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SEAMLESS, STREAMLINED, AND *SUSTAINABLE* *SUCCESS*

The family-owned Weerts Group enjoys uniquely inherent advantages. Didier Weerts, CEO of Weerts Supply Chain, and Christophe Weerts, Vice President of Business Development at Weerts Logistics Parks, discuss their divisions' agility, flexibility, accessibility, and continual investment in the future

Writer: Rachel Carr | Project Manager: Ryan Gray

Adjacent to the River Meuse in Belgium is the city of Liège, the economic capital of the Wallonia region and the headquarters of Weerts Supply Chain (WSC).

One of four different yet complementary business fields of the family-owned Weerts Group, WSC is included in the company's portfolio alongside motorsport, logistics real estate, and energy.

A circular portrait of Christophe Weerts, a man with short brown hair, wearing a blue suit jacket over a light blue shirt. He is sitting at a desk with his hands clasped in front of him.

Christophe Weerts, Vice President of Business Development, Weerts Logistics Parks

As the successor of Transports Weerts & Fils, founded in 1918, WSC grew into one of Belgium's leading national road transport companies over four generations. In 1989, the company diversified its services by adding contract logistics and began to gain experience in the construction of logistics real estate, which eventually became its focus.

Since then, Weerts Group has



been successful in expanding its divisions, with the addition of Weerts Energy in 2022. This new venture has implemented a comprehensive energy strategy across the group's entire portfolio, specialising in financing and customised renewable solutions for its properties, actively contributing to the net zero transition.

Currently, Weerts Group – more specifically Weerts Logistics Parks



Didier Weerts,
CEO, Weerts
Supply Chain

(WLP) - operates in multiple European countries, including the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Germany, France, the UK, Italy, Hungary, Romania, and Belgium. The company is divided into four robust units, each with a different focus, yet they all share the same values of innovation, sustainability, and excellence.

“Road transport was the origin of the business, which commenced ■

“WLP PRIDES ITSELF ON EXERCISING ITS RESPONSIBILITIES CONCERNING SOCIAL STEWARDSHIP AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT BY OPERATING IN THE MOST SUSTAINABLE WAYS POSSIBLE”

- CHRISTOPHE WEERTS, VICE PRESIDENT OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, WEERTS LOGISTICS PARKS

modestly after the First World War. The road transport division grew into one of Belgium’s leading companies in that sector until it was sold in 2008. Following that, Weerts Group continued to develop its logistics expertise, with a strong emphasis on technological innovation and an end-to-end approach,” introduces Didier

Weerts, CEO of WSC.

Focusing on food, consumer products, household appliances, electronics, and industrial logistics, WSC illustrates its scope with a presence in seven locations, over 350 full-time employees, and a total footprint of approximately 250,000 square metres (sqm).

REDEFINING EUROPEAN LOGISTICS

WLP, which forms an essential component of Weerts Group, is committed to developing cutting-edge logistics parks that cater to the specific requirements of third-party vendors and end-users.

These facilities display strategic location choices, an unflinching focus on sustainability, and superior operational efficiency.

“Our local partnerships in the countries we operate in are crucial to our success; they combine global innovation with regional expertise to ensure that solutions are tailored to each market’s unique requirements,” opens Christophe Weerts, Vice President of Business Development at WLP.



WLP has set out a clear roadmap of strategic site selection, an ongoing commitment to sustainability, and a pioneering approach to technological innovation.

“Short decision lines are one of WLP’s major strengths, and the company’s quick action is a testament to this. It continues to remain one of our top priorities and aligns with one of our core values – simplicity,” Christophe expands.

In addition, WLP is dedicated to delivering exceptional services to its customers, both during the construction phase and after the buildings are completed. The company maintains strong relationships with its tenants, seeking to understand their requirements and being their primary point of contact

to ensure continued partnerships and support.

Like the other divisions within Weerts Group, WLP is committed to sustainability and plans to install 274,000 solar panels and four wind turbines by the end of 2025, with a further two to follow by the end of 2027.

Furthermore, WLP buildings are equipped with first-class insulation, LED lighting, and intelligent sensors to reduce energy waste. WLP has pledged to undertake BREEAM certification for all future logistics real estate developments.

“WLP prides itself on exercising its responsibilities concerning social stewardship and environmental impact by operating in the most sustainable ways possible. ■

WLP'S PRIME PROJECTS

ITALY'S LOGISTICS INNOVATIONS

- Bari Modugno is an access point to Southern Italy, offering 49,932 sqm of logistics solutions and demonstrating how operational areas can thrive sustainably.
- Fidenza is an important 50,000 sqm hub that fuses environmental awareness and logistical efficiency.
- Venice Park links Northern Italy with the Adriatic Sea and features multimodal capabilities. It boasts LEED Platinum certification, embodying the pinnacle of green logistics.

BELGIUM'S MULTIMODAL HUBS

- Garocentre has an area of 59,312 sqm and is a beacon of multimodal logistics capacity. The site's strategic location is enhanced by its proximity to the Inland Water Terminal, which provides direct sea links to Antwerp and Zeebrugge. A nearby railway line extends its logistical reach.
- Cargo City West has a footprint of 170,000 sqm and, in collaboration with Liège Airport, will act as a central hub for multimodal shipments, including rail freight arriving directly behind the airport.

FRANCE'S GATEWAY TO EUROPE

- Dunkirk is a significant new facility for WLP, marking the start of a series of ambitious projects and a strategic step into the French market. Construction is due to begin in Q2 of 2024, and it has been designed with sustainability in mind.





“Our aim is to create logistics parks that establish a new benchmark in the industry and incorporate sustainability and efficiency in all aspects of our operations. By capitalising on our strengths, WLP is not only preparing for the future but actively shaping it, ensuring that our legacy continues to redefine the logistics real estate sector in Europe,” declares Christophe.

HARMONIOUS DIVISIONS

Striving for excellence in everything it does, Weerts Group is united by a strategic thread that connects its business units and creates a network of synergistic opportunities and overlaps.

“Although each of the four divisions operates with its own expertise and market focus, they all contribute to a collective strength that is greater than the sum of its parts,” Didier observes.

For example, WSC and its distribution networks support the racing division’s need for the precise and timely transport of equipment

“AT WSC, WE DON’T JUST OFFER STANDARD STORAGE SERVICES; WE GO ABOVE AND BEYOND TO PROVIDE A WIDE RANGE OF VALUE-ADDED SERVICES”

- DIDIER WEERTS, CEO, WEERTS SUPPLY CHAIN

and parts. WLP, meanwhile, demonstrates its logistics expertise by providing integrated solutions to customers and ensuring that projects are strategically located for optimal efficiency.

In parallel, WLP provides the foundation for the energy division to utilise sustainable solutions. These not only power the properties but also provide renewable energy systems for motorsport and logistics operations, further reducing Weerts Group’s environmental footprint.

“Collaboration between different departments can lead to innovation, with breakthroughs in one area driving progress in others. This creates a cycle of continuous improvement and growth, which

strengthens each individual division and opens up new opportunities in various markets. This diversified approach ensures a dynamic and sustainable future,” insights Didier.

Weerts Group aims to achieve sustainable growth while creating value across its entire portfolio for the benefit of all stakeholders, including employees, customers, shareholders, business partners, and society.

“Our most important social contribution is to generate jobs and stimulate economic activity in the regions where we operate. Our efforts to facilitate a positive working environment for our employees were recognised in 2020 with the Logistics Employer of the Year award,” Didier prides. ■



stow



About stow Group

stow Group is one of the world leading suppliers of racking and automated storage solutions. The core activity is the development, manufacturing and installation of top-quality systems and solutions for warehouse operations. The company employs more than 2,000 people worldwide. In 2023, the Group generated sales of almost €1 billion. It has an extensive pan-European manufacturing presence with nine production sites and a global distribution network. stow Group has two independent brands under its roof: stow and Movu Robotics, both headquartered in Belgium.

[STOW-GROUP.COM](https://www.stow-group.com)



International expertise for safe and reliable racking and storage systems

Part of the stow Group, stow Racking has been developing, manufacturing and installing a wide range of innovative and reliable racking and storage systems for over 40 years.

Renowned for the exceptional build quality of its products, stow storage solutions are designed using the latest computer-aided design (CAD) technologies with particular attention to detail to ensure quick and easy installation while providing safe and efficient systems to meet the specific needs of each customer.

The stow Racking product range includes a comprehensive range of pallet racking, mobile racking, drive-in racking, high bay racking, cantilever racking, mid-rise racking and shelving. stow also supplies single and multi-level mezzanine storage systems. Self-supporting silo racking projects are also designed.

As you would expect from a world-leading storage systems brand, every installation comes with a performance and quality guarantee, and every stow solution complies with the latest national and international regulations and standards.

With 9 fully automated production facilities around the world, sales offices throughout Europe and an extensive network of partners across the globe, stow is an international organisation. This global presence, combined with its extensive range of products and storage solutions, means that stow can undertake complex projects and provide bespoke installations for customers around the world.



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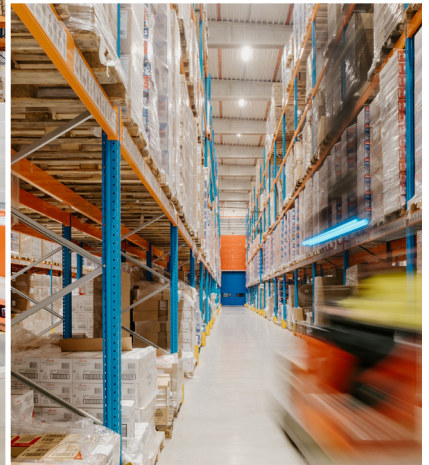


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Furthermore, WSC collaborates with adapted labour companies that provide meaningful employment for around 100 people at various locations in its Belgium warehouses. Similarly, WLP cultivates a holistic approach, which demonstrates its belief that businesses can be financially successful while also having a positive impact on society.

“In addition to promoting energy efficiency, WLP’s strategy is to construct spaces that help businesses thrive while strengthening the local economy through job creation and community support,” Christophe explains.

INVESTMENTS AND DEVELOPMENTS

WSC invests in artificial intelligence (AI) and various automation initiatives, as well as smart applications for training, communication, and reporting purposes.

It also prioritises the well-being of the workforce by investing in ergonomic workstations and equipment that enables safer and more efficient warehouse operations. ▣

WSC’S SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIES

WSC’s specific initiatives are an integral part of Weerts Group’s wider sustainability framework and emphasise its commitment to the environment:

- **Investing in replacing conventional vehicles with eco-friendly alternatives, such as electric or gas-powered trucks, to reduce the impact of and dependence on fossil fuels.**
- **Electric equipment and BREEAM-certified warehouses to decrease emissions and increase energy efficiency.**
- **Carbon footprint analysis, which will serve as the basis for further sustainability targets and initiatives.**

Weerts Group recently introduced Weerts Energy, which orchestrates the company’s renewable energy strategy and oversees its implementation across the entire portfolio. At the end of 2022, all former and planned energy investments were merged into this independent division.

Weerts Energy is undertaking a major investment programme to install solar panels across WLP properties. It is also responsible for conducting feasibility studies for possible investments in onshore wind turbines at various logistics locations and the viability of various investments in batteries, including the expansion of logistics sites and the creation of independent battery parks.

Additionally, the Renewable Energy Department serves as a central hub for all energy-related matters within Weerts Group. It extends its services to third-party clients with financing solutions and customised renewable energy strategies for their properties.



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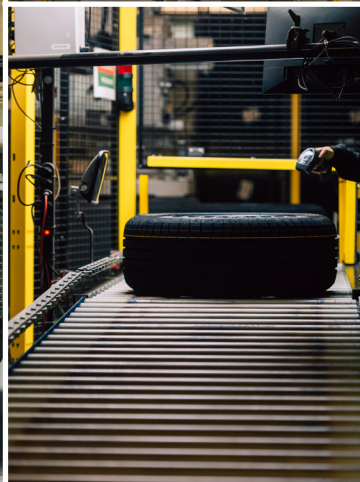
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Current projects include assessing the possibility of turning forklifts into automated guided vehicles (AGVs), enlarging the use of AI in the division's warehouses, and making administrative processes more scalable.

Additionally, WSC is developing new pricing algorithms which will allow detailed, complex, and customer-specific analyses.

"At WSC, we don't just offer standard storage services; we go above and beyond to provide a wide range of value-added services. In the logistics industry, where competition is fierce and margins are narrow, we continuously strive for improvement. That's why we finance engineering capacity, automation, and AI to keep up with the rapidly evolving landscape," shares Didier.

Currently, WSC is managing more than 100 projects, from continuous improvement initiatives and automation to onboarding new

clients and operational excellence programmes. Furthermore, to advance its productivity, the division insourced its warehouse management system (WMS) supplier a few years ago.


"We have an in-house development team that writes the code for our WMS. The system is really at the heart of our activities; it steers all movements in our distribution centres," Didier informs.

WLP heavily invests in many new warehouses, enabling WSC to grow and provide new opportunities for its customers.

"WLP has several projects in the pipeline in France, particularly near Dunkirk, Metz, Sarreguemines, and Châteauroux, to further strengthen its presence and ecological commitment in the country," Christophe confirms.

Together, WSC and WLP have a number of strategic projects across Europe, and both divisions are committed to sustainable

construction, targeting BREEAM Excellent certification or higher for all new logistics properties.

"We continue to plant trees around our warehouses and invest in environmentally-friendly vehicles to align with our logistics and sustainability goals," Didier concludes. 



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