



NATREF fuels document management improvements with Datacentrix

National Petroleum Refiners of South Africa (NATREF) has upgraded its document management environment, allowing for faster access to the critical documentation native to production and processing businesses. The ongoing project is being rolled out with the assistance of Datacentrix, a long-term NATREF partner.

NATREF, South Africa's only inland crude oil refinery, is a joint venture between Sasol and Total South Africa. The organisation produces fuel, including petrol, diesel, jet fuel, bitumen and tar, which it supplies to the inland region of South Africa.

According to Andries Visagie, operational and governance manager at NATREF's Information Management Division, the project came about when the organisation realised the time had come for it to set up its own Enterprise Information Management (EIM) system (this had previously been shared with Sasol). "We were happy with the solution being used, but found that, over time, there was a need for additional support. It made sense for us to put a team in place, not only to bolster support of the environment, but also to upgrade it for greater efficiencies."

Having partnered with Datacentrix before, the natural next step was for NATREF to engage the solution provider to complete a technical audit on the existing system, and the information contained therein, to

gauge the current status, assess risks within the environment, and use this input for decision making.

"The outcomes of the assessment, which encompassed a full strategy and roadmap, provided clear recommendations to NATREF's IM team, included details such as the type of infrastructure needed, sizing, and estimated timing for data migration," explains Visagie.

When it came to the implementation, NATREF's production environment encompassed critical information within the existing system, so a 'rip-and-replace' approach was not possible. With this in mind, and to minimise business interruption, Datacentrix replicated the old environment and used it as a platform for testing. From a business continuity point of view, the decision was then taken to do the cut over after NATREF's financial half-year concluded in November.

"Overall there was an excellent joint effort between Datacentrix and NATREF to make this as painless as possible. At this point, we're happy to report that the system is stable, and running across all disciplines within the business, with a total of 600 permanent users."

Visagie clarifies that the EIM environment is critical across all areas of NATREF. "For instance, when it comes to production, the system holds important



Essential within a processing and production environment, our safety team has timely access to supporting documentation such as work and task overseeing instructions. An example of this is when it comes to specialised welding, in that the welder would need access to task observations before any physical welding can take place. All of this documentation is quickly and easily accessible using the new EIM solution.”

information on standard operational procedures that need to be accessed and adhered to at any point in time, from start-ups to shut-downs. Within the HR environment, it is used to store the relevant policies and procedures. The finance department needs access to financial records, audit documentation, and so on.

“Essential within a processing and production environment, our safety team has timely access to supporting documentation such as work and task overseeing instructions. An example of this is when it comes to specialised welding, in that the welder would need access to task observations before any physical welding can take place. All of this documentation is quickly and easily accessible using the new EIM solution.”

Visagie says that NATREF users are embracing the new functionalities on offer within document and content management. “Ease-of-use, system speed and convenience have improved immensely for our users. We’ve also managed to completely automate workflow around the critical inspections conducted on NATREF’s production equipment, which are legally required and include mechanical integrity checks such as x-rays and infrared analyses.

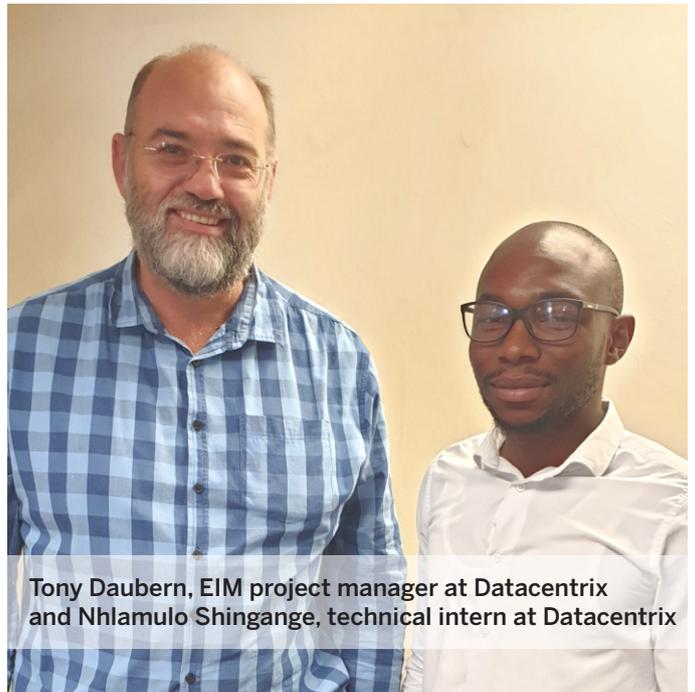
“The new EIM system is also now fully integrated with the other tools used by NATREF, making for a seamless user experience,” he adds.

“NATREF’s partnership with Datacentrix has been extremely positive overall. Our requirement for open and transparent communications has certainly been met, and we’ve found that the team of Datacentrix experts working with us have all the skills – from document management, infrastructure and around the product itself – needed to easily manage any unexpected challenges.

“For NATREF, this project was an excellent stepping stone in improving its document management environment, and we will be looking at upgrading our document archiving process next,” states Visagie.

Additional future plans at NATREF include integration of the organisation’s enterprise software with the EIM solution, a real area of strength for Datacentrix, according to Tony Daubern, EIM project manager at the company. “Datacentrix has a wealth of experience in the integration of EIM and enterprise software, receiving industry recognition for exactly this in the form of several awards over the past few years.

“We look forward to deepening our partnership with NATREF, and taking its EIM setup to new heights, with a view to also tackling its records management in time.”



Tony Daubern, EIM project manager at Datacentrix and Nhlamulo Shingange, technical intern at Datacentrix