Maersk Supply Service

More time for core tasks

When Maersk adopted a new strategy, the HR department at Maersk Supply Service – the offshore shipping arm of the group – was prompted to decide on a new IT system. They found a new tool which saved several man hours for the HR department. And at the same time, it makes seafarers' lives easier.

One ship. Twenty-eight seafarers on two shifts. Each possessing at least seven different certificates enabling them to work on complex tasks within the field of offshore shipping. A number of different nationalities. And various embarkation and disembarkation times and locations.

A lot of different factors must be taken into account by the crew management department at Maersk Supply Service when assembling a crew for one of the shipping companies' 44 ships.

"For managing crewing of our ships we need a tool that can cope with all manner of last-minute changes, and in general be able to manage uncertainty. We depend very much on a system that ensures that people with the correct certificates are allocated to the corresponding vessels", says Kevin Beier, Head of Crew Management at Maersk Supply Service.

The tool that fulfils these requirements is a crew management solution from the German company Hanseaticsoft.

Maersk Supply Service began to collaborate with the digital supplier in 2018. And now, members of the crew management department find that it has made a significant difference to their working conditions. Previously, Maersk Supply Service had been connected to an HR system developed by the Maersk Group. But in 2016 the shipping group adopted a new strategy in which the main focus was to be

44
Ships

1.100
Crew members

250
Onshore staff worldwide

Since 2019
Customer of Hanseaticsoft

given to the container company, Maersk Line, as well as the harbour division APM Terminals and the logistics company Damco. At the same time, the companies involved in the oil part of the company were uncoupled from the group systems.

The strategy meant that Maersk Supply Service, whose work includes the servicing of oil platforms and offshore wind turbines, would have to be sold or listed on the stock exchange. So the shipping company had to look around for a system of its own.

The Maersk Group subsequently revoked the decision and kept Maersk Supply Service, as it was hard to find a buyer for the company. Nevertheless, prompting a change in the crewing department's IT system had great consequences in terms of daily operations, as well as the everyday lives of the crew members themselves.

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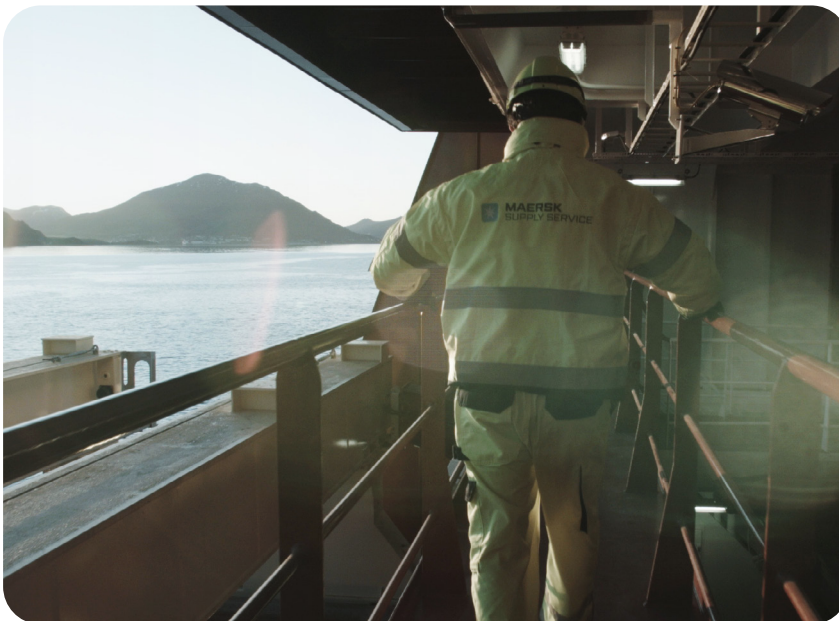
"Before, we had big problems. Sometimes, seafarers didn't receive the right payment because of errors in the system and processes. It could take hours for us to ring round and about in order to achieve some control on the salary question, and this removed our attention from core tasks", says Beier.

The old system was not suitable for the offshore area. Errors and breakdown were part of the everyday experience.

"Today, we in the crew management department can focus on our core tasks instead of having to resolve problems with an inadequate

IT system. The system and processes run smoothly and more quickly, so we save a lot of hours and avoid a lot of mistakes", concludes Beier. Maersk Supply Service is not willing to divulge the cost of the new software from Hanseaticsoft. The implementation of the programme itself took six months, with an ongoing development process for both Maersk Supply Service and Hanseaticsoft in order to adapt the platform to Maersk Supply Service's needs.

Hanseaticsoft provides similar solutions for other types of shipping companies, but offshore companies are a special case: they must comply with more certificates and safety regulations.

Job satisfaction

The crew management department has saved many hours simply by swapping its system for the new one. But there is potential for still more streamlining.

First, the company will get yet another module for the programme that will allow seafarers to self-serve – that is, update their certificates online if, for example, they have attended CPD courses and gained new qualifications.

"In addition there is a module dedicated to compliance which we would like to use. It ensures that all necessary documents – for a harbour inspection or a customer enquiry, for example – are easily accessible. This will save us a huge amount of manual work and also have an impact on job satisfaction", says Beier.

When the compliance module has been fully rolled out, it will show a 'traffic light' for each vessel. If the light is green, the ship is ready to sail, with all regulations adhered to and all crew living up to the requirements. If the traffic light is yellow, it means that some seafarers may soon need training or that there are other requirements soon due for fulfilment. A red light means that the vessel is not living up to the requirements that must be in place in order for it to proceed.

A final plus is the ability of Hanseaticsoft's software to work independently of platforms, so that seafarers for example can upload certificates from their own mobile phones and will not be dependent on using a specific on-board unit in order to contact the system.

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