

Sofonnews



Business Case: What do you do when a staff member leaves the organization after 50 years? Langguth used Sofon to safeguard company knowledge.

Ready to Go: Sofon knows how to keep implementations moving along at a good pace. How is this possible? A Sofon customer – active in the packaging industry – explains.

Expert speaks out: Thanks to Sofon, Damen Shipyards now works more within the standard offering, while at the same time, customers receive better advice and correct quotations.



Calculation, Engineering and Production have fast insight into extensive quotations

3 Expert speaks out

An interview with Wim Boerma (Design & Proposal Manager) of **Damen Shipyards**: "Thanks to Sofon, Calculation, Engineering and Production have fast insight into extensive quotations."

4 Business Case

An interview with Klaus Pekruhl (General Director), Ulrich Klempert (former Head of Sales) and Mathias Rauhen (Sales staff member) of **Langguth**: "Sofon helps Langguth to safeguard company knowledge."

6 Ready to Go

An interview with Amon Olivier (Project Leader for a machine manufacturer in the packaging industry): "We were not dependent on a consultant – and that's not going to happen either."

8 New Customers



Knowledge

Have you ever thought about the similarities between a label machine and a ship? At first glance there aren't very many. But at Sofon we see plenty.

As you will read in this edition of Sofon News, both quotations for label machines and quotations for ships are put together using Sofon. Both companies manufacture knowledge-intensive products that are sold in countless customer-specific varieties.

'Knowledge' is an important key to discovering your customer's needs, but so to finding the solution that best fits these needs. We are pleased to help our customers with this: making their own knowledge more accessible and maintainable so that sales reps can make more effective sales.

In this edition of Sofon News, read how Damen Shipyards and Langguth handle their company knowledge.

Otto van der Tang
Managing Director



Editors:

Marijn Schouten - Sofon
Judith Steinmeier - Sofon

Lay-out:

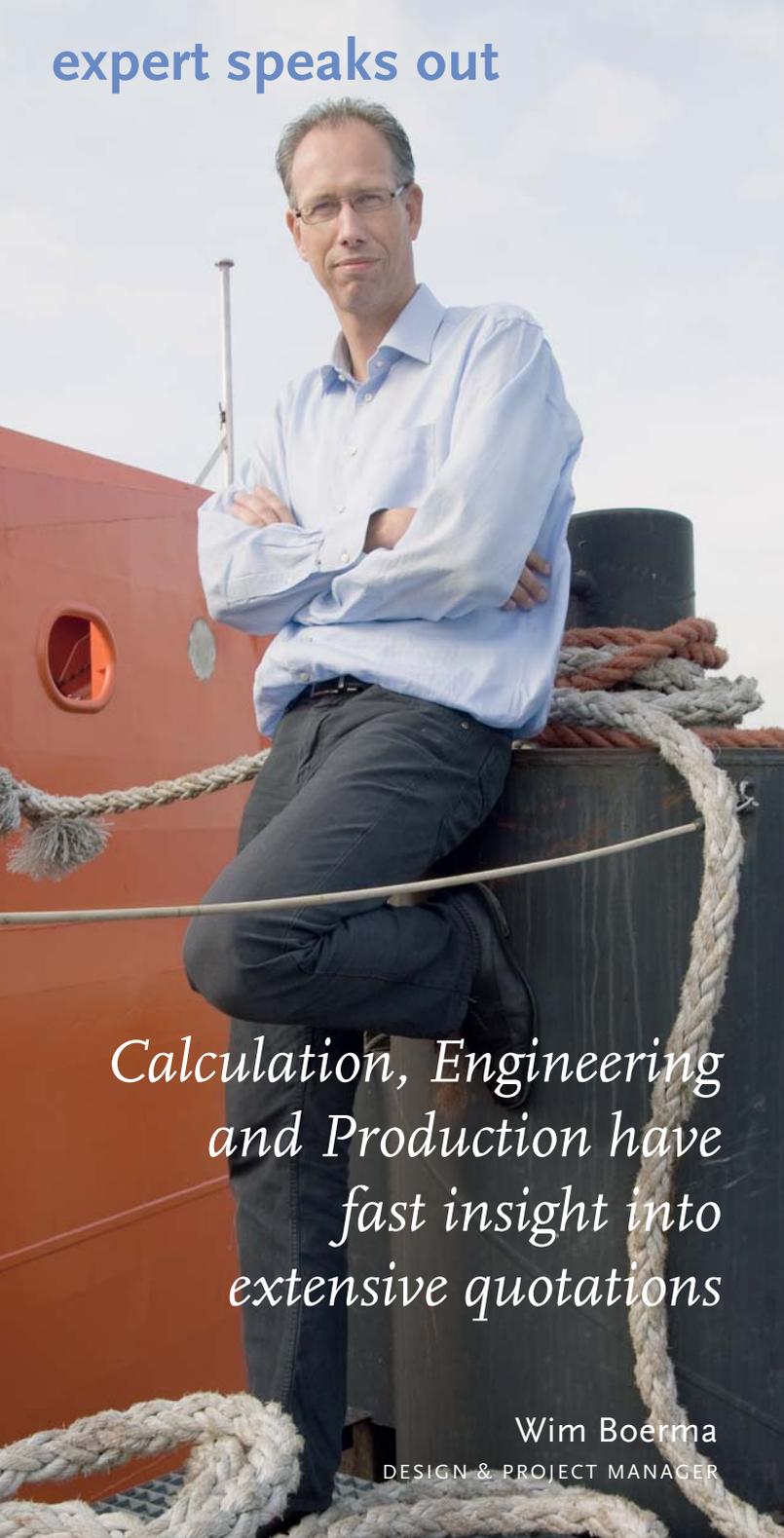
Grefo Prepress - Sint Oedenrode

Concept & Design:

credo.creatie - Eindhoven

Photography:

Hans van Asch, a.o.



Calculation, Engineering and Production have fast insight into extensive quotations

Wim Boerma

DESIGN & PROJECT MANAGER

What does Damen Shipyards do?

“The Damen Shipyards Group consists of some 35 subsidiary companies in and outside the Netherlands with a total revenue of 1.3 billion euro. Damen Shipyards Gorinchem designs and builds a wide range of ships: from relatively small tug boats and working boats to large seagoing working ships. Sofon is in use at the High Speed Craft department. As the name suggests, speed is of the essence here. Think of patrol boats, customs boats and fast vessels for the offshore industry of up to about sixty meters.”

What was the situation like before Sofon?

“At our branch in Gorinchem, we work on customer requests for our sales people until we have a complete quotation, including specifications, price and delivery time. Before Sofon

was in use, we had a standard quotation for each ship. A copy of this, or of a comparable quotation, became the basis for a new quotation. That led to errors. Maintenance was also a big problem. If pump A was no longer in use, but was being replaced by pump B, we had to adjust this manually for every quotation. You could give someone the job of keeping quotations up-to-date all day, or you would end up with old and therefore faulty documents.”

What is the situation like with Sofon?

“At the moment, 80% of our products are in Sofon. This has made the maintenance of product information simpler. If pump A is replaced by pump B, you only need to change the information once. The change is then immediately made in all relevant documents. We have also improved the definition of the standard. Previously, the first customer would define the arrangements on a ship much more than he currently would. Now we can advise a customer on these arrangements. In this way, we can also include a new ship to our line sooner.”

What else has been achieved?

“In the time before Sofon, we worked with quotations of varying lengths. If a customer spontaneously requested information, a short version would do. If more details were needed, you could produce the longer version in Word. With a shorter quotation you were of course finished faster and you ran a smaller risk of errors. Now we work with Sofon, extensive quotations are just as quickly produced as shorter ones. The quotations are far more conveniently arranged and error-free too. We really no longer have a reason to prefer a shorter quotation. Except of course if the customer prefers one over the other.”

Which Sofon application are you especially happy with?

“If a Project Engineer has completed his work in Sofon, I automatically receive an email with a management report. In this report, I can find all diversions from the standard. This so-called ‘change list’ makes it very easy for me to oversee a project; this often concerns ships costing millions of euros. In this way, I no longer have to read quotations of hundreds of pages in detail. We also use the change list to make improvements in the standard. Producing a calculation is easier and faster too based on this change list. The same goes for information disseminated to the departments of Engineering and Production. In the future, we want to apply Sofon for the generation of other documents. Preferably at the other Damen Shipyards product groups too.”

RESULTS

- Product information is easier to maintain
- Improved definition of standard
- Advising customers is simpler
- Quotations of varying lengths can be produced in an equal length of time
- Quotations are well-arranged and error-free
- Projects can be quickly overseen using ‘change list’



Klaus Pekruhl

Mathias Rauen

Ulrich Klempert

*Sofon gives us
guaranteed access to
correct, current
data at all times*

Case

Sofon helps Langguth to safeguard company knowledge sustainably

Langguth GmbH from Senden (Westfalen, Germany) is a mid-sized manufacturer of customer-specific solutions for labeling all kinds of products. At the Senden location, the company employs more than 100 people. Langguth wants to achieve

further growth and has realized that restructuring is unavoidable. We talked to Klaus Pekruhl (Managing Director), Ulrich Klempert (former Sales Manager) and Mathias Rauen (Sales staff) about the contribution that Sofon has made.

Growth in export

Langguth products are divided into four product lines: self-adhesive labels, wet glue labels, hot melt labels and sleeve labels. Langguth already has a strong presence in the German market. “However, we see the greatest growth potential for the future abroad. We already fabricate more than 50% of our products for export”, Pekruhl explains. “However, we will run into problems in the sales process if we start operating in other countries. We take care of engineering ourselves in Germany but not abroad. We will have to use sales reps abroad that have access to our know-how because they do not have technical insight. Also, the sales reps will need to be able to work with correct documents and quotations at all times. We wanted to structure the whole process more and lighten the workload for sales staff and support them in advising

customers about our products. This wasn’t possible with our self-developed quotation program. This standalone solution is 15 years old and has reached its limits. But in Sofon we found the solution.”

Implementation

At Langguth, two staff members are involved with Sofon. “Mr Klempert, who has worked for the company for 50 years and has an enormous amount of knowledge, is primarily responsible for the technical side of the project. And Mr Rauen has defined Langguth’s complete know-how in Sofon”, says Pekruhl. To date, 80% of Langguth’s products have been defined in Sofon. Rauen goes on: “In the beginning, we were trained by a Sofon consultant. That training quickly made clear the possibilities Sofon offers us. We realized that we



hotLAN
Hotmelt labellers



wetLAN
Wet glue labellers



selfLAN
Self-adhesive labellers



sysLAN
Pail handling systems

needed to reconsider our product and module structure.” Klempert explains: “In the past, we had 57 different types of machines, while comparable building blocks are needed for many of these machines. So the trick was to work with fewer types of machines, without limiting our customers. With Sofon, it became clear to us that a reduction in the various types of machines is possible.”

Change in thinking

Changes are always received skeptically and Langguth was no exception. Klempert comments: “In the beginning, restructuring was greeted with some reservations, even though it was definitely needed. A change in thinking needed to take place in the sales process. This kind of change is never quick, small steps are best. But the longer we’re working with Sofon, the clearer the advantages become. For us, the greatest advantage is that it is almost impossible to make mistakes, as the user is led through the whole process. Sofon always shows all possibilities and impossibilities and because of this, nothing is forgotten. Sofon also helps us save time, as data only needs to be entered once and not two or even three times in different systems.”

Visual and content quality

Quotations at Langguth are now of much better quality, both visually and in terms of content. Rauhen: “These days, it is not enough to make a quotation that is just correct in terms of content. Visual aspects are also something to distinguish yourself with. With a few key strokes we can now enrich quotations with illustrations and graphics. Besides that, we didn’t want a standalone solution again. That’s why our ERP system is linked with Sofon via an interface. We also use Sofon at

Sales, Production and Customer Service, to save information about the customer. Sofon actually functions as an internal communication tool, offering everyone access to current data.”

Future

Langguth wants to further extend the use of Sofon in the future. Klempert comments: “It would be a good idea to put together relevant bills of materials and routings directly from the configured building groups. We can then give in data into production immediately. This can certainly be realized with Sofon.” Langguth wants to build on the theme of knowledge transfer and knowledge preservation. Rauhen goes on: “When an employee has worked for 50 years at Langguth, he has built up enormous knowledge. When a person like that leaves the company, it is clear a lot of information will be lost. This is why we are planning to store even more knowledge in Sofon in the future to make sure that experience and insight are sustainably preserved for the company.”

RESULTS

- Knowledge safeguarding: when employees leave the company, their knowledge does not go with them
- Quotations visually attractive and correct in content
- Integration with existing ERP system. No more standalone solutions
- Sales staff can easily advise customers about products
- Decreasing number of machine types without limiting customers in any way



ready to go

Piet Brand

Amon Olivier

We did not become dependent on a consultant – and that's not going to happen either

Standard software, no customization

If you think of the words 'software implementation', you may think of long cycle times, high costs and customization. That might be true for traditional software implementations, but not for an evolutionary implementation approach like *Sofon Ready to Go*. Sofon knows how to keep up the pace

of implementations. The average implementation time is 6 to 9 months. How is this possible? Sofon customers explain in Sofon News. This time we talk to Amon Olivier (Project Leader), employed in the packaging industry by a manufacturer of machines.

Easy and independent implementation

Quality drive

During the implementation of Sofon, Amon Olivier filled the dual role of model builder and project leader. “We want to produce correct and complete quotations that do not give rise to any further questions when they become orders”, Olivier explains. “For the organization, it was a challenge to produce this kind of complete quotation. But we really wanted this quality drive to be able to satisfy the expectations of our customers and our own organization. Sofon software provides the helping hand in this.”

Phase 1 – Preparation

Sofon is used to guarantee and make available company knowledge to Sales Engineers in the form of a questionnaire. First of all, the implementation process was mapped out according to the Sofon Ready to Go approach: from preparations to live introduction. “We set-up the project plan with a Sofon consultant: Piet Brand. Things like goals, test criteria, cycle time and staff participation, were all incorporated. In this way, we defined *what* we were going to do, but also *how* we were going to do it. Sofon really took the *lead* in this. And that was striking; I had not experienced this before with other software implementations. Because of this critical, leading role, we were sure that the project and the overview were guaranteed. If we ourselves had taken the *lead* then we wouldn’t have been able to keep an overview of certain things.”

Phase 2 – Prototype Building & Simulation

After training and an inventory of the relevant knowledge from within the organization, it was time to store product knowledge in Sofon. Olivier, not the Sofon consultant, was responsible for this. “Quite logical when you think about it, as we know our company and our product best. Even so, many other software suppliers choose to make sure their consultant is clearly present, thereby increasing implementation time. Another striking, but good choice, is working with a prototype. So you are not working things out on paper all the time. You learn by making a first model – a logical whole of company and product specific rules – and you’re allowed to make mistakes.”

Phase 3 – Realization

To develop a definite model, various colleagues are involved in the project for input. “Colleagues see that their input is actually used and this is the way to obtain acceptance. At a

certain point, your model is complete enough to go live. I gave colleagues a last chance to give us any changes they thought were needed. They could tell us what definitely *had* to be included in the definite model, what *could* go into it and what did *not yet* need to be included. In this way, we held on to our tempo and enthusiasm. Once you go live and the first quotations are produced, it quickly becomes clear if anything needs to be fine tuned.”

Phase 4 – Hand-over & Live

In the last phase, training sessions for the end users followed. “Because of Sofon’s approach, I was able to train and supervise colleagues myself in applying new models. So we were never dependent on a consultant and we never will be. That also goes for model maintenance. Because you work with standard software, you do not make any changes in the software, only in the models themselves. There is no customization at all.”

Advantages

The first advantages after the introduction of Sofon have already become visible for Olivier. “We produce very complex products for large sums of money and with high risks. A mistake can have far-reaching consequences. The questionnaire set-up makes sure our staff are conscious of the possibilities and then come up with valid products without consulting all kinds of colleagues, tables and Excel sheets. Of course they do have the necessary freedom. We are now capable of having a new staff member without extensive experience, produce reliable quotations.”

RESULTS

- Company knowledge is guaranteed
- Model building and maintenance can be undertaken independently
- Sales Engineers offer viable products
- Quotations are complete and correct
- Successful implementation:
 - few consultancy hours needed
 - appreciation for leadership role Sofon
 - no dependence on Sofon consultant
 - no customization needed



New customers

Sofon Guided Selling is used in various industries by – at first glance – totally different customers. Our customers operate in the world of industry, warehousing, transport, insurance, telecom and services.

A short introduction to a few new clients:

 Crossroads Systems, Inc. is a global provider of solutions and services that ensure stored data is proactively protected and reliably recovered. Crossroads offers organizations powerful data protection, proactive data security, intelligent storage connectivity, unmatched performance, and significant cost savings. Crossroads is based in Austin (Texas, USA) and also has European operations based in Germany. Sofon will be implemented for quotation generation and price calculation for internal sales and distributor users. Sofon will be integrated with their salesforce.com implementation.

 Rollepaal designs and manufactures complete machinery for the production / extrusion of plastic pipes (PVC, PE, PP, ABS etc.). The company has almost 50 years of experience in this field. Their facilities are located in the US and India, with headquarters in The Netherlands. Rollepaal is the only manufacturer producing both upstream and downstream equipment for pipe extrusion. Rollepaal is a dynamic company employing highly skilled and motivated people. The company combines many years of experience in machine construction for pipe production with the latest technology. Rollepaal chose Sofon:

- to make the quotation process faster and easier
- to achieve quotations of a high, uniform and constant standard
- to secure company knowledge
- to train sales staff in proactively obtaining the proper set of specification data from the customer.

 Carthago Reisemobilbau GmbH is a leading manufacturer of motor homes in the upper middle class to the luxury segment. Carthago has been very successful in the past 30 years and has achieved an extraordinary, Europe-wide growth. Sofon is used for the configuration of the vehicle, the interior and accessories. Carthago will not only use Sofon internally. Carthago's dealers will also be able to configure quotes and orders of Carthago motorhomes in the future. Through an integration with Infor ERP LN quotations are automatically converted into orders and transmitted to the ERP system. This creates high savings in terms of quotation and contract generation.

Sofon
Guided Selling

Sofon is the supplier of sales support software under the name Sofon Guided Selling. With Sofon, quotations, contracts, orders and other sales documents are put together simply, quickly and error-free. Among other things, Sofon Guided Selling supports calculation, configuration, visualization and document generation in any language desired. This decreases sales costs, reduces delivery times, increases scoring rates and improves cooperation between customers, dealers, sales, engineering and production. Sofon integrates with standard CRM and ERP systems and is suitable for all companies who have a customer-specific way of operating – in every sector – anywhere in the world.

Guided Selling Blog

Sofon is happy to share knowledge with you! In Sofon's weekly blog posts, various experts from the Sofon organization speak out. These experts have a clear insight and experience into best practices within the sales and quotation processes of companies who supply client-specific products and services. You can share in this knowledge by visiting www.sofon.com/blog.



Twitter

Would you like to be kept up-to-date on Sofon's activities? Follow us on Twitter! You will be the first to know about a new blog post or our participation in a seminar or fair. You can find us at www.twitter.com/sofonsoftware.



Sofon B.V.

Sofon UK Ltd.
Sofon (U.S.), Inc.
Sofon Deutschland GmbH
Sofon Belgium bvba

I www.sofon.com
E info@sofon.com