

Maintain

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PASSIE VOOR PROFESSIONEEL ONDERHOUD

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SERVITIZATION IS EEN ANTWOORD OP TOENEMENDE EISEN VAN KLANTEN

Maintenance as an export product

While the Dutch expertise in water management is renowned all over the world, our skills and knowledge on effective maintenance is a well-kept Dutch secret. And yet, there are many opportunities. The Dutch maintenance industry has an annual value of 35 billion Euros and on a European scale that amount values from 420 to 450 billion Euros. Hans van Selm, general secretary of the Salvetti Foundation, argues that Dutch maintenance companies should be more visible in the European maintenance sector.

Liesbeth Schipper

Last June, the renewed Panama canal was opened. This 80-kilometre-long canal that connects the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean has been widened, partly moved and retrofitted with new and bigger ship locks. Dutch companies have contributed to this modernisation. Engineering company RHDHV was responsible for a part of the project management and The IV-Group took care of the new engineering for the new ship lock doors and the driving mechanism.

This project is just one of many examples of the leading position of The Netherlands as an expert on water management. How about the American use of the Dutch water management expertise to save New Orleans from new floods after hurricane Katrina? The Netherlands is world famous for our knowledge on high tides and preventive measures. That expertise is an excellent export product.

Mind-set

At the same time, The Netherlands has a leading position in maintenance skills and knowledge. 'However, that is relatively unknown outside of The Netherlands', says Van Selm of the Salvetti Foundation. This foundation provides a network for young professionals to help them at the start of their working career. 'Isn't it time that we show and tell the world what we know and can do in maintenance?', says Van Selm.

He continues: 'We have developed ingenious systems for reliability engineering in the oil and gas industry. And we have a lead in risk management. There are several companies that can promote their skills. It just takes another mind-set to do so. We have to help these companies and promote our country.'

The winner of the European Maintenance Manager of the Year election triggered Van Selm. This man, Dalius Simaitis from Lithuania, introduced preventive main-

tenance and real time monitoring to his working environment. And he did that in a country where the general level of maintenance is quite low. Simaitis told the public during his victory speech that he was happy to have access to all relevant information to do so.

Van Selm: 'We should realise that other countries can benefit from our expertise. They can learn from us. This gives Dutch companies the opportunity to work together with foreign companies. If we can establish some new relations, that can create new value for all parties involved.'

Four languages

The first step according to Van Selm is to share information. As an example he tells about the website of the Dutch Foundation for Industrial Cleaners. This website has content in four languages. By translating and sharing technical documentation, the foundation can show the leading position of the Dutch cleaning industry. This creates business chances for Dutch companies outside of The Netherlands. The Dutch maintenance industry should also present itself in a leading way.

Furthermore, Van Selm wants to promote the Dutch maintenance sector within EUCYS, the European Union Contest for Young Scientists. This initiative is set up to stimulate cooperation and knowledge-exchange between young scientists. He concludes that it would be good if a Dutch maintenance specialist could be a member of the EUCYS jury. That way we can enhance the position of maintenance in this European organisation. ■