

2.4 Extension of terminal opening time

Description

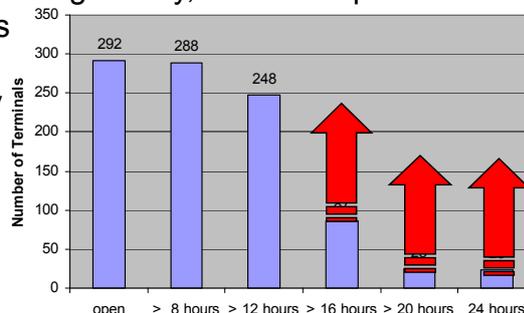
Though the exact opening time of combined transport terminals for serving road-side customers differs from site to site, typical schedules have evolved in Europe over the years. This assumption was clearly confirmed by our survey of some 350 European terminals including information obtained from the UIRR database (www.uirr.com). Only very few intermodal facilities are working on a single-shift-basis and are open for 8 to 10 hours. About 30 per cent of all the terminals examined are open more than 16 hours. Nearly 70 per cent of the sites, however, apply a two-shift scheme serving pick-up and delivery vehicles for about 12 to 16 hours, from Monday to Friday. Terminals are used to open between five or six o'clock in the morning and close around 7 to 10 in the evening. Considering a 24-hours-economy, these terminals on average are open to customers 53 per cent of the maximum possible time.

Figure 8: Extension of terminal opening time

Extension of opening time in two ways:

1. Operating times to deal with gateway, second departure or just "clearing" handlings
2. Opening time road side for pick-up and delivery

- Each day (1-5)
- Saturday
- Sunday



Source: KombiConsult analysis

Prerequisites and implementation

There are several prerequisites. The final customer of the shipment has to have opened his logistics services overnight or the shipment has to be carried over long distances so that the road vehicle and the driver would be employed efficiently. It seems that there is some hidden potential for optimizing infrastructure employment by homogenizing the flow of transports. In this respect, the DUSS terminal Köln-Eifeltor recently has received some positive feedback on its decision to open its facility 24 hours/day.

According to our inquiries, most terminal operators are prepared to broaden the opening time if customers demanded it. Intermodal operators, however, have also reported that they have sometimes difficulties to get terminal slots outside the published opening times.

Although terminal managers are arguing that customers do not want to arrive at different times, the two options of extending the opening times shall be looked at carefully in the perspective of raising terminal capacity:

- The first option is to enlarge the operating times (internal and rail-side) to deal with gateway transshipments, second departures or just “clearing” the handling and buffer lanes outside of peak hours.
- The second option is to extend the opening time also for road-side pick-up and delivery of shipments.

Impacts and Benefits

Extending the terminal opening time could mean increasing the daily opening period (up to 24 hours/day) or open also on Saturdays or even Sundays. The terminal managers involved in our investigation expect that the extension of customer-related opening times will bring about an increase of transshipment capacity of at least 10 to 20 per cent compared to the initial situation.

The capacity impact in the first place depends from the customer’s acceptance whether they are able (opportunities) or willing (behavior) to take the opportunity from enlarged opening times. The size of the capacity effect will be determined by the difference between the new and the old time window, the extent of gateway services at the terminal and whether industrial customers are calling at the terminal. When extending the opening time it should be taken account of the need to reserve sufficient hours for maintenance and repair of the terminal equipment.

On the one hand, due to longer business hours the service level and customer satisfaction might be increased. On the other hand, to extend the terminal opening time does not seem the most appropriate method for more environment-friendly terminal operations (higher pollutant emission and noise pollution) as well as for improving the handling effectiveness.

Figure 9: Impact of the measure “Extending of terminal opening time” on the four main goals



Source: KombiConsult analysis

Costs

- This measure causes more than proportional increase of personnel costs incurred by the night shift or weekend shift of all involved parties.

Involved Parties

- Terminal operator
- Public authorities, as regards permissions to run the terminal and allow truck operating to/from the site during night/weekend
- Trade unions, with respect to working time of staff
- Infrastructure manager, with respect to servicing network switch board at extended hours

- Railway undertakings, with respect to servicing trains at extended hours
- Intermodal operator, with respect of servicing trains at extended hour and communicate this to customers
- Customers to accept picking-up/delivering loading units at extended opening hours

Conflicts of goals

The advantage of the capacity increase needs to be weighed up against the disadvantages such as higher personnel costs or the rather negative environmental impact. To implement this measure represent the simplest way to increase the terminal capacity. Therefore, the bigger the capacity bottleneck, the greater the likelihood that a terminal operator will decide to extend the terminal opening time.

References

- Verona Quadrante Europa
- Busto Arsizio
- Nürnberg Hafen
- Praha
- Duisburg Ruhrort Hafen
- Köln Eifeltor