

AROUND THE DIVISIONS OF AMEC

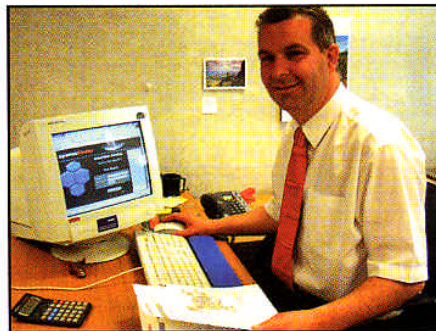
Virtual warehousing in Scotland

NEED a pilot bored simplex sprocket in a hurry and don't know where to get one? Well, don't worry, because help is now at hand in the shape of a new development by AMEC Offshore Services.

They have moved into the world of virtual warehousing through an association with e-business company sparesFinder – an independent spares inventory service for surplus engineering spare parts and equipment.

The service specialises in helping companies rationalise spares inventories by using the Internet to gain significant improvements in speed of location for urgently needed parts and reducing capital expenditure on spares already held elsewhere in the organisation.

The Aberdeen office in Scotland piloted the project, but now Offshore Services has widened the service across all four North Sea operating centres.



Logging on...Chris operates the system.

Chris Lihou, Supply Chain Manager for the Offshore business, said: "Even though we hold modest stocks ourselves we are in the business of managing other people's inventories during the projects we carry out

for them. This system has great potential for helping us to do the job rationally and economically and we intend to use sparesFinder on a regular basis to realise its true value."

Chris went on to explain how the new system operates: "Suppose a project or client's production is halted owing to a critical item not being available.

"The old approach was to ring around suppliers, but now you can save time and money by accessing a comprehensive database of items via AMECnet (<http://offshore.amecnet.com/supplynet>). Just enter a description of the part, perhaps with part number and/or manufacturer, and away you go.

"Parts can be expensive to buy, maintain and store, so by utilising the system, we can do both ourselves and our clients a favour."

Another important benefit comes when

projects are at an end and there is invariably surplus stock to dispose of... which can end up as scrap. However, through sparesFinder, the surplus inventory is visible to other companies who might need the components – so realising a price more like their true market value.

In addition to providing homes for spares or surplus stock, sparesFinder can also be used for rental equipment. The Specialist Services group of Offshore Services, has recently put its equipment up for rental, through sparesFinder.

And sparesFinder already links together the sites of some 22 major companies in the North Sea, giving them access to each other's spare parts inventories.

Current users include BP, Texaco, Aker Maritime, Marathon Oil, Agip, Britannia Operator, ExxonMobil, Score, Deutag, and Alstom Power.

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