

How will your port ride the wave of the demographic tsunami?

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We've all heard it's coming – that epochal sea change in demographics that will see the Baby Boomer cohort retire over the next 20 years, to be replaced by the Busters, Gen-Xers, Echoes and ultimately, Millennials. It is commonly held that the Baby Boom started in 1946 (although some demographers say 1947), so the first Boomers will hit age 65 this year. In some countries, Boomers make up over one-third of the work force.

Why should you care? If your port already has a state-of-the-art port management information system (MIS) based on current technology that supports effective knowledge transfer, efficient workflows and easy access to information, then you can skip this article. If not, read on.

Maritime traffic organizations and ports have legacy information systems that rely on the expertise of a limited number of long-tenured workers. For them, the challenge is to get all that key information out of the graying heads of key people. Expertise regarding business processes, business rules, customers, partners and organizational knowledge needs to be shared, not just with the next generation of maritime workers but also across the organization. This facilitates rapid, fact-based decision-making. Implementing current technology, such as the Klein Systems Group Ltd. (KSG) KleinPort system, allows ports to reduce key person risk for the organization.

Recent economic realities mean that some Boomers are delaying retirement, but without doubt, organizations will face significant changes in their workforces as the Boomers ease out. As a result, you will have very old workers side by side with very young ones. Since the younger generational cohorts are smaller than the Baby Boom was, get ready to compete for talent. Google 'labour shortages in next 10 years' and see how many academics and government agencies are predicting a shortfall in the numbers of qualified workers in practically any industry you can name. Depending on your source, there could be 10-17 million unfilled positions in the US alone over the next 10 years. Europe will face similar challenges, particularly in finding skilled replacement workers.

Qualified talent from the tech savvy Gen-X and Echo cohorts is more likely to be attracted to organizations where they get to use the latest commercial technology, as opposed to older legacy systems.

Many retiring Boomers are keen to leave their own legacy. When ports adopt KleinPort, KSG's consultants, who have deep industry knowledge of the maritime community, work with them to document their existing processes. KSG's experts then help the port and its various stakeholders to deploy the system that supports their desired business processes. There are a lot of stakeholders whose requirements must be considered in implementing a new system. KleinPort can accommodate the needs of harbor masters, traffic operators, billing managers, property managers, terminal operators, pilots, shipping lines, agents, IT managers and other partners. Their requirements are seamlessly woven into a system that enables easier training and knowledge transfer from tenured employees to new ones.

The challenge for a new employee coming on board is to learn to distinguish what information is essential to the safe and efficient operation of the port, from the myriad data that is available. Think about all the activity within a port that is triggered by a vessel call. Every port has its own rules, procedures and practices for dealing with a long list of considerations, such as tidal windows, pilot exemptions, hot work, permits, ship defects, billing and cargo to name a few.

Screenshot from the KleinPort PMIS.

Flag	Vessel ID	Movement ID	Status	Move Type	Ship	Auth	Start	Top	Cancelled	Plans Booked	Harbor
	501640	503393	CHF	DEP	DOCL FRIENDSHIP		18/04/11 14:03				
	501660	503417	REG	ARR	ACCOLADE 11		20/04/11 08:01				
	501658	503412	COM	ARR	KING COAL		25/04/11 13:00				
	501658	503413	SCN	DEP	KING COAL		25/04/11 20:00				
	501659	503414	REG	ARR	GALAWY HARBEST		27/04/11 09:30				
	501662	503423	CHF	ARR	CONSULEATOR		28/04/11 08:30				
	501663	503423	CHF	ARR	OPAL LEADER		28/04/11 08:30				
	501664	503427	SCN	ARR	VOGELTRADER		28/04/11 07:00				
	501666	503431	SCN	ARR	DOCL FREEDOM		28/04/11 10:26				
	501668	503437	REG	ARR	CAPE MORETON		28/04/11 14:03				
	501661	503419	CHF	DEP	DOCL YOKOHAMA		28/04/11 14:03				
	501609	503415	SCN	DEP	GALAWY HARBEST		28/04/11 17:00				
	501677	503451	PLN	ARR	NAALMEERBRANCH		28/04/11 08:01				
	501676	503450	PLN	ARR	A.K. FALE		28/04/11 08:01				
	501669	503436	CHF	DEP	CAPE MORETON		28/04/11 10:03				
	501661	503416	PLN	ARR	DOCL YOKOHAMA		28/04/11 10:15				
	501668	503435	PLN	ARR	WEAVER ARROW		28/04/11 11:00				
	501670	503434	PLN	ARR	IBC STANLY		28/04/11 11:25				

KleinPort automates operational details and enables management by exception by providing timely alerts for items impacting operational completion and the execution of scheduled events. All relevant information is automatically collected and displayed in a logical fashion based on efficient workflows. This simplifies the task of bringing new employees up to speed on how the port operates.

In addition to ramping up on the operational side, there is a critical revenue component to understand as well. Consider the harbour dues, pilotage fees, wharfage, dockage and other service fees that result from a vessel visit. These charges can originate from diverse operational and sometimes geographic areas. Port operators need to collect, sort, check, adjust and review information from the various stakeholders that make up the port's community. Not only is there a daunting amount of information that needs to be collected and analyzed, but it comes through diverse channels like fax, telephone, snail mail and email. KleinPort automates the capture of all billable events, ensuring that no revenue opportunities are missed.

As your port plans for the inevitable transitions that accompany demographic change, explore how upgrading your port MIS can reduce risk, increase knowledge transfer and reduce the learning curve for new employees.

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Christene Best, Vice-President, Sales & Marketing for Klein Systems Group Ltd. is a Boomer. She has over 20 years of experience in sales, marketing and customer service in the technology field with expertise in enterprise software & services, quality and business process improvement. She is based in Vancouver, Canada.

Klein Systems Group Ltd. (KSG or Klein) is an international provider of software solutions that has been meeting the diverse and changing needs of maritime ports, vessel traffic and coastal surveillance organizations, tug operators and Maritime Community Systems for over 28 years. Klein specializes in the automation of maritime business operations processes. Our solutions have been deployed in 40 ports around the world.

ENQUIRIES

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