

Natural resources...expertly deployed A Mohive customer case study

Case Study



Helping uncover the world's natural resources is never likely to be a job of convenience and Fugro has built its reputation on being able to deliver the best expertise for the task whenever and wherever it's needed. Andrew McNeill's aim is to make sure things stay that way.

Focused on the oil and gas sector, Fugro is an international group of companies with businesses all around the world. Apart from Leidschendam (in the Netherlands) where a lean corporate office and several Dutch operating companies are located, offices in Aberdeen and Houston are two of the company's largest. But together, even these hubs house less than ten percent of the

business' almost 11,000 workforce. The vast majority of Fugro's people are deployed in any one of its 200 plus operating companies, conducting surveys out in the field, frequently offshore and sometimes in the most barren and deserted parts of the planet.

Chief Surveyor for Fugro's Offshore Survey Division, Andrew's challenge it to ensure

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that the experts the business deploys in the field today get the learning and support they need to remain “world class” tomorrow. Having just incorporated Mohive’s e-Learning Publishing System (eLPS) into the operation’s training mix, Andrew has set the business on course for a new style of collaborative working that promises to keep even the most remote worker up to speed with the latest techniques and thinking available in the oil and gas exploration business.



One of the big problems from a training point of view is getting people together for classroom courses. If they have been away for six or eight weeks the last thing they want to do is come into the office for anything.



“Although we plan courses for specific dates, due to the project nature of our work, unpredictable events sometimes mean delegates cannot attend: a key person who may need to go on the course can’t make it because their project over-runs or bad weather keeps their vessel at sea. Any number of unexpected factors can hinder the training process. By offering training and support online, we’re overcoming many of the traditional problems associated with classroom learning. Our people can access training modules when and where it suits them.”

Tapping Fugro’s own natural resources

How does a company ensure that the knowledge acquired through lifelong learning in the most experienced portion of its workforce is passed on effectively to new recruits as they enter the operation?

By turning its most experienced people into Subject Matter Experts capable of

FACTS ABOUT FUGRO

- Employees around 11,000 specialists stationed in over fifty countries
- Half year revenues for 2007 826.3 million euros
- Infrastructure includes approximately 45 vessels, hundreds of CPT (Cone Penetration Test) and drilling units, approximately forty aircraft and helicopters, about a hundred ROVs (Remotely Operated Vehicles) and four AUVs (Autonomous Underwater Vehicles)

creating compelling e-learning programmes, Fugro is using the natural assets it already holds to address one of business’ biggest challenges.



The collaborative nature of the Mohive system opens up vast possibilities for knowledge sharing.



“For the first time, the highly specialist knowledge that sits at the heart of our business can be harnessed and distributed.”



We’re turning the best people in our business into course developers capable of producing professional standard online training quickly and easily.



“Ultimately we estimate producing a series of modules that last between 10 and 30 minutes each. Already we have developed a number of induction and familiarisation

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modules for new staff. Working in a large and decentralised organisation like Fugro means that for many new starts, gaining a fast overview of the breath and depth of the business they have joined can be a time consuming process. The new induction modules we've created are designed to address this."

And as the collaborative culture drills deeper into the Fugro psyche, Andrew believes knowledge acquisition in some of the business' most important technical areas can be supported with new high definition e-learning modules: "Much of the technology used at Fugro is unique and complex. The people it's trusted to use it to be completely familiar with its principles and usage in the field.

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It's the collaborative aspect that makes the Mohive solution really different.

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"There were probably a couple of things that were unique about the Mohive eLPS. First, it's web based and collaborative. This means we can have people working together on the development of e-learning projects even when they are quite literally hours away in terms of time zones and travel miles. We operate 24/7 around the world and working hours in one region can be at the opposite side of the clock to those in another, so to have a situation where people in these offices can share information effectively is a major achievement."

"One of the things we often find is that there is a gap between the university stage knowledge that comes into the business with new graduates and the pragmatic know-how required to do the job at a practical level offshore. Giving new people an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the technical

equipment and processes we use to gather data is one of the key areas of opportunity we see for e-learning as the concept grows in our business."

"Secondly, on a more commercial basis, this product is sold very differently to others in the market. Mohive licences its product to the enterprise rather than to individual users: something that's quite unique in the industry but actually mission critical if your goal is to open up the concept of course creation effectively across the enterprise. We have experts here who may use the software for a week or two then not use it again all year. Working on a per licence agreement would not facilitate the same easy flow of information. It just wouldn't be commercially viable."

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Ultimately we envisage 30, 50, perhaps even as many as 100 experts collaborating to develop Fugro courses.

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Control and best practice

But course development without adequate control can be dangerous, particularly in a highly decentralised operation like Fugro's. Without the right checks and balances sharing or reusing material can be a recipe for disaster. "Everybody tends to think they have the best idea," says Andrew. "But for many good reasons it's often a lack of exposure to other ideas that has led people to form their opinion. The new collaborative approach is changing the way people think in our business. By sharing knowledge and information across a trusted platform, best practise can evolve organically yet safely, within the controlled corporate framework that underpins our business."

The inbuilt QA/QC workflow also helps us manage the development of material.

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Course material can be reviewed and commented on by peers or managers, before it gets distributed to the wider Fugro community.

Flexibility

Even in today's highly networked world, there will occasionally be times when Fugro's most isolated workers find themselves without access the company's systems. For this minority, Andrew intends to take advantage of Mohive's ability to publish content outside of the main online platform.



With options to deliver content via CD or DVD, we're able to offer training opportunities to people even when they are operating from the most remote areas in the planet.

