihn</i>	
Lean process analysis in administration and production.....	470
<i>A. Schloske, P. Thieme</i>	
Measuring the Complexity of Manual Products Assembly	478
<i>S.N. Samy, H.A. ElMaraghy</i>	
Optimization of the material flow using the principles of the Toyota Production System.....	488
<i>K. Tracht, J. Wrehde, T. Seuguep Kouamo</i>	

Table of Contents

Problems of Lean Production Implementation in the Croatian Enterprises.....	496
<i>I. Veza, N. Gjeldum, L. Celent, N. Stefanic</i>	
Highly Extensible Life-Cycle Oriented Placement of the Order Penetration Point in International Supply Chains.....	504
<i>Y. Uygun, B. Sieben, A. Kuhn</i>	
Using BPMN for Modeling Manufacturing Processes	515
<i>S. Zor, K. Görlach, F. Leymann</i>	
Value Stream Mapping for the Optimization of Maintenance Processes.....	523
<i>K. Matyas, F. Hagmair, W. Sihn</i>	
Technology in production & logistics	533
Automation of Driving Process in Copying manual Manipulations	535
<i>Z. Yang, F. Echtler, D. Scherer, M. Golle, H. Hoffmann, G. Klinker</i>	
Cognitive Agent based Control of a Machining Shop.....	543
<i>H.S. Park, N.H. Tran, J.Y. Song, D.H. Kim</i>	
Development of Chatter Vibration Detection System utilizing Sensor-less Process Monitoring	551
<i>Y. Sudo, Y. Kakinuma, T. Aoyama (2), K. Ohnishi</i>	
Hardware-Accelerated Measurement of Particle Velocities in Thermal Spray Processes.....	559
<i>L. Rockstroh, J. Hillebrand, W. Li, M. Wroblewski, S. Simon, R. Gadow</i>	
Identification of RFID Application Potentials in Manufacturing Processes	567
<i>M. Faltin, F.A. Gómez Kempf, J.C. Aurich</i>	
A comparison of the logistics performance of autonomous control methods in production logistics.....	576
<i>K. Windt, T. Becker, I. Kolev</i>	
Monitoring of the Welding Station Cluster.....	584
<i>A. Lebar, L. Selak, D. Bračun, A. Sluga, D. Husenagić, P. Butala</i>	

Knowledge management in production & logistics591

A Knowledge Management Concept for Product Ramp-up in
Automotive Industry593

C. Hermann, H. Bruns, P. Halubek, A. Wenda, S. Altuner

Education in Industrial Automation in an Innovative Learning
Factory601

E. Carpanzano, A. Cataldo

Holistic Approach against product piracy609

H. Meier, C. Siebel

Knowledge Flows in Early Stages of Product Development617

D. Spath, L. Wagner, F. Goll, P. Ohlhausen

Mastering Production Processes on the Basis of Management of
Measurement Processes625

R. Schmitt, J. Lose, M. Harding

Semantic integration by means of a graphical OPC Unified
Architecture (OPC-UA) information model designer for
Manufacturing Execution Systems633

M. Schleipen, O. Sauer, J. Wang

Process modelling and process planning641

A Distributed Routing Concept for Dynamic Flexible Flowshop
Problems with Unrelated Parallel Machines643

B. Scholz-Reiter, H. Rekersbrink, B.-L. Wenning

A methodology to support the design of multi-stage material
separation systems for recycling651

M. Colledani, S.B. Gershwin, T. Gutowski, M.I. Wolf

Analysis of NC data based on feature information model of shape
and process for retaining machining information659

F. Tanaka, S. Igari, T. Kawaguchi, M. Onosato

Assessment of an Organization for Digital Production Planning
Validation with Axiomatic Design667

M. Manns, K.-J. Wack

Automotive Supply Chain Flexibility Evaluation675

D. Mourtzis, L. Rentzos and S. Makris

Cognitive Process Planning683

B. Denkena, L.-E. Lorenzen, S. Kröning

Table of Contents

Empirical and Neural Network Modelling of Tool Wear Development in Ni-Base Alloy Machining	691
<i>C. Leone, D. D'Addona, R. Teti</i>	
Modelling and analysis of an autonomous control method based on bacterial chemotaxis	699
<i>B. Scholz-Reiter, M. Görges, T. Jagalski, L. Naujok</i>	
Modelling of Tool Wear in Gear Hobbing with Coated Tools for Facilitating Process Planning	707
<i>K.-D. Bouzakis, S. Kombogiannis, E. Bouzakis</i>	
Production of a variable cross sectional profile from AHSS – A sequential roll forming approach	717
<i>J. Paralikas, K. Salonitis, G. Chrysosolouris</i>	
Routing model refinement in large-scale manufacturing environment by using data mining	725
<i>D. Kamok, L. Monostori</i>	
The mathematical structure of CAPP within the software application developed at FMT in Presov	735
<i>K. Monkova, P. Monka</i>	
Understanding and Improvement of the Piston Insertion Operation	743
<i>Arnaud Robert, Serge Tichkiewitch</i>	
Utilization of a Bioinformatics Algorithm for the Comparison of Process Chains	751
<i>F. Reichert, A. Kunz, C. Bender, R. Moryson, K. Wegener</i>	
Factory planning	759
AMOR – An Agent for Assisting Monitoring, Optimization and (Re-)Design in Factory Design	761
<i>D. P. Politze, N. Jufer, J. Bathelt, A. Kunz, K. Wegener</i>	
Approach for planning of unit cost-optimal manufacturing and transport systems	769
<i>R. Schulze, A. Opitz, A. Krauß, E. Müller</i>	
Cross-Functional Digital Production Validation Framework for Automotive Industry	779
<i>J. Kiefer, M. Manns, K.-J. Wack</i>	
Energy Efficiency at Manufacturing Plants – A Planning Approach	787
<i>E. Müller, T. Löffler</i>	

Participatory Design of Communication and Information Flows in Plant Layouts	795
<i>D. Jentsch, D. Menzel, R. Riedel, K.-P. Schulz</i>	
Production planning	803
A Key Performance Indicator System of Process Control as a Basis for Relocation Planning	805
<i>F. Reichert, A. Kunz, R. Moryson, K. Wegener</i>	
A proposal of socio-inspired manufacturing scheduling concept and its application into flexible flowshop	813
<i>T. Kaihara, N. Fujii, S. Toide, H. Ishibashi, T. Nakano</i>	
An approach to avoid collisions in sheet metal forming during early stages of production planning	821
<i>D. Metz, M. Grauer, O. Reichert, W. Schäfer</i>	
A New Approach for Cost Modelling and Performance Evaluation within Operations Planning	829
<i>J. Malta, P.F. Cunha</i>	
Assessment of Products Eco-Efficiency for the purpose of Eco-Design	837
<i>Snezhana Kostova, Peter Mitrouchev and Nonka Georgieva</i>	
Collaborative Planning with Dynamic Supply Loops	844
<i>P. Egri, A. Döring, T. Timm, J. Váncza</i>	
Considering Worst-case Scenarios within Final Assembly Planning	852
<i>L. Weyand, H. Bley</i>	
Efficient Phase-Out Planning by Alignment of Lot Sizes in Supply Chains	860
<i>F. Hertrampf, R. Nickel, P. Nyhuis</i>	
Exploiting Repetitive Patterns in Practical Scheduling Problems	868
<i>A. Kovács, J. Váncza</i>	
Flexible and Autonomous Production Planning Directed by Product Agents	876
<i>M. Matsuda, N. Sakao, Y. Sudo, K. Kashiwase</i>	
Hybrid evolutionary optimization in efficient assembly task planning	884
<i>T. Jankowski, J. Jędrzejewski</i>	
Improved logistics performance through the use of locked flexibility potentials	892
<i>K. Windt, O. Jeken, F. Arbabzadah</i>	

Table of Contents

Integration of Personnel and Production Programme Planning in the Automotive Industry	900
<i>S. Auer, T. Winterer, W. Mayrhofer, L. März, W. Sihn</i>	
Long-term Capacity Planning in the Shipbuilding Industry	909
<i>M.-C. Wanner, J. Sender, U. Kothe, R. Bohnenberg</i>	
Inventory Allocation with Consideration of Component Commonality and Risk Management	917
<i>A.M. Radke, M.M. Tseng</i>	
Methodology for Structure-Analysis of Automotive Manufacturing	925
<i>C. Löffler, A. Lakeit, E. Westkämper</i>	
Process Harmonisation in Digital Manufacturing	933
<i>J. Schallow, D. Petzelt, J. Deuse</i>	
Product Variety in the Brazilian Cosmetic Industry	941
<i>L.F. Scavarda, A.C. Reis, S. Braßmann, H. Winkler</i>	
Leveling of Low Volume and High Mix Production based on a Group Technology Approach	949
<i>F. Bohnen, J. Deuse</i>	
Rolling Horizon and online optimization in discrete lotsizing production	957
<i>W. Dangelmaier</i>	
Simulation-based, energy-aware production planning	964
<i>S. Chiotellis, N. Weinert, G. Seliger</i>	
Total Quality Assurance, Productive Maintenance	973
An Approach to Workflow Based Quality Management	975
<i>D.C. ten Dam, D. Lutters</i>	
An efficient use of quality engineering techniques for analysis and improvement of industrial processes	983
<i>V. Majstorovic, T. Sibalija</i>	
Determination Of The Overall Equipment Effectiveness For Assembly Systems On The Base Of Product Data	991
<i>R. Neugebauer, D. Kreppenhöfer, T. Langer</i>	
Transparency in Production by Sensor Equipped Molds and Dies	999
<i>R. Schmitt, M. Harding, J. Lose</i>	

ICT in production & logistics1007

Design and Analysis of A Simulation, Monitoring and Control
System of 4-DOF Modular Reconfigurable Robot.....1009

D. Zhang, J. Lei

A Robust Multiple Logistic Objectives-oriented Manufacturing
Control (RMLOO).....1017

K. Windt, B. Scholz-Reiter, Huaxin. Liu

Achieving Distributed Control Applications Using IEC 61499 and
Communication Standards.....1028

G. Morán, F. Pérez, E. Estevez, D. Orive, M. Marcos

Agent-based Simulation Modeling of an Interaction Mechanism for
Detailed Design of Autonomic Manufacturing Execution Systems.....1036

Milagros Rolón, Ernesto Martinez

CAM System Development for Multi-tasking Machine Tools1044

T. Kotani, K. Nakamoto, T. Ishida, Y. Takeuchi

Sensible Ergonomics Network in Smart Environment (SENSE) — A
Step to Human Safety and Productivity Sensitive in Smart Factory.....1052

C.F. Kuo, M.J. Wang, C.H. Su

Implementation of practice-oriented IT Frameworks for knowledge
based configuration and design of customised products1060

C. Lutz, D. Gerhard

iPod touch – an ICT tool for operators in factories of the future?.....1070

T. Fässberg, G. Nordin, Å. Fasth, J. Stahre

Lightweight IT support for ad-hoc-processes in production and
logistics1078

Martin Böhringer, David Jentsch

Modular INFELT STEP; An Integrated and Interoperable Platform
for collaborative product development based on STEP Standard.....1085

O. Fatahi Valilai, M. Houshmand

Seasonal Demand on the Array of Spare Parts in the Aviation
Industry1093

K. Tracht, P. Schuh, F. Weikert

Production Simulation in Virtual Worlds1101

S. Seitz, M. Hermann, D. Wimpff

Rule based Expert System with Quality Control Charts to support a
Logistic Strategy on Operational Level1109

M. Elsweiler, P. Nyhuis, R. Nickel

Table of Contents

Introducing SOA into Production Environments – The Manufacturing Service Bus	1117
<i>J. Mínguez, D. Lucke, M. Jakob, C. Constantinescu, B. Mitschang, (1) E. Westkämper</i>	
Wireless Field Bus Communication with UWB for Manufacturing Environments	1125
<i>M. Masini, M. Jakob, M. Berroth</i>	

Concept of transport-oriented scheduling for reduction of inbound logistics traffic

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Abstract

Nowadays ecological issues are of high public priority. In industry and especially the automotive sector, often new machines, facilities or technological innovations are the key to ecological improvements. Although it is seen less prominent, logistics plays an important part to optimize the ecological system. Due to the high amount of transport traffic in inbound logistics, small changes lead to substantial savings in CO₂ emissions. Through transport-oriented scheduling this potential savings can be realized. By means of smoothing and bundling demands in scheduling, transport planning can be optimized resulting in a raised utilization or avoided unnecessary transports resulting in a reduction of CO₂ emissions. The developed concept was evaluated by means of a simulation model using real scheduling data.

Keywords:

Logistics, Planning, Scheduling, Production

1 INTRODUCTION

Over the last two decades, ecological thinking has been increasingly growing in importance in the public eye. This is emergent in the design and technologies of buildings (e.g. low-energy house) or products (e.g. hybrid technology) [1] [2]. This attitude is often driven by high operation costs [3]. On closer examination logistics as well has to adjust their processes according to these changes, in order to reduce not only emissions but also to save costs.

Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) in the automotive industry often face unsteady demands due to a high level of customer oriented productions [4] [5]. These fluctuations in demand, especially through low-runner

parts, causes several inefficiencies in logistics, i.e. unsteady traffic volumes at good receipt or low utilization, which raise the overall CO₂ emission in the system [6] [7] [8].

In the automotive industry, the supply of material is achieved with two different supply concepts. *Full-truck-load transport* (FTL) is a concept which can be used when demand is constant over a certain time-period. The outcome of this is a high utilization. These transports often deliver high-runner parts and specific supply times are assigned by transport planning. On the other hand, *less-truck-load transport* (LTL) is very flexible and delivers low-runner parts [9] [10].

On closer examination of the transport ratio of FTL and LTL, a high amount of incoming LTL trucks per day can be identified (Figure 1).

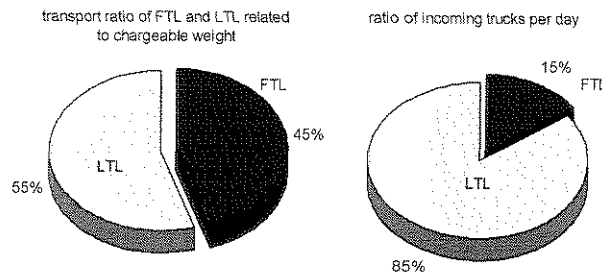


Figure 1: Ratio of Full-truck-loads (FTL) and Less-Truck-Load (LTL).

These transports with their unstable demand for the supplied parts and resulting low utilizations, represent the ideal area to realize a new supplier concept, in order to optimize the system and reduce CO₂ emissions. By means of a transport-oriented scheduling approach the demand for low-runner parts can be smoothed resulting in a more even utilization. The bundling of demand in production leads to increased utilizations, low inventory and transport costs through avoidance of transports due to bundling effects. These concepts assure a decrease in CO₂ emissions and reduced logistics costs. The starting point for the development of a transport-oriented scheduling approach was the analysis of the planning processes employed by the automotive industry.

2 ACTUAL PLANNING PROCESSES IN AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

One important objective in the automotive industry is to assure the building of cars with low lead and supply times, low stock and high flexibility [11]. Regarding inbound logistics, the primary objectives are to guarantee low supply times or low waiting times in the dispatch area, in order to minimize costs. Due to these circumstances and other requirements, processes in the automotive industry are very complex. Considering the relation between the scheduling and the disposition, which is important to optimize the supply of parts, it can be seen that the disposition takes a reactive position (Figure 2). The scheduling times all the orders on the basis of

planning restrictions into a defined tact. To avoid overload in the assembly stations the production restrictions have to be considered [12].

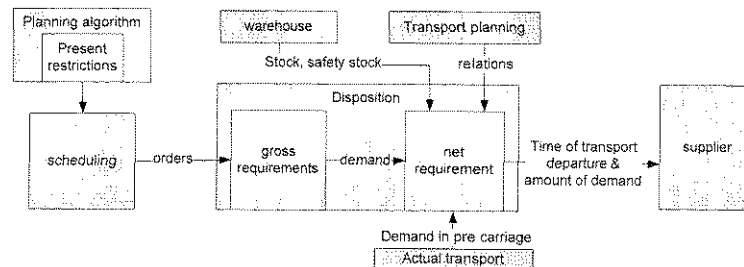


Figure 2: Linkage between scheduling and disposition.

With this and other logistical information disposition determines time and amount of demand for materials from the suppliers [11].

2.1 Processes of scheduling

Before the scheduling can be performed, orders have to be scheduled into the right time slots. Therefore, the orders are constantly scattered over a volume of a week and provisions for delivery times and production relevant restrictions are made. In a second step, the orders of a whole week are scheduled into the right sequence [13]. OEM use different algorithms to sequence the orders. Beside mixed-model sequencing, car sequencing or level scheduling are forms of applying orders to a tact. These models assure a consideration of different lead times of orders as a result of different variants to avoid overloads in the assembly stations [12]. After the planning process the sequenced orders are transferred to disposition.

2.2 Processes of disposition

The task of the disposition is to assign the demand of the production to the available transport capacities, which were planned in the transport planning process. Because of safety stocks, stocks in the warehouse and other stocks, the disposition has to appoint the right time and amount of demand to get it delivered in time (Figure 3) [11].

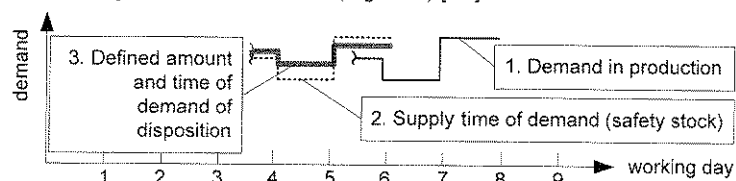


Figure 3: Determination of amount and time of demand.

To determine the right amount, disposition aligns the gross demanded requirements of a viewed period of sequence planning with the actual stock in warehouse and demand in pre carriage. The gross requirements are derived from manufacturing resources planning (MRP), where orders have been broken down according to the part list [11]. Thereupon the resulting net requirements are rounded up to the capacity of the transport

equipments. In case of a FTL or a milk-run the demand is rounded up a second time to achieve high utilizations. If a LTL is used the demand won't be rounded up a second time.

To determine the right time of material delivery, disposition has to run a backwards scheduling. Initial point is the first use of materials in production. Besides the transport duration the disposition has to consider the safety stock or "safety days". A further parameter is the type of transport concept. While a LTL is being scheduled independently from a certain planned day, a FTL or milk-run has to be scheduled on defined dates, which were set by the transport planning.

2.3 Inefficiencies in actual planning processes

Because of the reactive character of disposition, the inbound logistics is operating on an inefficient level. Low utilizations or unbalanced part arrivals can be identified. Beside higher logistics costs this also causes unnecessary CO₂ emissions. Especially OEMs, which often are located in urban areas and therefore have limited space for production, have to plan the arrivals of supplier transports very accurately.

To smooth the incoming traffic volume or bundle transports, the part requirements have to be shifted in the scheduling. The starting point for an optimization is to link the sequence planning with disposition. Hence, a new concept has to be developed, where sequence planning is expanded by logistical parameters starting at the disposition and transport planning.

3 CONCEPT OF TRANSPORT-ORIENTED SCHEDULING FOR REDUCTION OF INBOUND LOGISTIC TRAFFIC

The inbound logistic objectives mentioned in chapter 2 interact. Their work dependencies are illustrated in figure 4. Objectives in the second quadrant are called active components, since they have a strong impact on the system and are weakly influenced by the system. These objectives have the highest positive leverage effect on the others [14].

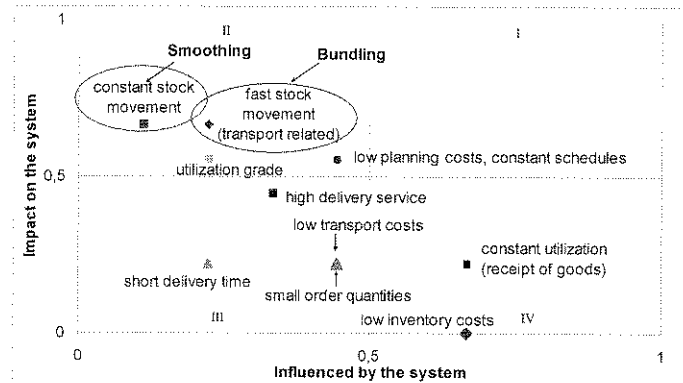


Figure 4: Work dependencies of objectives.

For inbound logistic purposes the main focus is to realize:

- **Smoothing of demand**

Smoothing means realizing a steady demand of parts. The resulting constant stock movement and flow of parts provide a basis for a steady transport schedule [15].

In consideration of mass customization, a constant demand exists only for parts with a high installation rate as can be seen in figure 5. Regularly these parts are high frequently sourced from nearly located supplier parks or with lean JIT transports [16].

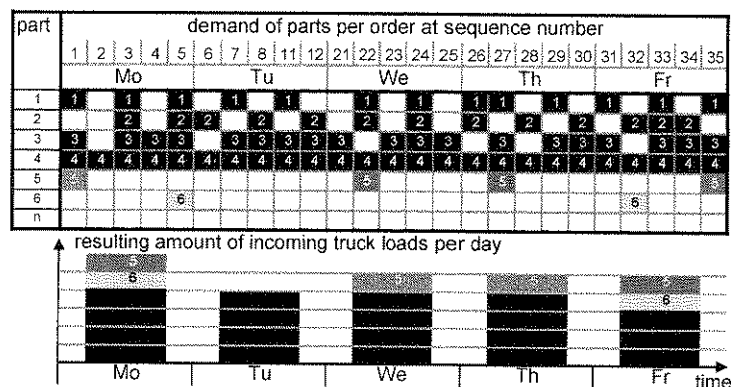


Figure 5: Sequence related demand of parts and transportation capacities.

- **Bundling of demand**

Bundling means concentrating demand of certain parts into a shorter time span. Bundling parts of the same transport relation allows high order quantities, high utilization and low inventory costs.

Parts with a low installation rate like part 5 and 6 are characterized by sporadic demand. Lean management consequently leads to numerous and unsteady transports. The delivery of the resulting low order quantities are carried out by low-loaded FTLs or expensive LTLs [17]. A solution is given by realizing a fast stock movement of defined transport-related parts as can exemplarily be seen in figure 6.

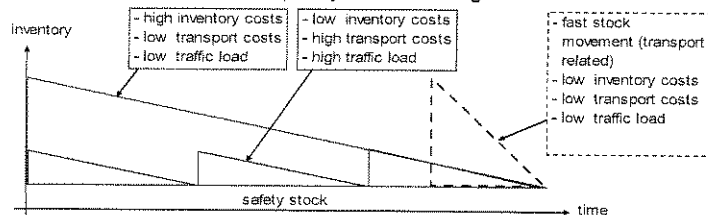


Figure 6: Low inventory, transport costs and traffic load through bundling.

Realizing bundling comprises:

- selection of the supplier and parts

- determination of the bundling time period
- determination of the bundling amount per part

Defining these requirements is part of the transport planning tasks. Besides the current production restrictions, the transport oriented specifications have to be considered in the scheduling process as it is shown in figure 7.

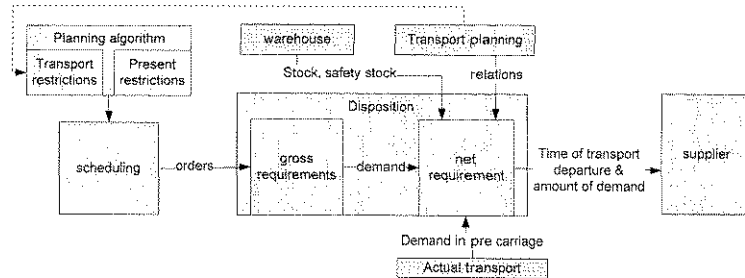


Figure 7: Integrated process of transport and scheduling.

Considering the transport restrictions at the scheduling, changes the sequence as it can be seen in figure 8. Through the transfer of order-number 1 for 29, 22 for 31 as well as 5 for 33, the bundling-time-period of part 5 could be reduced from 35 to 9 tacts. The demand period for part 6 is reduced from 27 to 2 tacts. As a consequence of the accelerated stock movement and high order quantities, the amount of truck deliveries for part 5 and 6 decreases from 6 to 2 deliveries per week.

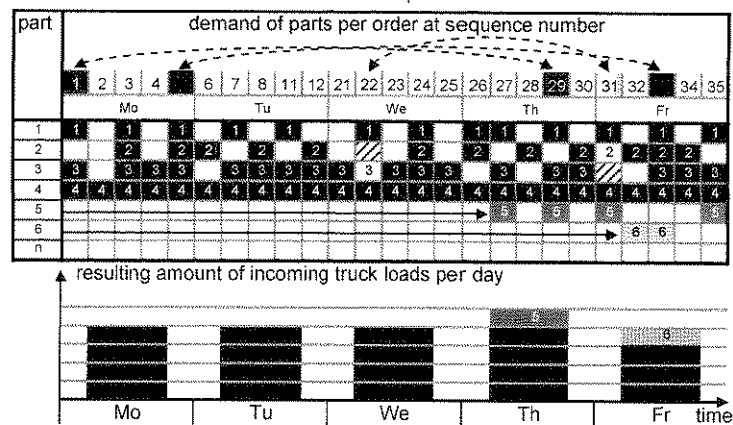


Figure 8: Bundled sequence concerning to part 5 and 6.

Gaining these advantages means accepting a changed demand of other parts like 2 and 3. The hatched boxes shows the temporal differences of demand. Change of orders is accepted as long as the present restrictions allow it. Reflecting the objectives of inbound logistic, only the most relevant parts and transport relations should be considered. Relevant factors are:

- long distances between source and sink. The longer the distance the higher is the saving potential of transport costs and pollutant emissions.
- The amount of different types of parts. The smaller the amount of different types of parts the smaller is the amount of transport-/ part related restrictions
- High inventory costs. The higher the inventory costs the higher is the present transport frequency and therefore the saving potential of transport costs and emissions.

An evaluation of the feasibility considering transport-related restrictions was made. The results, basing on authentic data and a car-sequencing algorithm of a German car manufacturer are introduced in the following chapter.

4 EVALUATION OF TRANSPORT-ORIENTED SCHEDULING

A production plant which produces two different models on two separated lines was chosen for the evaluation. The production volume of model A amounts to 3000 and model B to 1300 cars per week. The considered time horizon amounts 5 weeks. As can be seen in table 1, 7 suppliers were selected with the following characteristics:

- long distance (300 miles on average)
- small amount of different types of parts (2-3)
- high purchase prices

The suppliers were classified in a rank of relevance for the objectives of inbound logistic. Subsequently transport restrictions were defined. According to their rank, the transport restrictions were considered sequentially in the scheduling. The amount of transport restrictions were gradually increased, until they came into conflict with one of the present restrictions. The consequences of the implementation are presented in the table below.

Supplier	Rank	Distance [miles]	Amount of different parts per supplier	Average chargeable weight [m ³ /week]	Average delivery per week (present restrictions)	Average delivery per week (present+transport restrictions)	Change [%]
Supplier 1	1	320	2	36,35	3,80	1,80	-52,63
Supplier 2	2	300	2	23,45	2,60	1,60	-38,46
Supplier 3	3	350	3	13,67	3,20	2,20	-31,25
Supplier 4	4	270	2	18,89	1,80	0,80	-55,56
Supplier 5	5	370	2	24,53	4,60	3,60	-21,74
Supplier 6	6	200	3	30,16	3,60	2,60	-27,78
Supplier 7	7	330	2	32,34	2,80	1,80	-35,71

Table 1: Selected suppliers and consequences of transport-oriented scheduling.

As can be seen, noticeable reductions of the transport frequency could be achieved for the selected suppliers. The total sum of transport-deliveries, pictured in figure 9, could be reduced by 2.5-3.0%, depending on the amount and priority of the present restrictions.

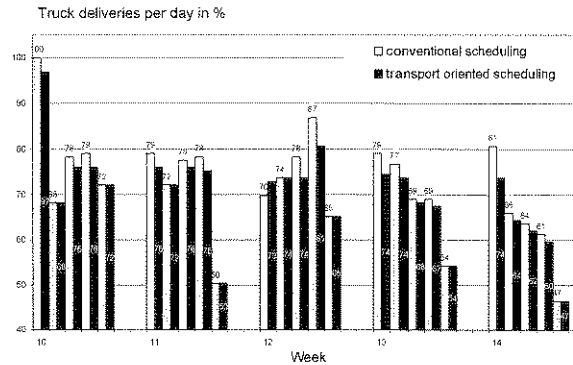


Figure 9: Linkage between scheduling and disposition.

The reduction of the delivery frequency causes a decrease of the pollutant emissions. The mentioned effects basically depend on the transport utilization of the pre and main carriage. A quantitative evaluation was not proceeded because of missing data.

5 SUMMARY

Considering transport-related restrictions like bundling at the scheduling-planning is possible. Due to the amount and priority of the present restrictions, the possibilities to expand the transport restrictions are limited. The evaluation with a time horizon of 5 weeks shows that the reduction of the total sum of transport is limited to 3.0% maximum. Nevertheless the transport oriented scheduling allows the reduction of costs and emissions for a limited selection of the most polluting and expensive relations and parts.

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