Since 2015, Global Tech I Offshore Wind GmbH has run a wind farm in the North Sea consisting of 80 wind turbines. To keep an overview of all their processes, the company pursues an end-to-end innovation and digitalization strategy. The key to this strategy are ELO ECM Suite and ELO Business Solutions for digitalizing central departments within companies.

Global Tech I Offshore Wind GmbH controls its wind farm located in the North Sea with an annual output of 400 megawatts from its headquarters in the HafenCity district of Hamburg. The employees in Hamburg collect thousands of different data points from the wind farm each day. This data is evaluated to monitor the system status and ensure smooth operation. An interface developed in-house transmits the data to ELO ECM Suite, an enterprise content management (ECM) system, where it is managed securely. The software from ELO Digital Office plays a key role in the company’s general IT strategy. Global Tech I also realizes a number of other processes with ELO software solutions.

“As early as 2016, we wanted to introduce an ECM system for the entire company. ELO is now a key part of our success across all departments.”

Detlef Klinge
Document manager
Global Tech I Offshore Wind GmbH

The winds of digital change
Clean energy for the environment

Global Tech I Offshore Wind GmbH is backed by various stockholders, including regional energy provider Stadtwerke München GmbH, Entega AG, and Axpo International S.A., which have a majority say in major strategic decisions. Around 100 people are employed directly by the company that operates the wind farm, independent of the structures of the shareholders. Since the beginning of 2010, Global Tech I Offshore Wind GmbH has aimed to meet all its required resources and technical expertise needs in-house.

In 2015, the Global Tech I wind farm took up operation 180 kilometers off the coast of Bremerhaven in the North Sea, with a total of 80 wind turbines. At a depth of 40 meters, the systems reach a total height of approximately 132 meters from the bottom of the sea without rotors. With its three blades, a rotor in this kind of system has a diameter of 116 meters, covering a surface the size of one-and-a-half soccer fields. In total, the wind farm produces 400 megawatts of clean energy that supply around 450,000 households with power.

Precision in the heart of Hamburg

The Global Tech I control station in the HafenCity district of Hamburg is where everything comes together. Employees at the company headquarters work around the clock to be able to monitor the system status at all times based on countless data sets. The berth in and around the wind farm is also constantly monitored from the central office.

To make all this possible, the employees at this utility company have to be able to depend on their technical infrastructure. This is why Global Tech I has always relied on an end-to-end digitalization and innovation strategy. The company recently received the renowned German Renewables award for the Product Innovation of the Year 2020 in this area. But Global Tech I set out on its digital journey as early as 2016, looking for a software solution that could seamlessly integrate with ERP system Microsoft Dynamics NAV, recently introduced in the accounting department. The goal: to automate the entire incoming invoice process.

Full speed ahead: ELO Digital Office and Balje Systems

Ultimately, the company opted for ELO ECM Suite from ELO Digital Office, as the enterprise content management system features an interface to Microsoft Dynamics NAV as standard. Global Tech I commissioned Balje Systems from
Hagenow with implementing a custom invoice workflow based on ELO ECM Suite, as the Business Partner had just the right know-how in this area. Detlef Klinge, document manager at Global Tech I, commends the excellent collaboration with the IT specialists: “During project planning, we were always able to depend on Balje Systems.” The project partners quickly recognized that they could digitalize much more than just invoice management in the accounting department with the ELO solution.

Automated invoice processing with ELO and Microsoft Dynamics NAV

But one thing at a time: In the first project step, an incoming invoice workflow was tailored to the needs and requirements of Global Tech I, implemented using the ELO workflow component included in ELO ECM Suite as standard. Integration with the business’ ERP system was no problem at all, as ELO ECM Suite also offers an interface to Microsoft Dynamics NAV. Since then, all documents generated in the ERP system have been filed to ELO automatically and can be opened in Microsoft Dynamics NAV at any time. This helps employees in accounting stay on top of invoices, orders, and other documents.

Digital asset management

With the company more than impressed by ELO ECM Suite, the project partners began working out even more application scenarios for the ELO solution. Next on the agenda was the asset management system IBM Maximo, which Global Tech I uses to monitor all the components of the wind farm digitally. A bi-directional interface was realized to store all data from the asset management system digitally in ELO and provide access to this data at all times. Maintenance plans for individual wind turbines can be viewed right on site using a smartphone or tablet with the ECM app ELO for Mobile Devices.

Innovative software solutions for every department

The project partners went one step further: “We asked ourselves where else in our company we could introduce the ELO solution,” says document manager Klinge. As the ideal complement to ELO ECM Suite, the out-of-the-box ELO Business Solutions will gradually be rolled out. The legal department is already using ELO Contract to manage all its contracts. With knowledge management software ELO Knowledge, Global Tech I has established a central knowledge database for all its employees, bundling valuable company insight for future use.
Everyone involved in the project at Global Tech I Offshore Wind GmbH has become quite creative when it comes to driving the ELO solution forward. Besides applications in specific departments, the company has worked with Balje Systems to implement additional workflows, for example a customization for what is referred to as concession requests. This allows users to review and approve requested technical concessions, such as for wind turbine maintenance. An ELO workflow is also used in the release process for QM documents.

It’s no surprise that Global Tech I is already working with the ELO Business Partner, planning its next digitalization projects. Right now, the focus is on the HR department, set to embark on its digital journey with ELO HR Personnel File and ELO HR Recruiting. It seems the winds of digital change will continue to blow at Global Tech I.

“Employee acceptance of the ELO solutions is overwhelming. In the meantime, more and more departments have expressed interest in using ELO. This helps us drive digitalization forward in our company.”

Detlef Klinge
Document manager
Global Tech I Offshore Wind GmbH