

Forklifts on Google Earth

Mobile Easykey with Outdoor Locator in use at the seaport Brake



SOURCE: DOMINICK + MÜLLER

The seaport Brake in the Unterweser region belongs in international comparison to the rather small handling centres. For grain and feeds however, it is the number 1 in Germany. It has specialised successfully in niche products in the areas wind power, steel and cellulose.

Flexibility is vital to the survival of niche players. Thus J. Müller Service GmbH, a family owned company for nearly 200 years in the seaport Brake, provides not only for a smooth service, but also for flexible procedures on the 2.6-kilometre-long pier on the Weser and on 170,000 square metres of roofed storage area. Some changes at J. Müllers made new demands for the technical department: The splitting of the company according to areas of competence and the spin-off of the technology department into an independent company should create greater cost transparency and being more cost-conscious. The existing logbook system led to too many operating hours which could not be charged to the internal customers.

Then again: The specially founded J. Müller Service GmbH with 53 vehicles and the in-house workshop with 18 employees is obliged to charge all expenses for forklifts and other vehicles according to precise log in hours. Jacobs: „This led to frequent and unnecessary discussions.“ To remove this discrepancy for good, Herbert Jacobs, the technical manager of J. Müller, started to search in 2015 for a forklift fleet management system. „After we had abandoned the idea of developing our own software for cost reasons, I searched the internet with a few keywords and quickly found: ‘Mobile Easykey’, tells Herbert Jacobs. It was clear: ‘This software is perfectly suitable for our demands, because users can demarcate, whether a forklift is logged in, powered or in the state Crash.’“

In addition, Mobile Easykey also delivers the answer to the other questions which the technical manager asked himself: „We wanted more safety in the company, improved economic efficiency, an optimised maintenance scheduling and an overview of the availability and the location of our vehicles.“

Data transmission by 3G-standard

Willenbrock Fördertechnik in Bremen, a close by Linde- and also Mobile Easykey dealer, was appointed with the configuration of the solution for J. Müller. Marco Sveda, co-ordinator for digital solutions with Willenbrock:

„The specification was clearly set and the right product was put together for the seaport in Brake fast.“ Requirement for the locating solution “Outdoor Locator” is a data transmission by 3G-standard which corresponded very well with the size of the area. “Outdoor Locator” is a part of the Mobile Easykey Software and indicates the exact location of every forklift on the Google Earth plug-in. To know this location, the requirement is again that the suitable forklift actually is always at the right time at the right place.

All 38 forklifts with up to 52 tonnes of load-carrying capacity, eight traction engines and seven Reachstackers (treacly load forklift with special equipment for loading goods and containers of all kind) were equipped with Mobile Easykey and the locating solution.



QUELLE: DOMNICK + MÜLLER

*In the workshop:
All entitled employees have a direct access to the Mobile Easykey software.*

Herbert Jacobs: „We must always know which forklift is available where. Who is not flexible as a niche supplier, has already lost.“

Immediate interlinking possible

The implementing of Mobile Easykey followed between January and March, 2016 in close collaboration with the in house IT department and the works committee. „J. Müller can fall back on excellent technicians. A 2-day installation training by a plant assembler of Mobile Easykey was enough. Then the workshop of J. Müller equipped all machines with the system on their own“, according to Marco Sveda of Willenbrock conveyor technology. The coordinator for digital solutions supported the customer with the configuration of the modules, so that the interlinking of the forklifts with the software was possible immediately after fitting. For safety issues J. Müller opts for the departure control of the system. Every operator is obliged to a security check and confirms the proper condition of the machine by pressing the green key. If the red key is pressed, the workshop receives a note that, perhaps, a repair or servicing is necessary. Herbert Jacobs: „However, there is no consequence for the use of the forklift at this moment.“ Employees are introduced step by step to Mobile Easykey. „In the first step we have transformed the admission, supervision, the locating and the servicing planning.“ Now in the course of the gradual introduction of the fleet management system the activation of the patented crash sensors is next. At the moment, together with the experts of Willenbrock and Mobile Easykey the accumulated data of the forklifts are evaluated. Marco Sveda: „The greater the machine, the more forceful movements of the construction. In addition, the different conditions of the carriage roads in the harbour area. We first collect data to set the crash sensors optimally.“ With the sensor "crash+remote" the settings are defined in the software and are transmitted via the mobile internet connection to the module. Corrections can comfortably be carried out any time from the office

desk. „A crash is a crash. If in future we receive a crash alarm, the forklift is closed down immediately. Then we take no risk“, according to the technical manager from J. Müller service. As strictly the use of the departure control should be handled: „Who presses the red key, blocks the forklift for further use.“

170.000 m²

roofed storage area
on the 2,6 km long pier
at the Seaport Brake



SOURCE: DOMNICK + MÜLLER

In conversation: Herbert Jacobs (left), J. Müller, und Marco Sveda, Willenbrock Fördertechnik

Careful handling of forklifts

According to the technical manager a considerable reduction of the damages is already to be registered. Thanks to Mobile Easykey the drivers handle the forklifts more carefully. Herbert Jacobs: „Even if we do not evaluate the personal data, the employees now feel a bigger responsibility towards these expensive capital goods. They also make sure that after each shift, every forklift stands where it belongs.“ Still, Mobile Easykey has even more to offer. Thus the UVV and maintenance scheduling is also controlled with this software. Now important audits and operating hour-exact servicing intervals are kept more reliably than when different systems and lists where used. In future a reduction of the fuel consumption should also be reached. It does not make sense to switch off the forklift if the driver does not use it only for few moments. Herbert Jacobs: „If he does not need it for several minutes, it is mostly economic to switch it off – what however rarely happens in practice.“ An automatic disconnection should solve this. At the moment experiences are still acquired, „it is dependent on the forklift's type, when a disconnection really makes economic sense“, according to Jacobs. His conclusion: „We can say little or nothing about the future. The business with sea cargo is extremely dependent on economic trends. But one is certain: Mobile Easykey is set for us! Now we know more about the economic efficiency of our investments. Besides safety one above all counts: How much money do we earn with every single forklift? This is what we are measured against.“ (jak)