

SensorLink: High-Voltage Tech Firm Turns to ISO to Compete and Grow Globally



THE OBJECTIVE

SensorLink has been manufacturing high-voltage sensors and monitors for utility companies for 25 years. Helping detect trouble spots in the power grid is their specialty. As SensorLink grew, they took on more people, customers, and products. And they became a global leader in high-voltage monitoring. This growth presented some new challenges.

Over 25% of SensorLink's revenue was coming from overseas, and that meant that getting ISO (International Organization for Standardization) certification was more important than ever. ISO serves as an internationally accepted mark of safe and reliable goods, and certification is increasingly required by international customers.

The prep for ISO certification is paperwork-heavy and requires participation from every department. To navigate the process, they needed a solution to dramatically improve communication and collaboration across the company.

THE SOLUTION

When it came to preparing for ISO 9001 certification, staying organized was paramount. While ISO provides several chapters of information on what needs to happen to achieve certification, it is more of a list of ingredients than a recipe.



SensorLink was founded in 1985 as an engineering and consulting firm, with the mission of assisting companies in improving their competitive edge using technology. In 1988, SensorLink was approached by a power utility to develop a new type of current measurement device. SensorLink developed an innovative inductive sensor that blew away contemporary industry standards and builds sensors and recorders that are used by utility companies worldwide.

CHALLENGE

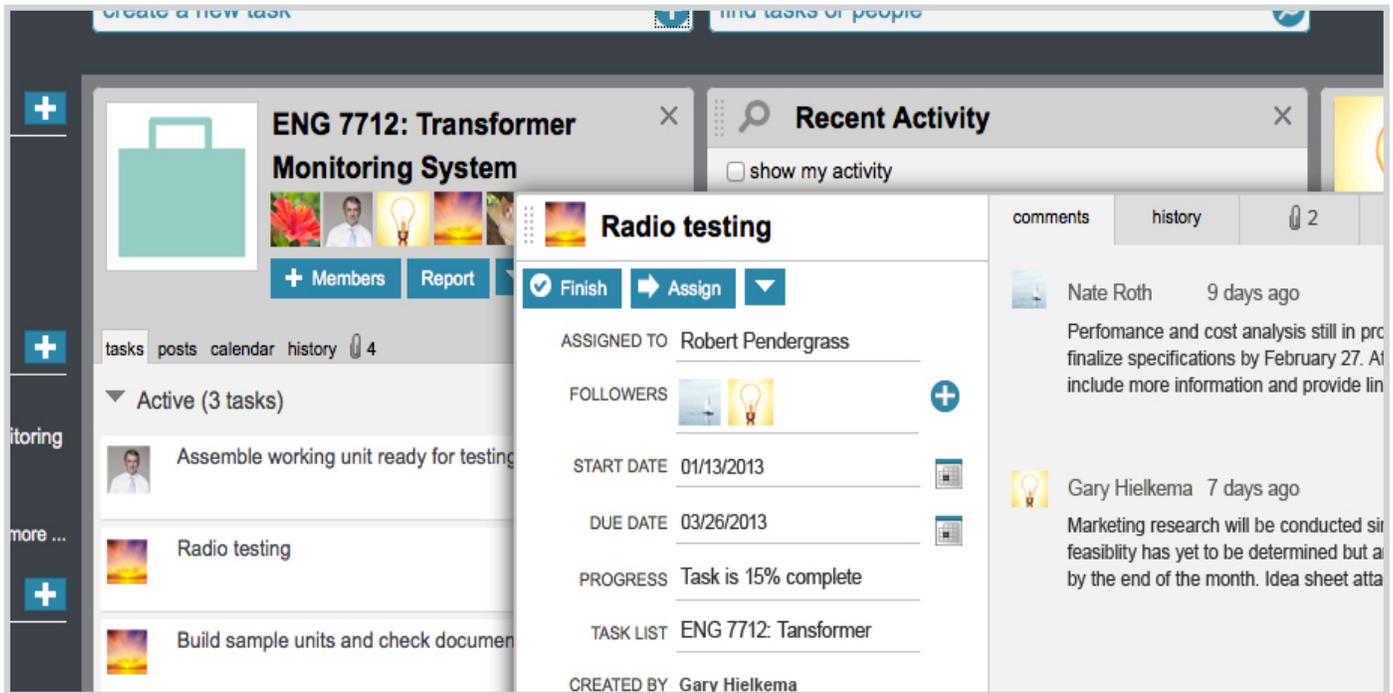
With a growing customer base and upcoming ISO 9001 certification, SensorLink needed to improve communication, collaboration and accountability across the company.

SOLUTION

SensorLink began using Mindjet company-wide in every department for every project. It was also instrumental in organizing the paperwork-heavy ISO 9001 certification process.

RESULT

Teams are much more responsive and efficient. Problems are solved faster with Mindjet, saving them months of prep for ISO certification.



SensorLink's VP of Operations and Quality, Loren Tinsley, was tasked with heading up the project. He had to create a quality manual from scratch covering all of the 20-year-old company's processes from sales order creation to customer service. "I had to create procedures where none existed, document and correct the procedures that did exist, and finally create all the supporting documents and records (around 30), oh, and I had to train all of SensorLink's Managers on all the changes, too," Tinsley said.

And he used Mindjet as the backbone for the project. Usage spread, and Mindjet became the standard to manage and track all of their projects and communications. Now, every SensorLink employee starts and ends every day and every project with Mindjet. "Mindjet is the first thing our team looks at in the morning, even before checking email," said CEO Gary Hielkema. "With Mindjet, we can brainstorm on a project and then track our exact

progress; I get a better assessment over a three-minute period that if I had an actual face-to-face conversation"

THE RESULT

"Without Mindjet, I think I would be a couple of months behind on the project," Tinsley said. "I'd have to chase emails, build lists—the transparency and communication wouldn't be there either."

Mindjet helped SensorLink break down the barriers that stifled collaboration that could have stalled ISO certification, while boosting accountability without having to micromanage people. "Mindjet makes us more accountable, more predictable, more efficient," said Hielkema. "It's dramatically changed the way we work."



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Gary Hielkema CEO, SensorLink

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