

GTX HELPS RESCUE RNLI FROM DROWNING IN A SEA OF PAPER

The Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) is a charity that exists to save lives at sea. It provides, on call, 24-hour service necessary to cover search and rescue requirements up to 50 miles (80 Kilometres) out from the coast of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland.

Founded originally in 1824, the RNLI now saves on average more than 1,000 lives a year, as a result of more than 6,000 launchings from a fleet of more than 300 lifeboats.

It is not surprising that the modern RNLI uses the latest in computer hardware and software to help them achieve and maintain their impressive record. Computers pervade all

aspects of the RNLI today, but no more so than in the design and maintenance of the lifeboats.

New lifeboats are designed in the RNLI engineering office and pose some unique problems. The boats must be small enough to get close to casualties, strong enough to go to sea in the worst weather, well equipped with navigation, communications and survival gear, stable enough to make capsizing unlikely and self-righting in case they should be capsized! Like all boats, their design has to be a compromise.

To help in these design and maintenance tasks the RNLI has installed a number of AutoCAD® and GTXRaster CAD® seats at their Poole, Dorset, U.K. Headquarters. Replacing an older UNIX based system, the RNLI has worked closely with Adris Ltd, the Southampton based Computer Applications and CAD Specialist Supplier, to specify and install a comprehensive hardware

and software system which looks after all aspects of its design and maintenance work.

Most of the all-weather boats have an operational life of 20 years. It is perhaps not surprising that during this lifetime a large amount of paper drawings (approximately 40,000) have accumulated. This reflects the individual changes and modifications that occur to each "class", including the latest classes of lifeboat, the "Trent" and "Severn", both introduced in 1993.

These drawings are being scanned onto the RNLI system using a Calcomp wide format scanner, and when combined with the TIFF files generated by the previous (CADD5/Formtek) system provide the bulk of the raster files that the RNLI has to keep updated.

The RNLI has found that using the comprehensive raster editing facilities of the GTXRaster CAD product it is not normally necessary for them to convert their raster drawing files into vector. They are able to maintain and update their scanned drawings very efficiently in raster using the unique Intelligent Object Picking (IOP) capabilities of GTXRaster CAD, which enables them to handle raster entities as if they were vector/CAD entities.

RNLI's current configuration consists of a network of 10 AutoCAD seats, 9 of which are running GTXRaster CAD,



mainly used for intelligent raster editing work, as well as one seat of GTXRaster CAD® PLUS, for when automatic raster-to-vector conversion is required.

As David Wilson, RNLI's CAD Manager, commented, "GTXRaster CAD provides a very comprehensive and user-friendly environment for RNLI to maintain, edit and update our electronic drawing files, whether they have been scanned in or are part of our electronic legacy archive from the previous system". He added, "When compared with our previous manual methods of update, using GTXRaster CAD has made it possible for us to keep our drawings up to date and correct in a much more efficient and cost effective way".

As with many organisations, especially those with a running cost of more than £88 million (\$132 million) per year, the RNLI is constantly seeking to upgrade its computer systems to take advantage of the latest technology and achieve even more cost savings and efficiency. RNLI has implemented SAP, and with the help of Adris's expertise to develop an interface between SAP and their design and drawing maintenance systems, the GTX software will continue to provide essential tools for the maintenance of the RNLI electronic drawing archive.

The RNLI is justifiably proud of the fact that its lifeboats are manned by highly trained volunteer crews, and every penny required to maintain the lifeboat service is raised from voluntary contributions and legacies. Their determination to provide a modern, world leading marine rescue service is as great now as



it was 176 years ago when they were founded. The 134,000 lives they have saved in that period are an appropriate testament to the success of their service.

GTX is proud to be associated with the RNLI and helping them achieve the sort of 'internal' efficiencies that help make their continuing 'external' services and successes possible.

If you would like to find out more about the RNLI, please visit www.lifeboats.org.uk.

If you would like more information on the technology solutions Adris delivers, please visit www.adris.co.uk

If you would like more information or details about the GTXRaster CAD Series of products, please visit www.gtx.com.



GTX Corporation Company Profile:

GTX Corporation is the leading supplier of scan-conversion and editing products that provide complete integration and interfacing between scanned drawing archives and Computer Aided Design/Drafting CAD systems.

GTX was founded in 1984 by Dr. Marvin T. Ling, to bridge the gap between paper engineering drawings and electronic format (CAD) and to solve the time-consuming problems of storing, retrieving and editing paper drawings.

GTX is a privately held corporation headquartered in Phoenix, Arizona with offices in Basingstoke, England and Taipei, Taiwan. GTX sells its products through a network of authorized distributors and resellers throughout the Americas, Europe, Asia, the Pacific Rim, the Middle East and Africa. The Company also licenses its technology to third-party CAD vendors for integration and sale under their own private label.

GTX technology brings intelligence to manually created drawings and allows companies to gain productivity and lower costs to effectively maintain, revise and store their engineering documents.

Major users of GTX products include public utilities, aerospace/defence, telecommunications, automotive and heavy manufacturing industries.

Intelligent Paper to CAD Solutions®

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