



**CLOUD4SERVICE WEISS UMWELTECHNIK:**  
A SERVICE PORTAL AND A STORE OF KNOWLEDGE –  
FOR ALL EMPLOYEES, AROUND THE CLOCK,  
AROUND THE WORLD

The solution “Cloud4Service” received the Empolis Customer Solution Award because, in addition to supplying the service worker with the right troubleshooting and maintenance information at any time, it also guarantees, for the first time, that the latest and most current software is always available for any particular machine.

At Weiss Umwelttechnik, one of the leading machinery manufacturers for environmental simulations, stability assessment and emissions testing, the service department alone has 463 service staff and 29 hotline workers at 15 locations on 4 continents. These employees are engaged in preventive maintenance, servicing and calibration of the machines, in addition to ensuring a reliable supply of spare parts. And because of the variety of products and the sectors, in which they are used, the number of operating manuals, product descriptions and language versions is vast. Marco Becker of the Service Team Hotline Technical Support recalls: "In the past, the documents were stored in a local folder structure in Lotus Notes. There were about 200 folders, and some of them contained over 100 documents. Service workers had to know exactly which folder the documents were in for the service issue in question, otherwise they wouldn't be able to navigate the filing system fast enough to be of any use."

There were multiple servers involved, when the subsidiary companies were included, and they tended to replicate themselves, which led to a huge jumble of documents. "If you had bad luck, you received 500 different versions of a document. And then there was the fact that the international branches didn't have access to Lotus Notes, and so, because of the difference in time zones, they often weren't able to make progress. As a result of that, about 10 percent of the service requests worldwide couldn't be handled without delays."

In 2017, Lotus Notes was discontinued, and Office 365 was introduced company-wide. As a result, Weiss Umwelttechnik found it necessary to look for a standardized cloud solution. The objectives were formulated quite clearly for Becker: "Distribute, use and preserve knowledge."

After all, following the market launch of products, the service department is obligated to offer support for them for approximately 20 years. In light of this, Becker sees "huge potential for optimizing service while at the same time cutting costs." Weiss Umwelttechnik therefore opted to work with Empolis and introduce the cloud solution "Cloud4Service" as a central, company-wide service portal that provides access to all of the needed documents around the clock.

Using the knowledge platform Empolis Service Express as a basis, a proof of concept was created with about 50 documents. The cost was fairly limited. By using the data import features, it was possible to incorporate all the service information quickly and easily. The preliminary work involved creating the knowledge model for the selection of documents involved. In total, the launch lasted approximately 24 months, from the first pilot to the complete implementation of Cloud4Service.

The knowledge model was created without great expense, says Becker. One important aspect here is giving the filters meaningful names and descriptions, he adds. Putting the knowledge model on a firm footing requires giving it some prior thought and doing the preliminary work with regard to its content. After that, it can easily be updated and extended on an ongoing basis. "Every day, new documents and new service cases are added, and then I have access to them with just a click — it's marvelous," says Becker. "Without feedback, there's no knowledge transfer, so the feedback channels of the users are extremely important for us. And I can upload tutorial videos as visual aids."

With Cloud4Service, every service employee has a central storage location for all documents, and he or she can access them around the clock on any device, whether it be a tablet or laptop, from anywhere in the world.



Marco Becker, Service Team Hotline Technical Support, Weiss Umwelttechnik GmbH

“This is a way to help people quickly help themselves,” says Becker. The documents are no longer scattered across multiple folders; they are available on a single platform with a modular structure. “It’s really nice that everything is in one place, and you can find anything with just a few clicks,” says Becker. After all, he says, experience tells him: “Certain service issues reappear again and again.”

“Cloud4Service is a 100% improvement over the old system, because you no longer have to rely on whether you just happen to know where the right documents are, or whether you happen to know the ‘right’ coworker to ask. These days, a service worker can’t know everything anymore. Our business has become much too complex and fast-paced. If you hear about a problem, now you can enter that term in the search field and find the solution quickly and easily,” says Becker.

At this point, Cloud4Service includes 4,558 documents in 7 languages, and they can be accessed by 419 users in 22 countries on 4 continents. With the portal, 10 service technicians save 30 minutes per day when performing troubleshooting tasks and searching for information; 10 hotline workers save 15 minutes per day when troubleshooting and answering standard questions; and 10 dealers save 15 minutes per day when carrying out routine work.

The result is savings of approximately 220,000 Euros per year in the service field including the cost of advanced staff training.

For Weiss Umwelttechnik, preserving and adding to existing knowledge was a priority. Becker explains: “We’re growing constantly, and at the same time, many older coworkers are retiring. Without our new service portal, a huge store of knowledge would be irrevocably lost to us, because without the cloud platform, it would be totally inaccessible to new and younger workers.

For Becker, a standardized cloud solution also has the advantage that updates and adjustments to the user interface take place automatically and silently, without any effort on the part of the users. Becker adds: “A special solution can also lead to a situation at some point where you end up in a dead-end, because certain things can’t be resolved anymore from a software point of view. That sort of scenario is avoided with a standard solution.”

One important consideration for the adoption of Cloud4Service is training the employees and keeping them onboard at each step of the way. Skepticism toward new things is human nature, so there is limited enthusiasm at the outset. But as soon as employees saw how quickly they can access all the service documents instead of searching for them forever, they were positive. Now everyone can benefit from the new features and use them immediately.

The special attraction is that, with Cloud4Service, a company has not just a complete system of information management but also a comprehensive way to manage training for its own employees. “I can just upload the documents and the questions for self-testing for all the participants with the SAP-VM training session number without having to pass them around to everyone. So the tablet becomes an instructional tool,” says Becker. For the employees, a sort of yellow pages was also uploaded with all the important phone numbers and pictures of contact persons. “At this point, that’s become very important. In former times, you knew all of your coworkers and colleagues over the course of 20 years.

Now, people hardly know each other at all because of the size of the company and the turnover. So a tool like that is pretty helpful.”

***“Getting the right information at the right moment every time is priceless. That sort of investment pays for itself immediately!”***

Marco Becker, Service Team Hotline Technical Support, Weiss Umwelttechnik GmbH

The Weiss Technik companies are divided into two lines of business — the Business Unit Environmental Simulation with the fields of Environmental Simulation and Heating Technology, and the Business Unit Air Solution. The solutions are used around the world in research and development, as well as in production and quality assurance for numerous products. The experts of Weiss Technik are available in 15 countries, where they ensure the best possible support and a high level of operational reliability in customer systems.

Weiss Umwelttechnik, headquartered in Reiskirchen in the German state of Hesse, is one of the world's most important manufacturers of systems for environmental simulation, stability testing and emissions testing. This includes systems for temperature tests, climatic tests, and outdoor weathering, temperature-shock, corrosion and long-term tests in all test chamber sizes. In addition, large-capacity systems and process-integrated machines for environmental simulation are planned, produced and installed according to customer specifications.



Empolis provides solutions that enable companies and organizations to analyze, interpret and automatically process the rapidly growing amount of structured and unstructured data. They utilize their knowledge capital to improve enterprise-critical business processes enabling decision-makers, employees and customers to reliably receive precise and relevant information, situation-appropriate and task-relevant, for faster and better decisions.

DECIDE. RIGHT. NOW.

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