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Learning

Case Study

How CEMEX Marine gave crews and office teams more time with Ocean Learning Platform

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 **Marlins**

 **MTS**
Maritime Training Services

 **Seagull**

 **Videotel**

Introduction

When managing a fleet of highly specialised vessels that need to extract materials from the seafloor, navigate through high-traffic waters and discharge their cargo within a 24-hour window, every minute counts.

Managing crew changes and training to fit in with changing schedules and tight turnarounds is business-as-usual for the CEMEX marine department.

About CEMEX

CEMEX is a global construction materials company that is building a better future through sustainable products and solutions.

CEMEX offers cement, ready-mix concrete, aggregates, and urbanisation solutions in growing markets around the world, powered by a multinational workforce focused on providing a superior customer experience, enabled by digital technologies. The marine department manages a fleet of four specialist dredging vessels that work primarily in the North Sea and the English Channel to extract marine aggregates for use in projects across Europe.

Most of CEMEX's customers work on just-in-time production schedules, which means the marine department has around 2-3 days of visibility into where their vessels will need to be. The schedule is made more volatile by the narrow weather windows in which dredging and cargo discharge can be safely performed.

As a result, CEMEX vessels will carry out all their operations over a condensed timeline, travelling to their extraction site, dredging, and discharging their cargo back to a port close to market, all in an intense 24 to 36 hr period.

The challenge

As is the case for all vessel operators and managers, the crew's safety and the effective operation of the vessel is of paramount importance to the CEMEX team.

Changing schedules and intense working periods mean there is often little time available for learning and development beyond which is mandatory. Additionally, the effort undertaken on board puts increased pressure on the Master and the teams ashore.

The CEMEX Marine team was looking to solve two problems:



Reporting on training was time-consuming

Exporting training records was a very manual process involving lots of spreadsheets. The office team spent vast amounts of time entering the hand-written records they received from the vessels into the database and turning the data into information that could be reported back internally. This process took the office team days to complete and put extra pressure on the management team aboard to oversee and report on training.

When the operational teams visited their vessels, they spent a lot of time checking and reconciling training records aboard with what had been reported back to the office. This took up valuable time that could be better spent with the crew.



Getting training to the crew was challenging

Intensive work schedules meant getting crew together for traditional group training when they were aboard was harder. As a result, there was limited time for structured learning onboard beyond statutory training.

Getting the training to the people that needed it also posed a logistical challenge. Training materials were only available on specific machines onboard, which meant the crew could only train when the computer was free, and this sometimes led to training in their rest time.

The solution

By implementing the Ocean Learning Platform, the CEMEX crews can now access training whenever they need it, whether they are onboard or ashore. Automated exchange of records between ship and shore means that office teams have a clear view of the training carried out onboard and can easily report on training performance.

Driven initially by the flexibility and scalability of Ocean Learning Platform as a cloud-based solution, once implemented, the team quickly identified that it also offered additional opportunities for improving efficiencies throughout their operations.



Faster reporting

The most significant advantage OLP delivers for the CEMEX Marine team is the timesaving achieved through better reporting. **The speed of reporting alone has proved to be a game-changer** for the team. The API link between ship and office gives Matt (Cemex's DPA), Susie (Crewing Logistics and Training Coordinator), and their team a near real-time picture of training performance without the need to chase the Master for reports, or to spend time collating data from multiple spreadsheets.



Better scheduling

CEMEX Marine operates a fleet of specialised dredgers, each with its own unique configuration of equipment and safety systems. OLP **enables the CEMEX team to define training matrices tailored to each of their vessels and the equipment onboard**, ensuring that statutory, company-specific training is consistent across the fleet and any relevant type-specific training is assigned to the crew serving on those vessels.



Improved communication

The team uses OLP to deliver more than just training to the crew onboard. Using the native Company Notices feature in OLP, CEMEX sends safety bulletins to all their crew. This fully-digital approach has replaced emailing PDFs to vessels and requesting signed copies to be returned once they have been read. This reduces administration aboard and improves record keeping, but the team says it has **also improved seafarers' engagement with the information shared in the safety bulletins**.

The results

Crews are now safer and more effective

The cloud-based, anywhere, and anytime functionality of OLP means seafarers can complete training on their own schedule and fit it around their own work, instead of disrupting their rest time. As well as using OLP to offer more flexibility to crew, CEMEX utilises on-line functionality to provide cadets with access to learning resources when they are away from the vessel, back at college or studying at home.

The Marine team have more time for planning

As the records onboard and on-shore are automatically synchronised, everyone has an up-to-date picture of what needs to be done and what has been done. The ease of accessing, logging, and reporting on, training in OLP has eliminated days of manual processes and associated paperwork for the crews and teams ashore.

“OLP enables us to have better-trained crews, which makes it safer and more efficient on board.”

Matthew Bland, DPA for CEMEX

“OLP has unlocked more time and has enabled me to focus on other areas within my remit which perhaps would not have been possible beforehand, such as course feedback and forward planning etc.”

Susie Taylor, Crewing Logistics and Training Coordinator for CEMEX

“OLP really cuts down on administration onboard and in the office as well”

Matthew Bland, DPA for CEMEX





The Marine team has more time for planning

The time-saving delivered by OLP and the accuracy of reporting, give the CEMEX team the information and capacity to make longer term plans for training, which also enables them to increase the utilisation of their assets. Being able to tailor training matrices based on specific vessels and future needs, and easily assign those to the right people, ensures the team can close skill or competency gaps before they arise.

Crew and office staff have improved work-life balance

OLP has also enabled the CEMEX team to be far more resilient to travel disruptions. When offices are closed or it's challenging to get on or off vessels, learning can be conducted at home or onboard, and the records are instantly available online.

"I turn my laptop off at the end of the day, knowing that the reports are being created without my input. Before we had OLP, I often had to fit them in outside my scheduled work time, so my home/work-life balance has improved too."

Susie Taylor, Crewing Logistics and Training Coordinator for CEMEX

"OLP enables us to perform remote audits and to track compliance easily. We don't have to spend so much time aboard looking at the paperwork. We can spend time on board looking at things we can't see from the office, and talking with the crew"

Matthew Bland, DPA for CEMEX

The next steps

CEMEX has already initiated a fleet replacement project, with plans well underway to modernise all their vessels with new builds and modern cloud-based technology.

Having already transitioned most of its fleet from Videotel VoD over to the Ocean Learning Platform, the CEMEX team is looking ahead to utilise OLP and other OTG solutions to improve efficiency and deliver a better experience for the crew.

Expanding the use of the solution

Bringing induction training into OLP with Rapid e-learning

The CEMEX Marine team is evaluating Rapid e-learning as a tool for onboarding, sharing company procedures and measuring understanding.

Utilising Wärtsilä Cloud Simulation for assessment and promotion.

CEMEX plans to use the Wärtsilä Cloud Simulation integration in OLP as a tool for assessing the competency of the existing crew, as part of the promotion process and to evaluate candidates applying for roles at the company.

Taking a joined-up approach to training and maintenance with Ocean Fleet

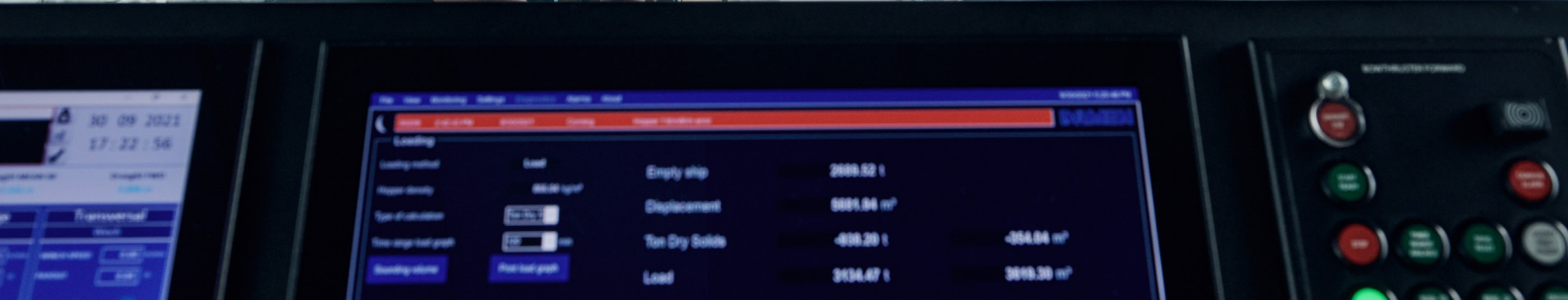
To ensure vessels continue to perform as they age, a high standard of maintenance is critical. In preparation for new vessels entering the CEMEX fleet, the Marine team is investigating how the Ocean Fleet solution can reduce maintenance and procurement costs, and how the links with OLP can better equip the crew to maintain the new technology aboard.

“Part of our decarbonisation plan is to increase efficiencies across our operations, and adopting technologies that will enable us to make better use of our limited resources will be key to achieving this.”

**Matthew Bland,
DPA for CEMEX**

“We actively seek out solutions that can reduce the pressure on our crews and lessen their workload. OLP has enabled us to automate the routine, give time back to our crews to focus on what matters, and ensure a safe working environment for our employees, as well as the contractors and the members of the public whom they come into contact with.”

**Matthew Bland,
DPA for CEMEX**



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