*Soutron Library System supports the Acquisition and Maintenance of Information Critical to Air Traffic Management*

# SOUTRON'S LIBRARY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM IS CLEARED FOR TAKE OFF!

**EUROCONTROL**

## CHALLENGE

EUROCONTROL is the European Organisation for the safety of Air Navigation.  Their mission is to harmonise and integrate air navigation services in Europe, across 38 member states. Based in Brussels, with offices in Luxembourg, Netherlands, France and Germany, they aim to create a safe and uniform Pan European Air Traffic Management (ATM) System for civil and military users.

The Library at EUROCONTROL supports multiple business operations through a network of special libraries in different locations, all of which are concerned with managing information to support the safety and security of millions of people travelling across Europe each year. The ability to share accurate, timely and accessible information across country boundaries is critical to the library's function.

Juliette Engel, manager of European Library Services at EUROCONTROL, had a vision to integrate the several separate libraries and share the information on a single catalogue making it easily available to the 2000 users as well as introducing efficiencies in purchasing and cost savings for the organisation.

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>
> Juliette Engel,
> European Library
> Services Manager

## SOLUTION

Soutron was selected following a detailed tender process. To meet the rigorous requirements, multi-site and multi–office capability and the flexibility demanded by EUROCONTROL's libraries, Soutron proposed their own brand new library management system.

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Soutron was designed from the outset as a web-based application, using Microsoft .NET and SQL Server database technology. The three principles behind the system are simplicity, flexibility and efficient workflows, to meet the needs of individual libraries whilst sharing a single common flexible database.

Accurate expenditure control was difficult for EUROCONTROL, especially when ordering journal subscriptions for numerous locations in several currencies.  One single system with reporting facilities to monitor and manage budgets would help the library to control resources in a way that was never previously possible with disparate systems.

## CRITICAL LOOSE-LEAF CONTROL

There was also the need to control loose-leaf materials from the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) which publishes rules and best practice on a regular basis: these are vital to the roles of various EUROCONTROL employees. The Library therefore has to ensure that the latest information published is available to users to ensure safety in the skies above Europe.  ICAO updates these publications regularly and knowing who has what, how many copies are required and which have been issued with updates is laborious and time-consuming. Soutron agreed to produce a detailed analysis of these procedures and their application to the LMS.

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In re-defining and simplifying the processes for ICAO document control, a streamlined workflow was introduced via Soutron including full integration with the main catalogue. "To say it simplified the work involved in controlling these documents is an understatement. The improvement in the way of working has removed tedious and frustrating work for staff, saving hours", said Susanna Gaynor, Head of Library at EUROCONTROL

When Graham Partridge, Soutron's R&D Director and Project Manager, asked Susanna about the significance of these documents and their updates, he didn't expect to be told, "Planes might crash! If the wrong documentation is not followed or updates are not received it could be a matter of life or death". The conversion of the data from the original five libraries was a major undertaking. Combining bibliographic records and copies and making the data conform to an agreed standard was a complex process. "As Soutron had a proven methodology and cared about what they were doing, I knew that we would get a good result and we did", says Juliette Engel.

It is the system's simplicity that appeals most to users. Intuitive workflows throughout meant that user training was very straightforward. The OPAC is now in use across the EUROCONTROL network and plans are afoot to extend the system to other areas of the business.

## RESULTS

Today the Catalogue is a single cohesive entity for the first time and content of varying formats is being added all the time, which is very satisfying for everyone. Each library still works autonomously though within a central framework, thus a single annual fee covers the maintenance and support costs for all of the libraries.

Juliette's comment sums it up: "Responsiveness, flexibility and accuracy are crucial to our organisation and we get all of this from Soutron LMS and from Soutron people. The database software is great but the relationship we enjoy is even better".



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EUROCONTROL's library staff continue to be closely involved in the definition of new functionality; in fact, Susanna Gaynor was one of the first to see the new database and cataloguing features for version 3. The EUROCONTROL team have forged an excellent working relationship with Graham Partridge and there are frequent exchanges of ideas. EUROCONTROL is a progressive large European organisation that does things in a deliberative and organised manner and the Library is very much at the forefront of information management techniques and has to keep pace with the rapid development in aviation information.

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