

Mammoet Reduces Project Administration Workload by Over 50% with Real-time Information Portal

Challenge

In its attempt to improve operational efficiency and effectiveness, Mammoet started a project in 2007 to install information and communication technology (ICT), both at its home base and in its vehicles. “A key objective was to improve driver time-registration and processing,” says Giel Koevoets, Mammoet’s managing director.

The company already had a back-office finance & administration system, Metacom, to process all project information. Mammoet now needed to find a faster and easier way of monitoring projects in progress, and to eliminate the enormous paper flow between its home base and its drivers.

The first step was to install CarrierWeb computers in all its trucks. These in-cab computers, which are connected to CarrierWeb’s server through a GPRS mobile communication link, provide drivers with navigation tools and administrators at the home base with vehicle positioning & tracking functionality. These onboard computers automate many of the functions the drivers perform manually—such as time, mileage and fuel registration—as well as track and book all this and other relevant project data to the correct project code.

To gain the full benefit from this ICT project, Mammoet also needed to connect Metacom to the CarrierWeb server in order to complete and fully automate the information loop. However, Mammoet discovered that the necessary link and interfaces between Metacom and the CarrierWeb server would require a special customized application to satisfy regulatory requirements and provide additional functionality.

In the meantime, all project information would have to be manually extracted from Metacom, printed out and forwarded to the individual drivers. Conversely, the information from the CarrierWeb server would have to be entered into Metacom by hand.

Solution

To address and rectify this deficiency, Mammoet brought in CAPE Groep, a Dutch IT and management consultancy active in the transport and logistics sector.

Following a successful preliminary investigation and proof-of-concept exercise, CAPE proposed a web-based application, and a development platform, which was easy to use and required little or no technical skills. “After looking at several software products, we finally selected the Mendix development platform because it is model-driven and user-friendly, and because application designers and developers mostly need business expertise,” says Bas Sanders, a CAPE business consultant in charge of the Mammoet project.

Considering the application in question was largely about communicating and exchanging data with other computer systems, interfacing was a particular concern. “Developing interfaces for Metacom and the CarrierWeb server turned out to be quite straightforward,” says Sanders. “Mendix Business Modeler provided us with the possibility of developing these special interfaces in Java. And we used recognized format standards to exchange data.”

Results

The Onboard Computer Portal, as the Mammoet application is called, went live in 2008.

The Portal has completely automated the information flow between the home base and the field. Furthermore, the Portal has automated the total transaction cycle: from order entry, through planning and execution, to billing.

Commenting on the Portal’s functionality, Koevoets says: “The Portal provides us with a complete, real-time overview of all ongoing projects, allowing us to zoom in on any key project data, and correct it,

or act on it. We also have access to reports, such a summary of all worked-hours per driver, as required by law. These reports also contain all changes made, including the underlying reasons for these changes and all relevant supporting communications.”

Critically, the Portal allows all projects to be tracked online and at real-time. This is useful to Koevoets and financial director Marc van den Boom—the main Portal users—in closely monitoring and tracking project costs to ensure all projects are on time and on target. “It may seem odd that company executives would get involved in day-to-day operational activities. But not when you consider that more than 50% of our incurred costs are related to our drivers’ wages, and when you realize how crucial good customer service is in our line of business.”

Another notable feature of the Portal is the way it handles work orders involving multiple projects. “The Portal uses a complex, specially developed algorithm to split the work order into several projects, and to assign all related project costs appropriately and proportionately,” explains Koevoets.

The Portal delivered a concrete benefit: “The Portal has eliminated seven hundred pages of reports a week, greatly reducing the project-administration work done by my colleague and myself and increasing efficiency considerably,” says Koevoets. “In fact, the Portal has reduced by more than 50% the number of man-hours we spend per week. And remember, these are executive man-hours we save.”

And there are other benefits, “Our ability to track and monitor all projects online and at real-time — especially the costs — has made our operations and business more effective as well. This Portal

“ The Portal has eliminated seven hundred pages of reports a week, greatly reducing the project-administration work done by my colleague and myself and increasing efficiency considerably. In fact, the Portal has reduced by more than 50% the number of man-hours we spend per week. And remember, these are executive man-hours we save.”

Giel Koevoets

Managing Director
Mammoet Road Cargo

represents and underscores our ambitions and efforts to become more professional and customer-centric,” explains Koevoets.

Perhaps unrelated to its success in drastically improving operational quality, Mammoet Road Cargo was among fifty companies in the Netherlands to receive the 2009 award for Best Managed Companies based on strategy, and the company’s performance the previous year.

Commenting on Mammoet’s investment in ICT, “We expect a return on investment within two years on the Mendix solution, onboard computers and the necessary integration work,” reports Koevoets. Reflecting on the Portal in general, “We gained more than we expected — and at a fair price,” concludes Giel Koevoets.



Mendix helps enterprises achieve their digital goals. Our digital innovation platform empowers customers to bring new products to market, digitize customer engagement, and automate unique business processes. Facilitating an iterative, collaborative approach, the platform brings business and IT together to build and deploy innovative applications at the speed of ideas.

A recognized market leader, Mendix is helping hundreds of customers across dozens of industries achieve exceptional results. For more information, visit www.mendix.com and follow us on Twitter [@Mendix](https://twitter.com/Mendix).