

WINNER FOR SUSTAINABILITY

WEAVING A SUSTAINABLE SOLUTION

How to Create a Quiet Zone on a Noisy Factory Floor

Veranneman Technical Textiles, winner of the 2021 Duty of Care award for Sustainability, created a communications hub as a quiet place for employees to share information and plan their work.

Sioen Industries, Belgium is a textile solution provider. It makes yarns, woven and non-woven fabrics, technical textiles, fine chemicals and protective clothing. Veranneman Technical Textiles is part of the Sioen company. It creates high tech textiles used in PVC roofing, swimming pool membranes and other waterproofing and construction applications.

Eloïse Buyse, Content Creator at Veranneman, explains the challenges of working in such an environment:

'At our coating plant in Ardoois, Belgium, our weavers work in the middle of about 70 weaving looms. The looms cause a lot of noise and temperatures can rise quickly when you're working amidst the looms. The constant zooming and

clicking of the machines can make it hard to discuss the weaving looms' monitoring data. In this environment, employees also find it hard to get a clear overview of the KPIs, internal memos and other important information.

'At Veranneman, and all the Sioen Group companies, we strive to offer the best working conditions possible, by digitalising processes, among others. So, we set out to find a sustainable solution. The result was Coolbox.'

Creating a Communications Hub

Coolbox was installed in the middle of the production site to provide an efficient communications hub. It is used by weavers, technicians and team leads for their short debriefs in between shifts. Thanks to the large monitoring screens, the debriefs can be supported with visuals and data. The screens show the KPIs, the speed indicators and loom data, among others.



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One of the screens is dedicated to internal memos, emails, company information and general guidelines. The quiet room and large screens make it much easier for people to work together to solve problems and exchange information and ideas.

An Employee Initiative

The Coolbox was an employee initiative. It was the result of the 'top teams initiative', a series of improvement projects with close involvement of all workers. Employee involvement has always been key to the company's success. Since the very beginning of the Sioen Group, direct communication has been important. Colleagues are encouraged to talk to each other, know each other, and feel able to discuss ideas and problem situations with their superiors. All recognise that this type of communication benefits both the employees and the company.

The communications hub is a cool and almost silent place where colleagues can talk to each other. The employees chose the name 'Coolbox' and they see it as delivering 'communication in the organisation to improve quality for a lifetime'.

Meeting the Sustainable Development Goals

The Sioen Group is guided by the UN Sustainable Development Goals as part of its commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility. With the Coolbox communications hub, Veranneman builds on 'resilient infrastructure, promotes inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and fosters innovation', as set out in SDG 9. The Coolbox also helps in realising SDG 8, as it aims to 'achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men' by 2030, as set out in SDG 8.5.

Veranneman's Innovative Digitalisation

The Coolbox is a step towards the full digitalisation of the Veranneman production site. Another step in this process was changing from a paper-based production system to a digital system. Instead of using more than 50,000 documents a year for monitoring the

weaving looms, a digital platform on tablets is now used. This user-friendly and ecological alternative is another commitment to Veranneman's commitment to sustainability.

Eloïse Buyse Concludes

'The Coolbox communications hub has been an effective part of our digitalisation efforts. As well as helping us to monitor the weaving looms, it improved internal communications generally. It also provides a pleasant meeting space.'

'Thanks to this and other innovations towards digitalisation, Veranneman has won the Factory of the Future award twice: in 2017 and 2020. The title counts for three years and is awarded by Agoria and Serris. It shows that our efforts in modernisation, digitisation and innovation in the past years have paid off. We will now continue our focus on improved working conditions for our employees and on sustainable production processes.'

Key Elements

- Create long-term and effective solutions, using digitalisation.
- Include employees closely in developing and improving initiatives.
- Encourage ongoing communications at all levels within the organisation.