

## Vigor Industrial ups efficiency, improves audit compliance with Issuetrak

### business challenge

When building or converting ships for clients such as the U.S. Navy or Coast Guard, Vigor Industrial must keep up with thousands of details. From construction to maintenance testing, quality and on-time delivery depend on numerous key processes.

Since 1916, Vigor Industrial has built and repaired ships on the Seattle waterfront. As the largest shipyard in the Pacific Northwest, the company provides new construction, conversion and repair for government and commercial customers.

When Leonie Markgraf, Information Systems manager, joined the company in 2004, the team tracked employee IT help desk issues using just email. Without a centralized program for assigning and tracking, the team could not prioritize tasks or report on trends. Supporting 800 employees more efficiently required a different approach.

As a government contractor and a publicly traded company, Vigor Industrial also needed systems for documenting processes such as test inspections and purchase approvals – particularly in light of new Sarbanes-Oxley compliance requirements.

“We saved approvals in emails, but when we were audited it was time-consuming to produce the documentation to show those approvals,” Markgraf said.

### solution

The Information Systems (IS) team initially experimented with freeware software for the help desk, however its limited functionality brought little beyond the previous email method. They then compared several software solutions before ultimately choosing Issuetrak.

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*-Leonie Markgraf  
Information Systems Manager*

“Issuetrak best fit the way we needed to use the system,” Markgraf said. “The price, licensing model, functionality and modules



were everything we needed. And we could put a knowledgebase in place for the IS department as well as internal customer use.”

The software provides comprehensive end-to-end tracking to resolve employee technology needs more quickly and efficiently. With Issuetrak’s unique licensing model, Vigor Industrial extends full access to the IS team, and view and data entry access to all employees at no additional cost.

Workflow capabilities ensure that issues follow a specific path to resolution. The team can also automatically assign and escalate tickets by type. Plus, Issuetrak offers the detailed reporting necessary to identify recurring issues or training needs.

Most critically for Vigor Industrial, Issuetrak proved flexible enough to extend well beyond help desk needs. Soon after the help desk implementation, the company took Issuetrak to its manufacturing shop, which needed to manage work requests.

Just as in Information Systems, the department can hand off work orders to the right team members and follow to completion.

## tracking thousands of work items

Vigor Industrial brought Issuetrak to a major client service process – test inspection plans.

For example, work on a nuclear carrier involves thousands of work items to be checked off as pass, fail or to be rescheduled. Issuetrak consultants developed a custom application for test inspection plans that handles a very complex set of relationships across all types of inspections.

When inspections are scheduled, relevant contacts are notified with times, required forms, what equipment is needed, or any pre-steps that must happen first. Those contacts then close out the test when complete.

“We easily do several hundred test inspections in a month, and everything is scheduled in Issuetrak, tracked and reported,” Markgraf said. “We use the dashboard at a high level to see where we stand with inspections and provide reports to the Navy.”

Beyond government-required inspections, Vigor Industrial has its own tests to enforce quality control, which it likewise follows closely in Issuetrak. Insight from reports lets the company identify root causes of any problems and plan equipment replaces or additional safety education.

## powering processes

Success with Issuetrak across various departments inspired further deployments.

Accounting now relies on the software for payroll requests, such as questions about



paychecks, vacation and sick leave. Emails to the department automatically open tickets that the payroll team can address and close out.

When new employees start, Issuetrak houses the checklist of setup processes for configuring computers and setting up smart phones. Before establishing a consistent, repeatable process, the IS team received more computers returned for additional configuration.

As Vigor Industrial employees turn over after each shift – the company runs three shifts per day – those leaving can record status updates on ongoing projects for those starting their shifts. They simply enter notes and the next team knows where to pick up.

## supporting SOX audits

Issuetrak has significantly changed the audit process for Vigor Industrial. With the software, the company tracks every request related to capital expenditures, making it simple to provide documentation for Sarbanes-Oxley (SOX) audits. Likewise, chargebacks to clients each have their own ticket, with the ticket number noted on the corresponding invoice.

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## benefits

### customizability

Issuetrak’s flexibility has allowed Vigor Industrial to tailor the software for its diverse company processes. Effectively, the company can apply it to maintain consistency and accountability for any workflow-driven need. With one program across its many departments, Vigor Industrial realizes significant economies of scale.

### a single program to learn

Likewise, employees throughout the organization only need to learn a single application for managing multiple processes. The fact that Issuetrak requires very little training time or support simplifies usage for staff that have minimal computer experience.

“Our employees’ skills are on deck, not the computer,” Markgraf said. “Once someone uses Issuetrak once, they never have to learn it again when they use it for a different process. They just use a link off our intranet to fill out the necessary form. No one ever calls the help desk with questions about how to use Issuetrak.”

### easier audits

Before, Vigor Industrial obtained the proper approvals per Sarbanes-Oxley but lacked the



ability to prove compliance in every case. Now, Issuetrak houses a record of every approval, giving the company and auditors one place for all compliance documentation and reducing the time to prepare for audits.

## meeting SLAs

Vigor Industrial established and enforces service-level agreements for turnaround times. Without SLAs for migrating employee accounts before, the process could take three to five days. Now, using task groups in Issuetrak, the IS team hits the SLA target of two days 98 percent of the time.

## stable product, solid support

Finally, Markgraf appreciates the stability of Issuetrak, minimizing support needs. But when she does call the company, she always receives quick resolutions.

Looking ahead, Markgraf plans to apply Issuetrak to even more company needs, and is confident the software is up to the job. Each new process that Vigor Industrial streamlines contributes to more efficient teams and better service to clients.

"We have definitely deployed Issuetrak in ways we did not originally intend but it's worked out really well. It's been an excellent fit for us," she said.

## about Issuetrak

Issuetrak helps keep important business issues and tasks from falling through the cracks! We provide our customers with reliable and intuitive software for tracking, assigning, and reporting on internal and external issues and requests. Issuetrak includes a powerful process management component for streamlining workflows, and ensuring approvals are obtained and procedures followed. Founded in 1992 and based in Norfolk, VA, Issuetrak is a leader in developing issue tracking, complaint management, workflow, and help desk solutions. Our customer span nearly all industries, and many use Issuetrak across their entire organization.

