

# Intelligent fleet management for fork lifts

Behind Mobile Easykey stands the owner-managed company Domnick + Müller. The forklift dealer from Friedrichsdorf faced a new start in 2001, when the traditional brand Steinbock was taken off the market. One focus of the realignment was the manufacturer-independent fleet management system Mobile Easykey.



Meanwhile, 15 of the DAX listed companies are investing in Mobile Easykey technology. Its customers include well-known companies such as Daimler, Volkswagen, BASF, DHL and Lufthansa, which could reduce the costs of damage by up to 40 percent and the volume of fork lift fleets by up to 15 percent.

## Patented technology

Mobile Easykey is today a modular system, which was at that time started as pure access control. In the past 15 years the technology has been developed into a sophisticated fleet management system. For example, forklift trucks can be fitted with an adaptive crash sensor, which is altered to individual safety requirements during operation. In three defined steps, the patented crash sensor can react and limit the fork lift in the speed or shut it down completely.

Further highlights of the modular system are the possibilities for monitoring oil level, water temperature, effective operating hours, electrolyte level, maintenance intervals, battery control and GPS positioning in the outdoor area. Special module versions are also available for cold storage and explosion protection facilities.

## Used by Rudolph Logistik

The Rudolph Logistik Group is a global player in the logistics business, with 5,000 employees in 40 locations around the world, for example in Volkmarsen. With its two 140000-square-meter halls, the Automotive Division is home to Hesse's largest covered storage area. Rudolph stores spare parts from automotive manufacturers there and sends them mainly to the company's headquarters, worldwide. The parts leave Volkmarsen by truck or over their own railway ramp, with 220 meters one of the largest in Germany. 80 employees are active in up to three shifts at the site.

Hans Christian Sproedt, who was responsible for the introduction of Mobile Easykey at Volkmarsen in the automotive division of Rudolph Logistik as project planner: "The beginnings with the system have, so to speak, grown historically. Only in the course of time it became clear how powerful and helpful Mobile Easykey is ". Volkmarsen was the first location of Rudolph Logistik, in which the fleet management was used with all its possibilities. The Jungheinrich forklift trucks are equipped with the small blue Mobile Easykey Box, which sends and receives their data via WLAN to the software, the Mobile Easykey Manager. The drivers have an individual transponder chip. There are also the so-called master- and workshop transponders for testing and releasing after triggered crash alarms and for the transfer to the workshop. "Since we implemented Mobile Easykey," the costs of impact damage have been reduced and, of course, the safety for our employees has been significantly improved, " explains Steffen Rödger, who is responsible for the quality management and training of the employees in Volkmarsen. He is responsible for fleet management on site, trains employees and monitors the maintenance- and testing dates of the forklifts with the Mobile Easykey Manager.

### **Effectiveness centrally controlled**

After a pilot project, Mobile Easykey is now gradually being rolled out to other locations in Germany for all business areas. Responsibility is now in the hands of Andreas Pfeiffer, who is responsible for the energy- and fleet management of the industrial trucks in the Rudolph Group. Pfeiffer is working in the company center in Baunatal. In addition to the implementation of Mobile Easykey, he takes care of the structure of the data in the software. All costs incurred during the operation of the forklift trucks are recorded and can thus be exactly apportioned to the operating hours. The aim is to obtain a cost-effectiveness analysis, centrally from Baunatal, for each individual forklift for every location, at the push of a button. The Mobile Easykey software makes this possible as soon as all data has been entered.

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According to Pfeiffer, it is particularly interesting to determine the exact hours of use, an important decision-making aid for future leasing agreements. Andreas Pfeiffer draws another, quite unexpected benefit from the Mobile Easykey software: "In the meantime, we have also recorded all inspection requiring devices, from the telephone to the roller shutter, and deposited the maintenance dates. What used to be complicated in different Excel lists is now available at any location and can be viewed immediately. "

### **Easy implementation**

Hans Christian Sproedt, the project planner at Rudolph Automotive, points out the importance of the excellent cooperation between Mobile Easykey and the forklift manufacturers. " When ordering a forklift, we can now just tick the order box to order Mobile Easykey and the interface." Volker Quirin, Mobile Easykey Development Manager: "Three years ago, we had the first contact with the VDI. There, an interface is used for the entire industry. We also developed a separate interface in close co-operation with Jungheinrich, Linde and Crown. "In addition to the simplified assembly, the advantage is that the original data from the fork lift is taken over, which would otherwise have to be generated by means of additional hardware", adds Quirin.

"We should not forget that it is always about the security of our employees. We would like to be better than the industry standard, "says Hans Christian Sproedt. "But of course, it is also about costs. Along with lowered impact damages, we also note that the forklift fleet is growing at slower rates than the capacity utilization at our sites, "says Sproedt. And one more factor has favored the introduction of Mobile Easykey: "All data remain with us in house and do not end up in any cloud."

"All is achievable" is the slogan of the Rudolph Logistik Group. And Mobile Easykey asks: "Get to know your fleet". Here, two partners work closely together: Rudolph profits from the know-how of the market leader and Mobile Easykey can permanently convert experiences from the daily work and the resulting wishes of the customer into further developments and improvements.

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Photo: Rudolph Logistik, Location Baunatal; from left to right: Volker Quirin (Mobile Easykey), Andreas Pfeiffer (Rudolph Logistik)

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