09/01/2022 Insight

INKonnect – Remote Customer Service Solution for Siegwerk's digital transformation

Hands-free troubleshooting within minutes anywhere in the world provided by Siegwerk experts. This service is now part of the company's modern and future-oriented customer care. INKonnect is the solution Peter Steinmetz, Head of Global Technology Excellence and INKonnect Product Owner at Siegwerk gave us some insights into the development of the project, the advantages it brings and what's in store for the future.

What kind of technology is INKonnect and why is it so important for Siegwerk?

INKonnect is Siegwerk's new remote service solution used in customer support and troubleshooting over distance. We strengthen our high-quality standards in customer service and have once again positioned ourselves for the future.

How do we have to imagine the functioning of INKonnect?

It is an assisted reality-based solution. A suitable visualization device, for example smart glasses, is connected via a software application. Siegwerk experts interact remotely with customer or inhouse technicians in real time with an immediate field of vision and audio connection. So, the expert literally sees exactly what the technician is also looking at, but from a distance.

Sounds like talking in person though. But why not keep it personal then?

INKonnect allows even faster response times and easier accessible expert knowledge. This reduces waiting time and machine downtime which reduces costs in the end. The technology allows the technicians on site to use both hands for troubleshooting while being advised and instructed by Siegwerk experts. This increases safety during troubleshooting. Win-win for our customers and Siegwerk. Especially in the everchanging global service landscape or – other topic – during the current corona pandemic.

Speaking of current crisis: Is the pandemic a reason the remote solution was developed then?

The pandemic played a role but in general remote services for clients are becoming more important. We are facing new challenges and need to rethink our role. The drive to implement such solutions is great. Accordingly, setting the course for digital systems and their actual implementation is easier or let's say more supported.

Why is that?

The absolute bans on visits to major client's sites during the pandemic made new and digital solutions necessary. Even now – almost three years in – travel remains difficult. It is important that we can respond quickly to our customers. As a result digital communication has become enormously important - Siegwerk can introduce its customers to innovations here.

How did this work with INKonnect? How did it come to be?

INKonnect was developed close to the customer. The project emerged from a customer survey, followed by an agile development with a pilot project in North America. We are learning and expanding our digital competence in customer service from this.

This was surely not developed over night. How did you manage the process?

A cross-functional and transregional project team has been working intensively: selecting suitable software and gradually implementing IT-infrastructure, a learning platform, and responsible key users. It was a lot of work, but we see the success. The team is very proud that they have managed to make remote service a standard Siegwerk offer and that we will be able to provide customers with our expertise in an even closer and more efficient way.

What's next then?

The work of the INKonnect project team is not finished yet. The tool will be available to targeted groups of Siegwerk employees around the world. The next focus is to encourage the usage and further implementation, support key users, and evaluate the potential future external roll-out directly to Siegwerk

customers.

Media contact

Nathalie Müller-Samson
Manager Corporate Communications

Tel: +49 162 200 2727
Email: nathalie.mueller-samson(at)siegwerk.com

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