Quicker inspections of life-saving equipment with Digital Pen and Paper

“With the introduction of PaperDynamix at Viking for the service department, our job became much easier.”

*Patrick Hagnir, Managing service technician, Viking Life-Saving Equipment*

Viking Life-Saving Equipment is a global supplier of safety equipment. The company is headquartered in Esbjerg, Denmark and has 50 branch offices all over the world. Viking also operates a global network of 270 service stations.

All lifesaving systems have to be inspected once a year according to legal regulations to ensure that they are safe and in proper working order. This is done by a Viking owned or certified service station.

One or more of the company’s service technicians work with a nine-page checklist containing several hundred items to be checked off. Previously, these checklists were typed by the branch technicians or posted to the headquarters and processed there. To do this, a clerk would enter the inspection results manually into the PC and prepare the inspection certificates and invoices in SAP on this basis. The paper checklists also had to be archived in compliance with legal requirements. This process could take as long as two weeks to complete and due to the manual inputting of data, typing mistakes were frequent.

**Digital pen speeds up workflow**

Viking has started using a new solution that speeds up the whole process, including archiving from two weeks to a few minutes. The solution, PaperDynamix®, has been developed by SRS-Management GmbH and is based on Anoto Digital Pen and Paper technology.

Viking needed to acquire data as quickly as possible and transmit it to the headquarters in Denmark. The company therefore tested a variety of solutions, but the limitations quickly became apparent: PDAs were too small to accommodate the large number of test criteria on the display and therefore failed the test due to ergonomic reasons. Another shortcoming was battery capacity, which was so low that workflows constantly had to be interrupted. The service technicians found notebooks to be too heavy and thus impractical. In addition, neither of the solutions was robust enough for use in a workshop environment and they were also unfeasible for cost reasons.

**The new solution – how it works**

PaperDynamix, the chosen solution, makes it possible to digitise form-based workflows by combining conventional paper with the digital world. The solution is now used by Viking for the inspection of life rafts and life jackets.

As a rule, Viking assigns the inspection of a lifesaving system to several service technicians at the same time. They inspect different items such as screw connections, seals and hinges as well as drive components and fasteners, in the case of life rafts. Each service technician is often

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**FACTS**

**Customer:** Viking Life-Saving Equipment, a market leader in maritime safety

**Challenge:** To speed up the process of inspecting life-saving equipment, such as life rafts and life jackets and improve data quality

**Solution:** PaperDynamix® from SRS-Management GmbH, enabling Anoto functionality.

**Benefits:** 7,500 hours per year are saved in life raft inspections. Much less time is now required for issuing certificates and submitting invoices. Less administrative work for the back office. More information is available digitally, which can be used for proactive planning. Also, data quality in SAP has increased.

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Anoto Group AB is the company behind and world leading in the unique technology for digital pen and paper, which enables fast and reliable conversion of handwritten text into digital format. Anoto operates through a global partner network that focuses on user-friendly forms solutions for efficient capture, transmission and storage of data within different business segments, e.g. healthcare, bank and finance, transport and logistics and education. The Anoto Group has around 80 employees, offices in Lund (head office), Boston and Tokyo. Published in October 2009
For more information: www.anoto.com

ANOTO CASE STORY

Benefits with the new solution
The digital pen and paper solution did not require the service technicians to change their accustomed, tried-and-tested workflows, which meant that they quickly accepted the new technology, and expensive, time-consuming training was unnecessary. Viking can use the solution to draw up the forms it needs quickly, flexibly and cost-effectively and send them to the branch offices over data lines, making them available in standard format all over the world.

With the new solution, much more information is available digitally. Previously, only 40% of the data written down on checklists was typed into the computer. The rest was only available on paper. Now, 100% of the data is available in digital format. This has allowed Viking to enable product life-cycle analysis where historic data is used for proactive recommendations to customers. One example is, instead of servicing a specific life raft it is replaced with a new one, based on statistical information in the system. Both Viking and the customer can benefit from this both in terms of saved time and money.

“Using SRS PaperDynamix in our service process has significantly reduced time for issuing certificates and invoices. It has increased our data quality in SAP, so we have a complete digital record of each service job, which provides important value to our service business”, says Hans-Henrik Madsen, Global Service Director at Viking Life-Saving Equipment.

With the introduction of PaperDynamix at Viking for the service department, our job became much easier”, says Patrick Hagnir, service technician, Viking Life-Saving Equipment in Bremerhaven, Germany.

The service station in Bremerhaven is staffed by four service technicians. With the digital pen and paper solution, together they saved 200 hours per year on the life rafts that they inspect. And every year, thousands of life raft inspections are performed worldwide by Viking’s service technicians. In these inspections, approximately 7,500 hours per year are saved in administration time, due to better data quality, fast availability of data for certificates and invoices and since the archiving of forms has been automated.

Since all inspection data now immediately is available in the system, this allows the system to make an automatic online validation of the materials being used. As mistakes are now detected in real time, the number of customer inquiries to the back office in Denmark has been reduced. And the back office has a substantially smaller workload now, since they have less administration to take care of.

Plans for future implementations
The digital pen and paper solution is currently being used at all Viking owned stations performing life raft inspections, for example in Bremerhaven, Shanghai, Seattle, Long Beach (California), Istanbul and Hamburg. At the moment, 215 pens are being used and this number is expected to grow to 275.

Partner profile:
SRS-Management GmbH is a system supplier of mobile business solutions. The company is based in Bensheim, Germany. SRS optimises business processes based on the collection of handwritten data. Its core product is PaperDynamix®. SRS offers PaperDynamix for applications such as facility management, lead management, management of purchase orders, logs and service reports. It addresses a wide range of industries, from finance, manufacturing and healthcare to trade and logistics as well as real estate management.

www.srs-management.de

Customer profile:
Viking is a market leader in maritime safety, providing and servicing essential safety equipment for passenger and cargo ships, offshore installations, fishing vessels, yachts, and defence & fire-fighting industries. Viking is a private company headquartered in Denmark, with over 1,250 employees worldwide. Products are manufactured in four locations: Esbjerg and Bramming in Denmark, Bergen in Norway, and Laem Chabang in Thailand. Viking’s unique global network includes 50 branches and 270 certified servicing stations.

www.viking-life.com

Anoto Digital Pen and Paper technology
An Anoto Digital Pen looks and feels like a normal ballpoint pen. However, it contains an integrated digital camera, an advanced image microprocessor and a Bluetooth® transmitter. Any paper can be used with a digital pen, if the Anoto dot pattern is added to the layout before printing the paper. The Anoto dot pattern consists of numerous black dots that can be read by the digital pen, but are almost invisible to the naked eye. The pen reads the pattern and registers what and where the user writes.