

## Operations all over the world - without any travel

### The remote service from Mahlo

The Corona crisis still has the world firmly in its grip, and work-related travel is hardly possible at present. However, companies are dependent on their production continuing to run smoothly. With the remote maintenance service of Mahlo GmbH + Co. KG, customers of the German machine manufacturer have a partner with whom they can get quick help at any time - even without a technician on site.

When service technician Christopher Cetto switches on his computer in the morning, he doesn't know which country he's in today - and he does so without leaving his workplace in Saal. Mostly by e-mail, he receives customer requests from all over the world for machine commissioning, software configuration support or troubleshooting. And not just since Corona. Since 2005, remote control software has been installed as a standard feature on all Mahlo systems delivered, providing fast and uncomplicated access to the system. This allows software problems to be fixed without the need for a technician to travel to the site. With the current travel restrictions, this service is now coming into greater use.

"Recently, we had a job in Korea to install a retrofit kit for a weft straightner and process control system," Cetto says. "On-site deployment was not an option." The order had its work cut out for it, as soon became apparent. "What was actually ordered was a voltage output, but what was needed was a power output. For me, that meant changing the configuration again before we could really get started."



Fig. 1: Christopher Cetto solves problems via Remote Service.

## Good communication counts

For on-site support, the customer provided a technician at his plant to solve the task together. "That's where good communication matters most." That's done via chat, email or phone. Pictures and live videos are also sometimes necessary to better understand the situation. As in this case, language barriers often prove treacherous. Instructions and follow-up questions, in particular, must be understood precisely. "When we went to test the system, the technician kept measuring voltage on the machine instead of current," Cetto says. This went back and forth a few times. "You end up racking your brains sometimes on how to explain it even better." Support came here in the person of a salesperson from the Korean service partner, who acted as an interpreter. "That's why cooperation with our partners and customers is so important to Mahlo," Cetto emphasizes. Together, they made everything work.



Fig. 2: The technician can access the Mahlo system directly.

The experienced service technician could not yet lean back with this success. The customer was still waiting for a new residual moisture measuring system to be commissioned. "That's why this job dragged on for several days." Due to the time difference, the specialist in Saal only ever had a small window of time to work and communicate. "That's why it's all the more satisfying when a job, which also has its pitfalls and obstacles, is successfully completed and the customer is happy."

## Safety first

As with an on-site assignment with a Mahlo technician, safety plays a big role in remote service. Before accepting the job, customers fill out a special form. Among other things, they name a responsible person who is also authorized to place the service order. They also confirm, among other things, that possible hazards, for example due to the machine starting unexpectedly, will be prevented. The duration of remote service varies greatly. Depending on the effort involved, the working time ranges from a few minutes to several days. The technicians always have to take into account the time difference. The service team is not satisfied until all problems have been eliminated.

Since Corona, remote service has been used more and more - but it is not only the current restrictions that bring advantages for customers. The general conclusion is: shorter downtime at lower costs. This is because the machine builder's team can respond more quickly to emergency calls - especially in the case of operating problems - if a technician does not have to travel to the site first. This also results in a lower financial burden for the customer, as no travel costs are incurred. There is another advantage, according to Cetto: "If, despite everything, a call-out to the factory is necessary, the missions can be better prepared with online fault diagnosis. The risk of not being able to complete a service call at the customer's site because a spare part is missing, for example, is thus minimized." Cetto is certain: "Remote and online support will shape the direction and image of Mahlo's service even more in the coming years, but one must not forget that we are always also dependent on the people on site who turn a few screws for us now and then!"

