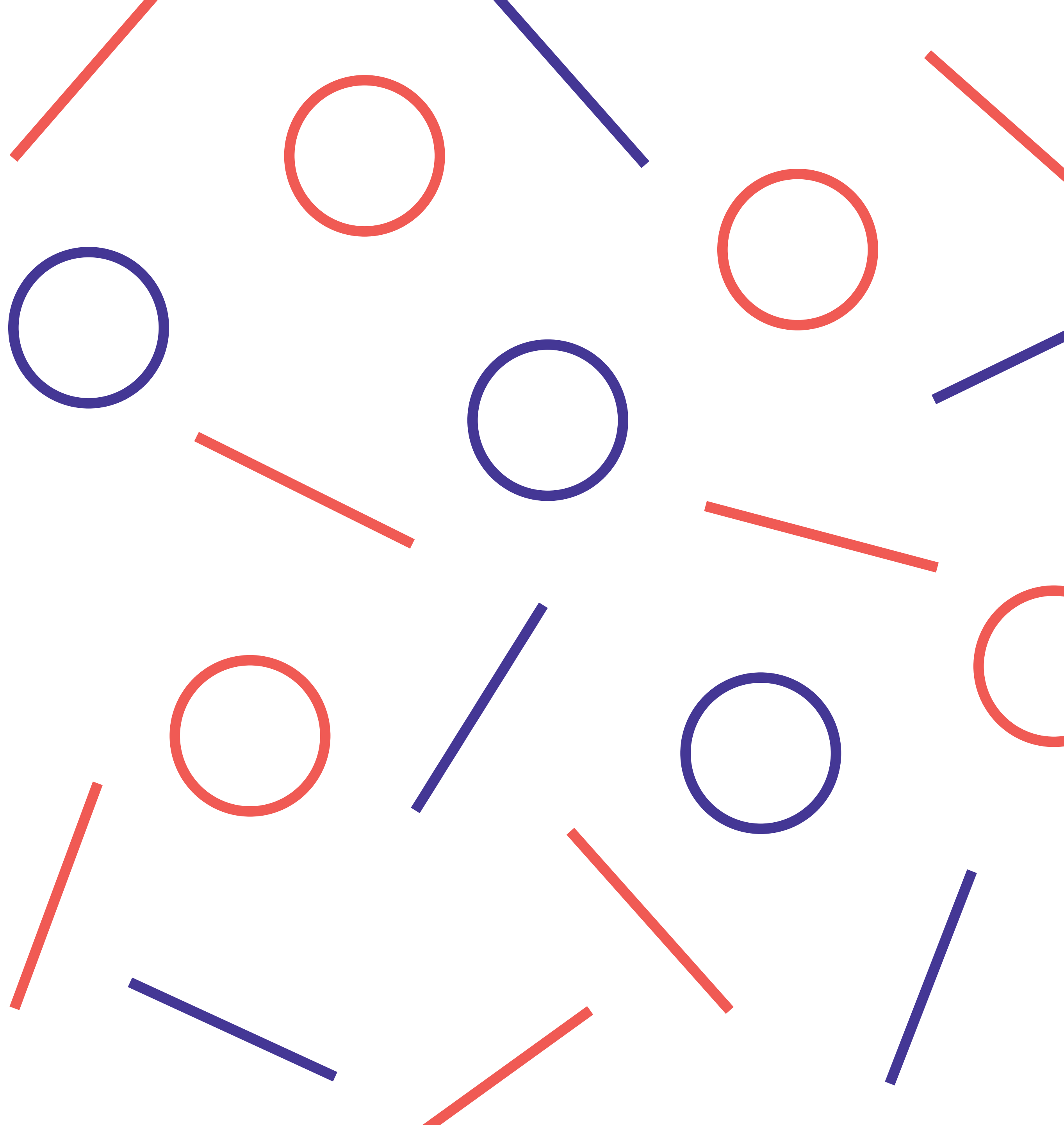
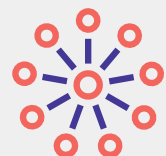
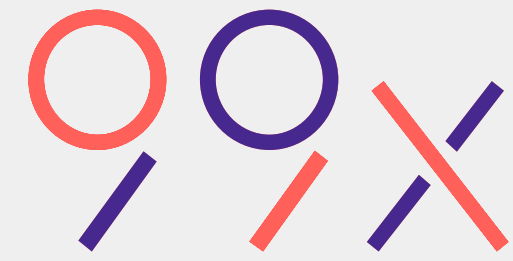


Celebrating impactful digital products







Celebrating impactful digital products

Digital products are transforming our economies, communities and every aspect of modern life. We celebrate some of these digital products which impact our lives, often connecting so seamlessly that we aren't even conscious of its use.



Playing to win

Developing digital products is challenging. Your digital product is the heart of your business and entrusting it to a partner thousands of miles away is never easy. Yet, the outcomes can be tremendous. This is a compilation of stories of digital product companies bold enough to take this step – and by co-creating together, have made a difference in people's lives through impactful, market-winning digital products.

Mano Sekaram

Founder and CEO



Together with our clients, we have built over 150 digital products during the past fifteen years, and we are pleased to showcase twelve of them. We hope these examples will inspire you on the reality of co-creating and innovating impactful digital products while drawing on global differentiators.

Dag Honningsvåg

Chairman of the Board



It is our absolute delight to present these examples of courage and collaboration in “Celebrating impactful digital products”. These are more than just stories but a chronicle of relationships which have sustained and grown over the years.

Together with our clients, we have built over 150 digital products during the past fifteen years, and we are pleased to showcase twelve of them. We hope these examples will inspire you on the reality of co-creating and innovating impactful digital products while drawing on global differentiators.

In the following pages, you will discover founders and entrepreneurs who dared to imagine new digital products, CEOs and CTOs who re-imagined how these could be kept current and conquer new markets, and Product Managers who have persevered sprint after sprint to make this a reality.

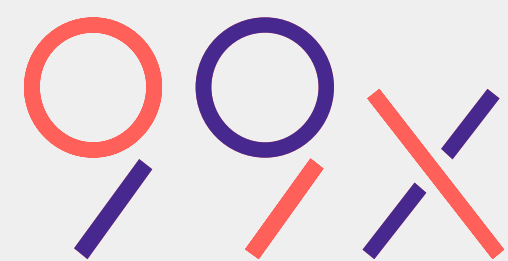
We thank each of our clients who willingly participated in this publication. We see the passion you have for your product, the bond you have with our teams, and the love you have for Sri Lanka echo on every page.

We dedicate this book to the Xians (as we call ourselves) both present and past, whose passion to build impactful digital products forms the other half of the story. Thank you for your commitment to adopt the client’s product as your own and regularly going beyond the call of duty. You can be proud that your code power thousands of businesses, in Europe and beyond.

Best regards,

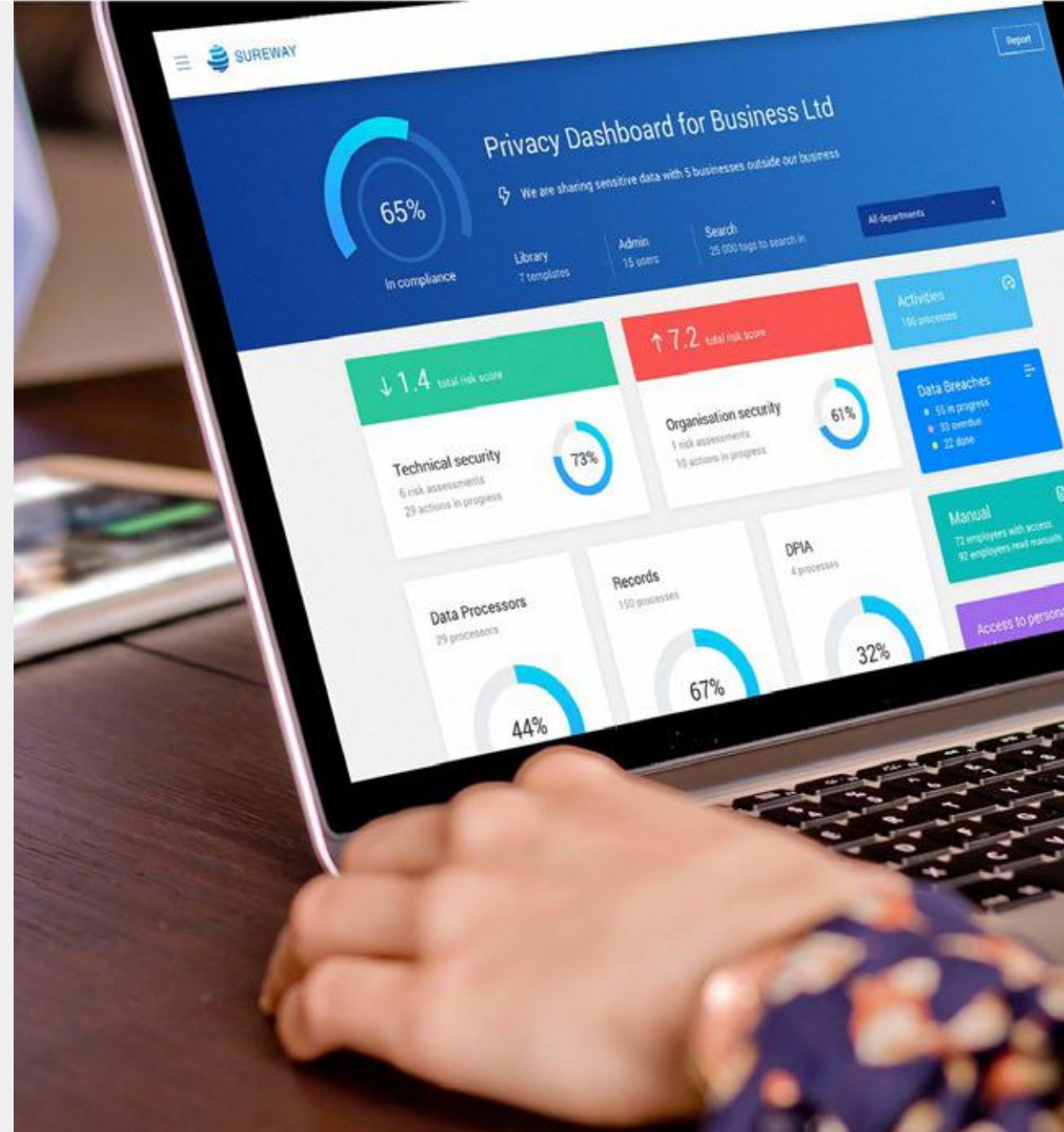
Mano Sekaram
Founder & CEO
99x

Dag Honningsvåg
Chairman
99x



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For Kjetil, it was not a time to watch and wait as dozens of Norwegian municipalities struggled to coordinate their responses to the rising number of COVID-19 cases. The Founder and CEO of Sureway, Kjetil already had strong relationships with over 100 municipalities who used his product. Whether it was in Oslo, Stavanger, Sandnes or Lund, he could see their need for real-time information on suspected cases, beds, personnel,

Tackle: Enabling municipalities win their battle against COVID-19

Kjetil Odin Johnsen,
Founder and Chief Executive Officer

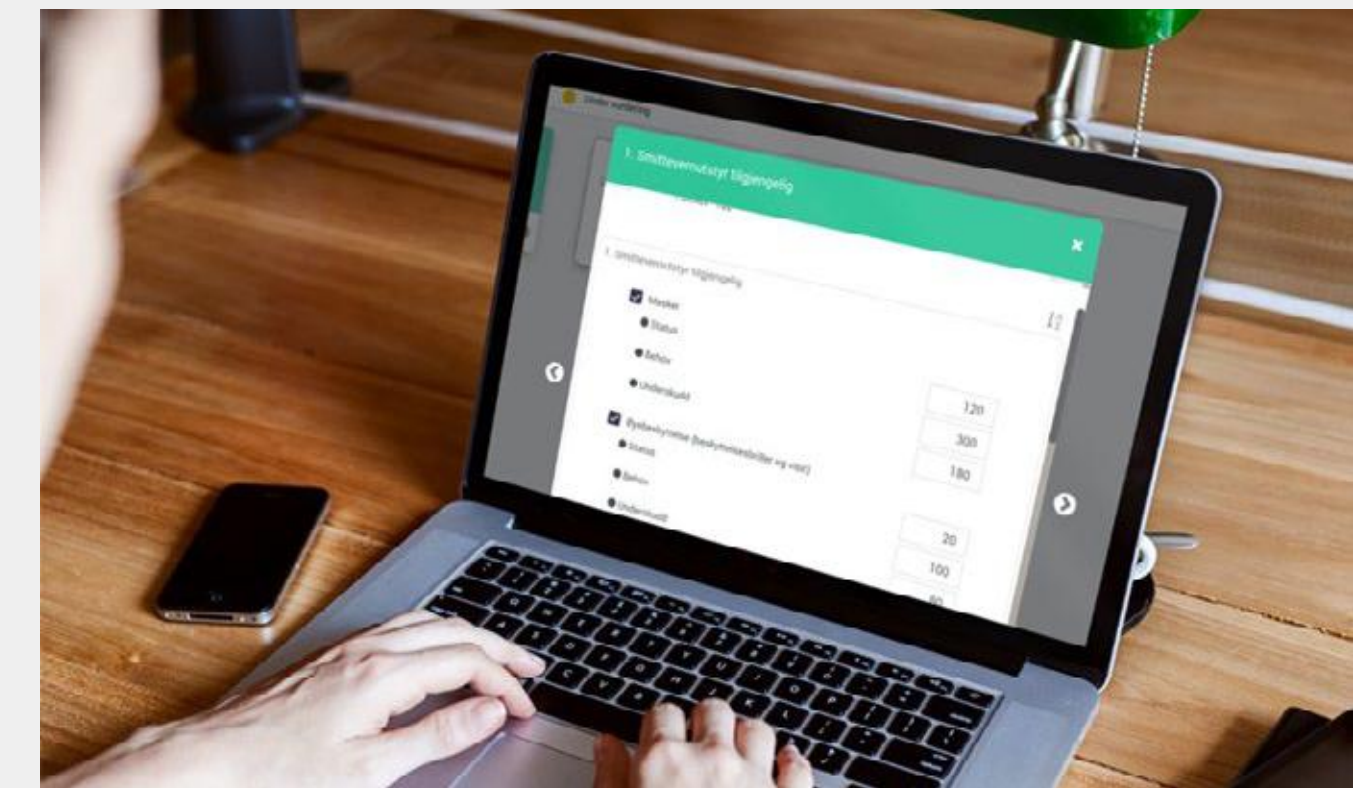




protective equipment that needed to be tracked from multiple sources. He also saw that Post-it notes, SMS and Messenger updates on spreadsheets was simply inadequate to meet the need for accurate information. Something had to be done, there was too much at stake.

Since Sureway already used multiple dashboards to report compliance data, Kjetil had a hunch that it could help to report updates on COVID-19 as well. He immediately threw the challenge to his team to see if Sureway can be used. He stated only two requirements: it must be simple to log the updates from multiple sources and it must have a dashboard for everyone to view the status in real-time.

The team came back with an approach the very next day. It was not adding an extension to Sureway but to strip-out the current functionality and build a new product to address the crisis. In a matter of days, 'Tackle' emerged to help municipalities take the crisis head-on. Even with the lockdown in effect, both in Norway and Sri Lanka, the team worked around the clock to iterate and build the features needed.





Kjetil identified two factors which stood out when building Tackle. The first was a team culture which was willing to take an initial idea and turn it around rapidly towards a solution and secondly, the cloud competence of the team. “Since we’ve been working as a distributed team since 2012, we have become good at it”.

He described his approach to convey requirements as a combination of sketches and conversations, “I like to do drawings and pictures to convey what I have in mind. I also go over the domain and discuss to make sure that the team

has understood my idea”. Tackle enabled municipalities and emergency services to organize themselves better, to save lives while protecting healthcare workers.

Reflecting on his experience, Kjetil commented, “If you dare to go that path to build a new product, you should go and do it. Not everything will be perfect, there was more to be done after 8 days but we have a product and it can be used!”. In his courage to build Tackle, Kjetil made a difference to countless lives and mitigate a national crisis.

“I like to do drawings and pictures to convey what I have in mind. I also go over the domain and discuss to make sure that the team has understood my idea.”





BUS: Digitizing vehicle inspections

Einar Dahle,
Co-Founder & former Owner

For Einar, it was all about spotting an opportunity, building a solution and then being bold enough to give it away and start all over again. He describes his journey as an entrepreneur: “I was the ‘IT guy’ and my friend Bernard Jaeck the ‘finance guy’ at Saab Automobile. We started talking about dealers, ERP and accounting systems and how

“Switching to working with the 99x team of product engineers gave us the support it needed to accelerate our growth. We discovered incredible people here in Sri Lanka.”

there was a huge gap in technology to monitor and manage car sales, workshop- and spare part workflow for dealerships. In 1996, we bought an ERP-solution and soon made a shift both in strategy of development and introduced a completely new pricing model based on recurring income.”



Today, BUS is a technology company in Norway and Sri Lanka supporting over 2,000 customers ranging from large car dealers to small one-man car repair shops who in total do over 1.7 million vehicle inspections each year and have 75% of the market share.

Einar described his challenges with 'cowboy' coders in the early days of development, where developers had complete control over the development process and did as they pleased. He was also challenged to maintain continuity when team members moved out. After not seeing the expected progress with his development team, he realized a new approach was needed.

“On 1st of January 1998, the EU-legislation for road worthiness was introduced and we developed a module on our ERP-solution to engage our customers even more to our services. Soon, we also realized the huge potential to deliver this service to other customers, who are using other ERP-solutions. We were overwhelmed by the demand and soon had several hundred new customers. However, our existing ERP-solution was a blocker for larger new sales. So, we decided to shift the core services of BUS to work with small modules for a large number of customers instead of the complex ERP-solution for a limited market potential. We then sold the ERP-solution and step by step, boosted the number of customers buying licenses for vehicle inspections.”





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In Einar’s words, “Switching to the 99x team gave us the support to accelerate our growth. My philosophy when partnering with 99x was that this is only a geographical extension of our team and that everyone who’s working on our project is a part of our company.”

Einar did have his concerns about making an outsourced model work, due to time differences and cultural differences. He fondly recollects his visits to Sri Lanka to learn, fine-tune and establish optimal work process. “But now, I can see the beauty that has come out of this. I would never go back to the previous setup.”

RamBase: A pioneering ERP built for the cloud

Roger Gullhaug,
Development Manager

Cloud is a word now synonymous with technology – yet, many years back when cloud was only associated with the sky, is when the futuristic RamBase ERP system made its entrance into the technology space. Built for the cloud and in fact, one of the first ERP systems operating from the cloud, RamBase is a Hatteland company and has played a key role in the company's 50 years of success.

RamBase Cloud ERP is a SaaS product with a range of different modules for sales, procurement, finance, production, logistics, auction, service rental, HR and more, all of which come together to support most of the operational needs of companies. Of course, maintaining such a product is demanding. A visionary product needs to always look to the future to stay competitive.





The RamBase vision is to become the obvious choice for mid-sized businesses within Discrete Manufacturing and Wholesale Distribution. This made RamBase look beyond the shores of Norway for product engineering expertise that supported their strategy to speed up time-to-market and stay ahead of the game. Speaking about this search for a development partner, Roger Gullhaug, Head of Development of RamBase, recalled: “We started looking for a partner and to be honest, started looking into companies closer to Norway. But then we got in touch with 99x and understood that they knew technology, were familiar with our way of working and importantly, understood our culture in a very good way as they had been working with Norwegian companies for a very long time, so that made it an easy choice for us.”



“It has been working very well for us. We started with five people, now up to eight and are very happy with the three different teams we have here. There is an excellent technical understanding and competencies within their teams and many of our most challenging technical projects come to them.”

Today, RamBase's offshoring journey spans over seven years. "It has been working very well for us. We started with five people, now up to eight and are very happy with the three different teams we have here. There is an excellent technical understanding and competencies within their teams and many of our most challenging technical projects come to them."

The culture fit has been a key factor in the success of RamBase's engagement. The teams understand each other well and are not afraid of pointing out errors made by either the Norwegian or Lankan teams. This great level of engagement sees the teams working together to always do better, and change things if required. "I think a lesson learnt is that to get this kind of arrangement to work really well, you should not write specifications, send it over and get a product back. You need to engage within the teams."

Looking back on the decision taken to outsource, Roger noted: "It was absolutely a good idea for us and it's hard to imagine that we could continue without 99x now. Absolutely."





Aspit: Conquering digital health record and patient management

Dag Helge Haslekås,
Owner and Chief Executive Officer

Founded in 2001 by Dag Helge Haslekås and Kenneth Grande (CTO), Aspit is Norway's most technologically advanced Electronic Health Record (EHR) and patient management solution for clinics and individual practitioners. Today, Aspit is used by over 5,000 psychologists, psychiatrists, physiotherapists, chiropractors and specialists to manage patient records.

Dag Helge commented: "While our initial business was in infrastructure management services, we made some inroads into ehealth during 2004 and 2005. This direction was endorsed in 2011 when we acquired the majority shares in an EHR company. It's good to be in the ehealth business as the demography of Norway and around the world is trending to an aging population. We need to be

more efficient with the technical resources we have and I'm glad to be part of building a product which is useful to society."

Aspit won a 5-year national licensing contract with the Directorate for eHealth in 2018. It enabled the company to launch 'Envision', a new innovative solution that solves challenges related to medical images, video and documents by providing secure image sharing between doctors and healthcare professionals. This contract also includes the right to establish and manage a national archive for medical records. The pandemic has also not had an adverse effect on Aspit, enabling them to support their customers by contributing to the national economy relief package by offering a 30% discount.

"We were one of the first technology companies in Norway to get on the cloud back in 2006, due to our IT services management expertise combined with the EHR solution. We kept upgrading the technologies used and finished moving from MS Access to .NET in 2012. In 2017, we made a very bold decision to rewrite our entire application to be ready for the 2020s – possibly our most significant investment to date and where 99x is part of our journey."



Dag Helge was familiar with offshore partners in Belarus, Estonia and Vietnam through multiple prior engagements. Dag Helge came to know more about the IT industry in Sri Lanka when he attended a conference in Colombo. Dag Helge identified a strange cultural similarity between Norwegians and Sri Lankans. “I don’t know if it’s because of the coastlines we have in common or being a small country with large neighbors, I was able to easily connect with people at 99x like Hasith and Mano. Whether it was history, Nordic conquests or eastern philosophy, I found that we shared similar interests.”

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Dag Helge added, “While there are so many places where our cultures do align well, we still have to work through the differences to succeed. Domain competency and domain complexity are two challenges we need to work through at every stage of the engagement. Sometimes things have taken a little longer than they should have but there is responsibility on both sides to address this. What finally matters is that we have been able to work through it all and get to a good place. In the end, it all comes down to personal relationships as well. I see the 99x staff as socially responsible warriors, who fight the right battles, in the right way and for the right reasons.”

Compello: Enabling paperless payment processing

Torgeir Lyngstad,
Chief Technology Officer

Compello is a software company with a history of over 25 years. Compello enables customers to implement a completely paperless work environment, coupled with a simple and secure process for receiving, approving and distributing invoices and other documents.

Torgeir Lyngstad, reflected on his initial days at Compello. “When I joined as the Chief Technology Officer in January 2018, my role was to lead the SaaS/cloud migration from a hybrid setup to be fully on the cloud. The most serious challenge we faced at that time was the slow pace of innovation. The engineering teams struggled with the load of maintaining multiple legacy systems. We realized we had to invest in innovation, and the only realistic way to do that in a short time was to expand our team in Colombo. That was the fastest and easiest way to add more muscle to our development.”



“We added some developers, and then when we needed it, added mobile developers. Now, the engagement scope covers development, manual and automated testing, performance testing and UX work across the entire product suite with a team of 28 engineers in Colombo.”

The first engagement with Compello started in 2013 and the team increased gradually over the years. The first project covered one core product and the scope was limited to manual testing services in Colombo. It then progressed from manual testing to test automation. Describing how the team grew, Torgeir commented, “We added some developers, and then when we needed it, added mobile developers. Now, the engagement scope covers development, manual and automated testing, performance testing and UX work across the entire product suite with a team of 28 engineers in Colombo.”

Torgeir stressed on the investment required to sustain a productive distributed team. “Some of our initial challenges were around building domain competence. I felt having this was more important before we dived into technical aspects. We also invested in the teams to spend physical time together either in Oslo or Colombo. This physical interaction is essential to build a common team culture. It is only when you have established a relationship, where you have an understanding, that you can work seamlessly together.”



The close relationships were evident during the COVID-19 lockdown, when the engineering team was able to move from 3 physical locations to 48 virtual locations overnight, without any loss of productivity.

“You must not make a distinction between your primary geography and other geographies where you have development staff. Every location is equally important, and you must make sure that all their opinions are heard, that they are kept involved in discussions. The level of skill in Sri Lanka is just as high or higher than

what we can recruit locally, and it is a shame if we don't use that talent to its full advantage. In my view, three things matter: getting everyone involved, treating everyone the same, and investing for everyone to be together regularly for physical interaction.”

Torgeir believes the additional effort to do this does payoff in the long term. “We had to make adjustments in how we did things. We had to change our internal newsletter to be in English, so that all geographical locations are equally aware.

We also did this for our annual strategy update as well so the team in Colombo are fully engaged. It is a good sign when the employees in your extended team start challenging some of the strategic decisions you make relating to the product direction. To me, this shows that they have a stake in it, and they are just as concerned as us that the right decisions are made. See your distributed team as an extension of your own company - just that they receive their paycheck from someone else!”



Easy2You: Technologically transforming traditional logistics

Espen Slyngstad,
Chief Executive Officer



Espen Slyngstad found himself at crossroads in 2017, upon the acquisition of the traditional logistics company Norpost. He felt that for the company to succeed, it needed to embrace technology as its core and transform into a 'logtech' (logistics technology) provider. And so, the journey towards achieving that began. In February 2018, the first milestone was

achieved. Now renamed as Easy2You, the board of directors backed the strategy to focus on technology - it would be the core development of Easy2You's journey. Just a few months later came Easy2You's next milestone. The decision was made to partner with a technology services provider and several partners were considered, Espen recalled.

"99x had an available team and could get started right away. We considered three or four candidates, but you were the only offshoring candidate with a team not inside of Norway that we considered."

“We then met Dag Honningsvåg who presented 99x. I think the overall concept of Dag as an owner and Chairman of the board of directors was quite important because he knew several of our owners as well.”

“I was very confident that this partnership would have no risks entailed compared to hiring all the employees ourselves. That would take us a very long time, to hire a team in Norway and train them. 99x had an available team and could get started right away. We considered three or four candidates, but you were the only offshoring candidate with a team not inside of Norway that we considered.”



Looking back on the decision, Espen observed that they were all very happy with the final outcome themselves, in the midst of a very tough restructuring of Easy2You. “Tough decisions had to be made but we stuck with the partnership of 99x. We were very pleased with the technology side of it, but I was also very pleased with the business dimension of it. 99x has been a good business partner in the restructuring of Easy2You, which is highly appreciated and a very important

part of the story, beyond your technical skills.”

Today, Easy2You drives two lines of business. “What we do, you can see it as a booking.com for transportation,” explained Espen. One area focuses on last mile deliveries related to ecommerce and the other, B2B related transportation needs that can be everything from last mile deliveries to companies to global transportation requirements.

“We are doing everything from Norway to Chile and in-between. A transition from traditional logistics to logistics technology has been our journey. We match a transportation need with a transportation resource and in that respect, are utilizing

spare capacity in the market, thereby also contributing to sustainability by reducing the environmental footprint,” Espen added.

Reflecting on the decision to offshore, he noted that a lesson learnt was that time and money invested to make the offshore team understand what you’re trying to achieve never goes to waste. “Don’t just give them detailed specifications on what you’re building. Invest and focus more on making them understand what you’re trying to achieve because that saves you time when it comes to the actual specifications. Make sure you have a steady dialogue and send people there as well. Make the team a part of your organisation is my key takeaway.”



“99x has been a good business partner in the restructuring of Easy2You, which is highly appreciated and a very important part of the story.”



Norkart: Creating Smarter Communities

Bent Brugård,
Chief Executive Officer

When Bent Brugård joined Norkart in 2011 as the Chief Executive Officer, it was an interesting convergence of his years of experience in the Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and telecommunication domains. He identified the critical need for municipalities and public services to operate more productively and the need to adopt emerging technologies to make this possible.

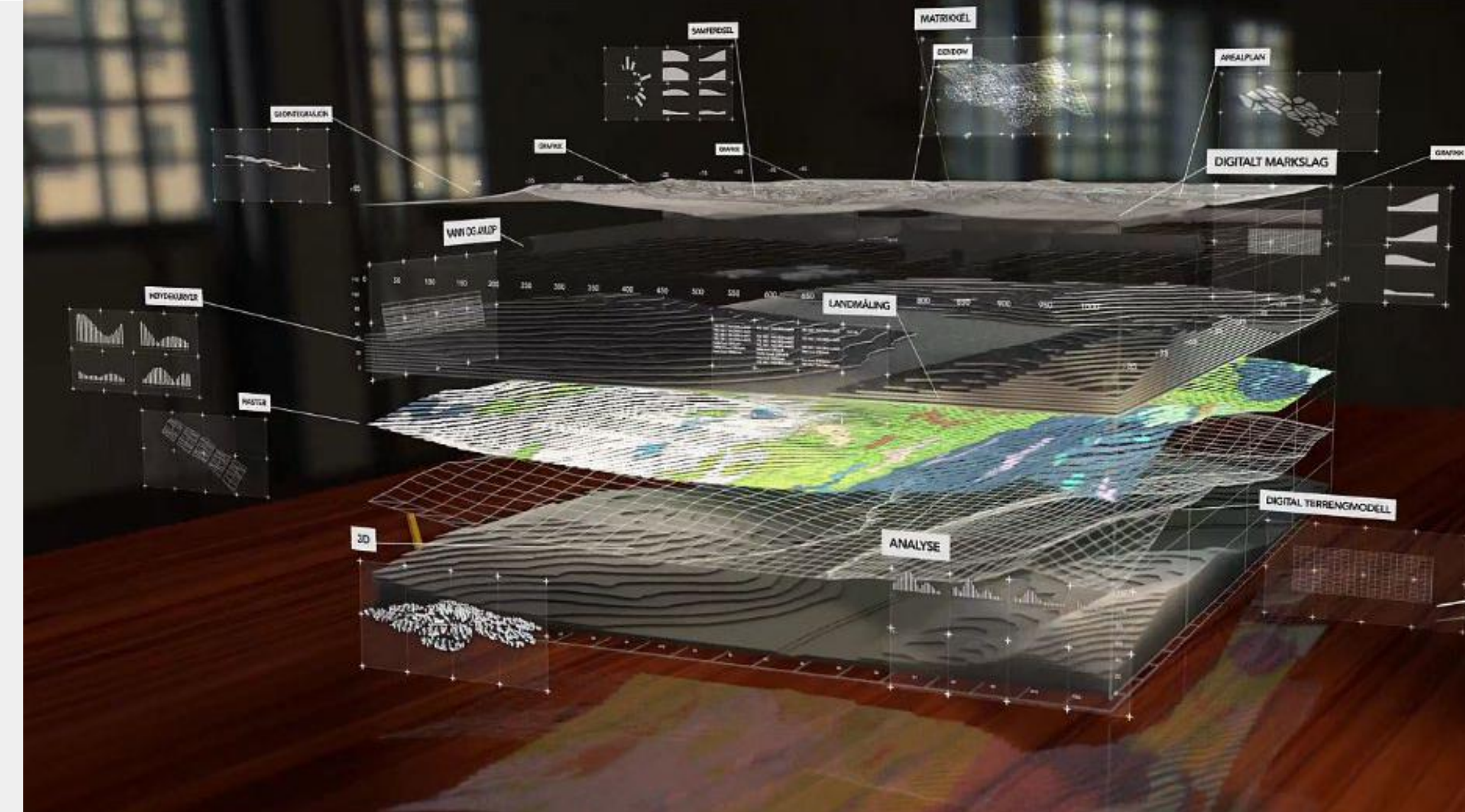
Today, Norkart enables the digital transformation of the Norwegian public sector and businesses.



“One of my first priorities was to transition the company through growth within subscription-based models and increase recurring revenue.”

The company is a pure software company within municipal engineering, map and property information, and is a supplier to the technical sector in 90% of Norwegian municipalities. Norkart has grown from a provider of municipal management solutions based on geographical data to become a value-adding, geographical information services provider for municipalities and the private sector. These include services for calculating property tax, digital self-service, waste and recycling, fire and sweeping, wastewater management, geodata for planning and development, and services for the real estate and construction industry.

Bent commented, “One of my first priorities was to transition the company through growth within subscription-based models and increase recurring revenue. This challenged us to offer automated access points where our customers can easily subscribe and consume our services. We saw three important shifts. Firstly, that residents should always be able to find, obtain and enter information themselves by using self-service features. Secondly, that field workers are enabled to have direct digital communication with the municipality and the resident. This provides for real-time visibility on activities and progress, with minimal overhead on updates.



Thirdly, to increase productivity of municipality employees where manual tasks are minimized and automation and self-services become the new norm. We needed to drive these changes at every touchpoint of the business”.

These measures have paid-off and today, Norkart has a strong business model where turnover in 2019 was divided into 62% recurring revenue from licenses, subscriptions, and operations, in addition to 27% repeatable revenue from transactions and consulting income, with only 11% non-recurring revenue from new sales and one-off projects.



Norkart is the market leader in management solutions for the municipal engineering sector. The GISLINE platform is Norway's most complete system for managing geographical information. The KOMTEK platform provides residents and businesses with efficient, self-service solutions, as well as automated processes for generating municipal fees.

Annually, the KOMTEK systems produce NOK 14 billion in municipal fees. Norkart has built Norway's largest geographic data warehouse with 24 Tb of data and 43 million daily lookups from the public and private sectors. The services are based on the compilation and processing of data, and are used by banks, insurance companies, contractors, and lawyers, in addition to the municipalities.

“We must be clear and unambiguous in what we want to solve together and in time, the results will come.”

“I'm glad to have 99x as a partner in our journey. You offer large cost-savings compared to in-house development and the flexibility to scale and meet business demands. At the same time, 99x and Norkart have a similar view of the value of thinking long-term in this type of collaboration. You also understand the Scandinavian culture, which is very important in such a cooperation. We must be clear and unambiguous in what we want to solve together and in time, the results will come”.

DRIW: Transforming retail and logistics through technology

Merete Aaheim Alnes, HR Manager
Jon Vidar Eidsaa, Chief Product Officer

Driw was founded in 1982 by Per Egil Røshol, who continues to advise the company as a member of the management team. While it is unusual to have a 38-year history for a software company, Driw has always been in innovating logistic software solutions for the retail and wholesale industry. During the early years, Driw was one of the first companies to adopt voice technology in order to increase efficiency in order fulfilment. Driw is implementing a new product suite “Trace”, consisting of an integrated Warehouse Management System (WMS), Order Management System (OMS), Store Management System (SMS) and a Transport Management System (TMS).



Jon Vidar Eidsaa commented, “We have always had the large supermarket chains as customers and have been successful as a company. We realized that our technology platform had to change to support the future of retail, that we needed to respond to this. We also realized that the customer is now digital, more demanding and they request more alternatives on delivery, price and flexibility.

Supporting this behavior was becoming a barrier for logistics chains using older technology. Another priority was to move away from custom implementations for each customer and have a standard platform instead.”

Merete Aaheim Alnes added, “We had to grow very fast and hire around 20 people a year to meet the time-to-market challenge ahead of us. We are based in Alesund which is a very small town, where it is difficult to recruit enough people with the right technical competence.” “We had to look at other options to scale-up and that is when we heard of 99x through Dag Honningsvag. We did some research on our own and later a team flew to Colombo for face-to-face meetings. We saw the alignment in terms of culture and the focus 99x had on teamwork and developing people, and the relationship began”.

Many of the managers had experience working with distributed teams with both nearshore and offshore vendors. Merete commented, “We knew what to expect and the obstacles when you have



“We saw the alignment in terms of culture and the focus 99x had on teamwork and developing people, and the relationship began.”

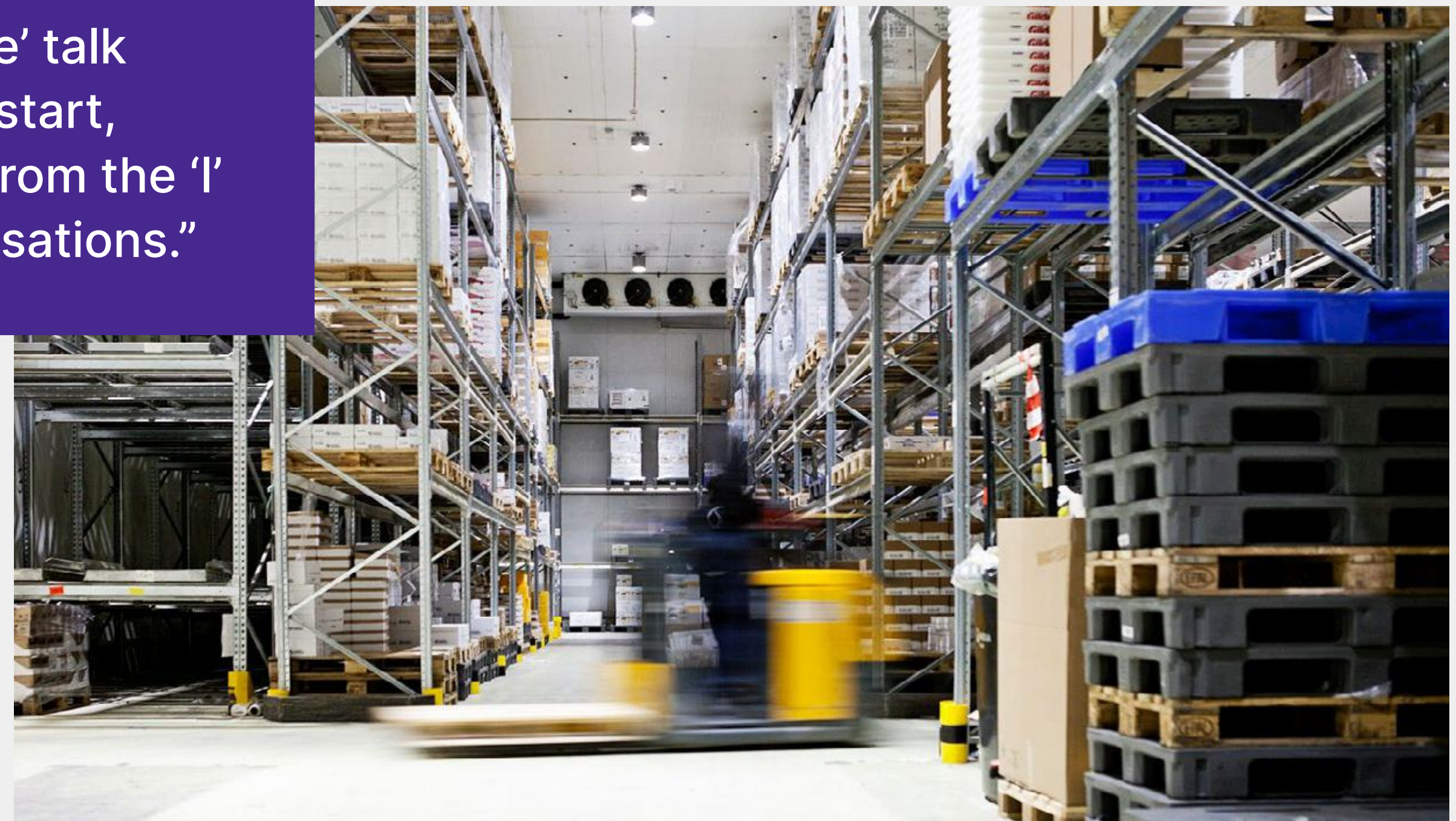
to collaborate, especially with culture. You can’t just ‘plug and play’ and hope it works! Some of us were quite skeptical when we began the initial engagement because we also wanted developers in Norway and have everyone work together.” Today, Driw and 99x collaborate across multiple products on the Trace platform, with 20 product specialists contributing on the platform from Colombo.



“As a team, it’s about getting to a ‘we’ talk right from the start, moving away from the ‘I’ or ‘you’ conversations.”

a ‘we’ talk right from the start, moving away from the ‘I’ or ‘you’ conversations. If there is one quality I value in my team, it would be curiosity. To be willing to ask questions and figure it out as what we are building has never been done before. There are no right answers, but I believe the team will always collaborate and figure it out”.

Jon Vidar reflected on his experience. “I want everyone to have freedom to try new things as the complexity of what we are building is very high. Logistics is a challenging domain and it is difficult to immediately to see this complexity from thousands of miles away. We try new ways like role plays and simulations to help the teams understand requirements better. As a team, it’s about getting to



Uni Micro: Disrupting accounting services in the cloud

Jon Terje Aksland,
Product Manager

Jon Terje Aksland joined Uni Micro in 2015 as the Product Manager. Uni Micro is a software company providing ERP software for accounting agencies. The platform enables companies, their employees and agency accountants to collaborate and manage the entire accounting back-office operation. This was an industry regularly facing disruption due to emerging technology, moving from client-server implementations, web and hybrid systems to being fully on the cloud.





Commenting on his journey at Uni Micro, “The chance to join Uni Micro was an offer I couldn’t refuse. I had the opportunity to select a great team of developers and build a cloud-based accounting system from scratch. Having been at Hatteland for 15 years, we had previously collaborated with 99x on our product RamBase. So, it was not a hard decision when Prasath (the CBDO of 99x) called and asked, ‘What about 99x?’. Today, we have seven scrum teams active across our products at Uni Micro, and two of these teams are based in Colombo. One team handles the integration of the product, the APIs and backend, while the other team drives our native mobile app development. Actually, everything relating to mobile is done in Colombo and I see

mobile being the future of the product as well”.

Jon Terje reflected on the disruption he had to deal with as the product evolved. “We had to change our business model in 2017. Although we had our product Uni Economy, a cloud-based accounting system, we also saw the opportunity to offer our product as a platform and teamed up with the FinTech industry. We launched our platform SoftRig in November 2019 and looking back, this was a very successful move. As a result, Norwegian banks can provide an accounting system as a ‘bundled offer’ when a business opens a bank account. For the customer, they see the bank providing this service, but it’s SoftRig which does all the work behind the scenes”.

“The chance to join Uni Micro was an offer I couldn’t refuse. I had the opportunity to select a great team of developers and build a cloud-based accounting system from scratch.”



The ease-of-use, functionality and scalability of Uni Micro’s products were well received in the market. Today, Uni Micro serves 400 of Norway’s accounting agencies, providing services to handle the accounting back-office for over 11,000 companies with multiple integrations to FinTech platforms.

“I love the people I have to work with in Colombo. Sometimes I feel they are Norwegian! I enjoy their sense of humor, irony and the light conversation as we work together. We are not pretending to be a team – we are a team for real. I especially remember how Kalana and Harshana

conducted this workshop on cross-platform mobile development at the Haugesund Campus during their visit in 2017. I was so proud to see the team on stage. Of course, there are too many great memories from my visits to Sri Lanka –Kandy, Galle, Colombo and crab curry!”

Boligmappa: Digitizing housing documentation

Erling Olausen, Chief Executive Officer
Eirik Vigeland, Head of Marketing



“What’s remarkable in the Boligmappa/99x journey is how both have been influencers of positive change for each other.”

It all began in 2012 with Per-Christian Svendsen (fondly known as PC), on a founder’s quest to digitize the management of housing documentation. Today, Boligmappa, considered Norway’s largest portal for housing documentation has digitized over 6 million documents. For homeowners and craftsmen, the process of creating documentation is now simplified. For IT companies and app developers, Boligmappa’s open API framework offers a platform to build better services for thousands of companies.



At the helm is Erling Olausen, the CEO who took over the reins from PC in 2018. Under his leadership a brand-new chapter began for Boligmappa. The product focus shifted from professionals to property owners. “Housing documentation creates value for the owners of the property. For Boligmappa as a platform, it was necessary to increase the property owners use of the system, thus creating higher demand on the professionals. We needed to increase these network effects”, says Erling.

Commenting on the relationship with 99x, Erling added, “The concept for Boligmappa was initiated by PC. He had this great idea of Boligmappa which is a pretty complex structure. PC knew he needed manpower to make it a reality and it just wasn’t possible to fulfil that demand in Norway. Through several coincidences, PC came to hear of 99x and Sri Lanka.”

What is remarkable in the Boligmappa/99x journey is how both companies have been influencers of



“What stands out is how we fell in love with Sri Lanka, how we can joke about the same things and share the same work culture. You don’t get that everywhere.”

positive change for each other. Erling, who was new to Boligmappa's offshoring model, was able to recognize and embrace the connection between the Sri Lankan and Norwegian teams. It enabled him to be more open towards outsourcing services and even extend it to the security domain.

For 99x, Boligmappa was a forerunner with its Objectives and Key Results (OKR) management framework that allowed teams to set challenging, ambitious goals with measurable results. This framework was later adopted by 99x as its own goal setting tool to manage initiatives.

Eirik, long-standing employee recollected his experiences on traveling to Colombo. "One thing we all talked about after our visit to SL was the warmth. How well we connect with the Sri Lankans and the team especially. How easy people are to work with, communicate with and how the team share our sense of humour which is very important. It's the Norwegian way of life in the workplace. Having a good time because we believe having a good time always leads to better results.

That is one of the key aspects that works so well when working with a tech team abroad. When we talk of other companies that offer the same outsourcing service from India or Eastern Europe, it isn't always the case." Eirik has visited Sri Lanka numerous times

and even managed to combine work with a family vacation as well. According to Eirik what really matters when managing a virtual team is frequent contact and connection as a team. He believes team visits are necessary to build a solid team culture. "Of course, an offshore experience is different from having a team in the same office in Norway. However, when COVID-19 happened in February, companies like Boligmappa were the best ones to manage that."

Eirik found it difficult to pick one specific memorable experience in Sri Lanka. For him, out of the many experiences, one was the food. "Norway doesn't have a single Sri Lankan restaurant. Sri Lankan food is like Indian food but a whole lot better!" Apart from that, visiting places and riding a tuk-tuk in downtown Colombo's crazy traffic takes precedence. When asked what stands out in this journey together, Eirik claims "What stands out is how we fell in love with Sri Lanka, how we can joke about the same things and share the same work culture. You don't get that everywhere."

For Erling, the most memorable experience was the first meeting with the team on a beach in Negombo. "I will never forget the way I was received. Some members of the team had organized a 'get to know each other' event. It was filled with laughter and fun, and I immediately understood the culture of the team and how well it resonated with our Nordic culture".



SuperOffice: Building a 30-year legacy through disruptive innovations

Guttorm Nielsen,
Chief Product Officer

A 30-year legacy and continuing to be the Norwegian market leader despite stiff competition from global players make SuperOffice a formidable force in Europe's CRM market. Chief Product Officer Guttorm Nielsen attributes all this to one basic idea, one that the company still runs on.

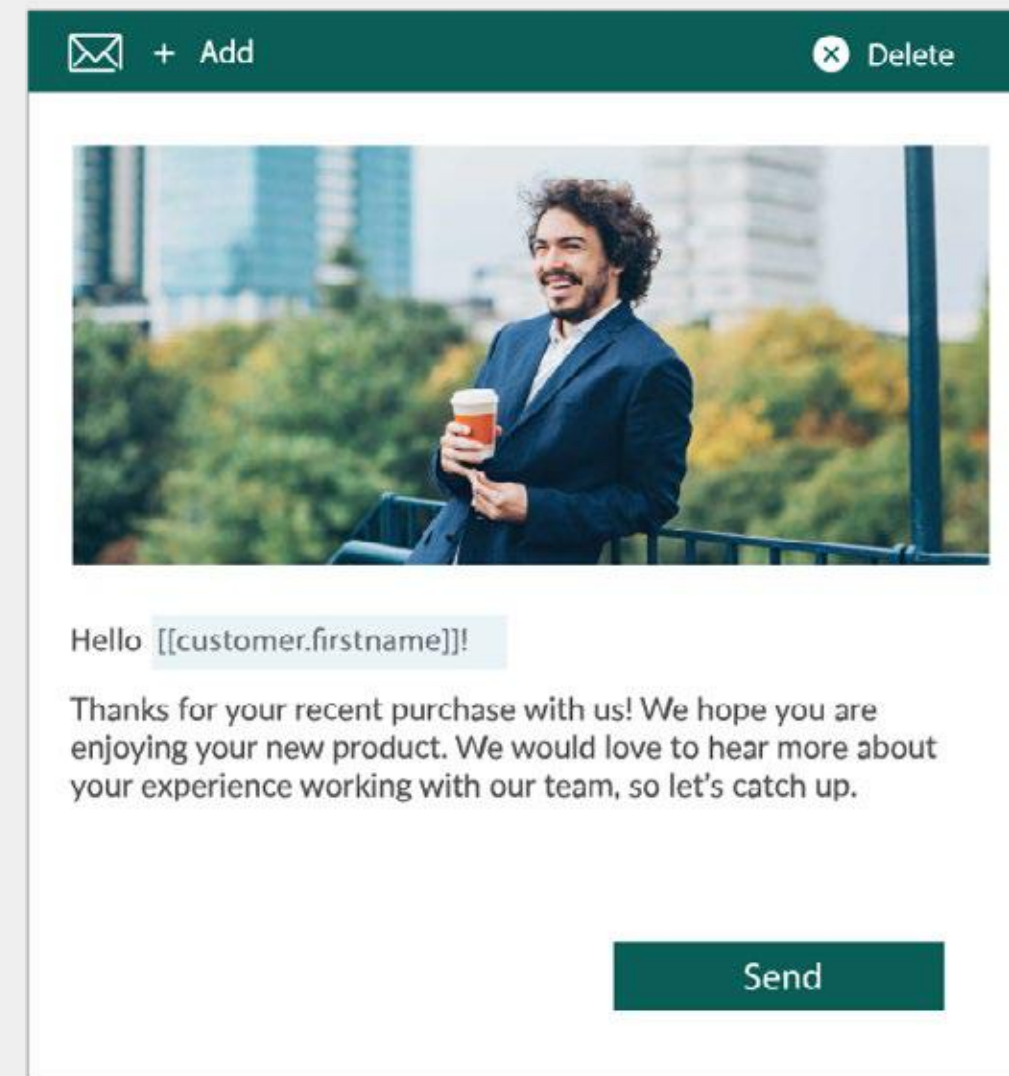
This stemmed from SuperOffice Founder Une Amundsen and it was simply to add structure around selling and give salespeople an efficient tool to work with customers. The idea was revolutionary in the early 90s and rapidly gained traction, resulting in SuperOffice selling thousands of systems.

“It was a strange time. The term CRM was only invented in the 2000s and no one really knew what we were doing before that. ‘SuperOffice? Do you sell office equipment? Paper?’ was what we would get asked!” reminisced Nielsen. Yet, 1997 saw them being listed on Norway’s stock exchange and 7,000-8,000 customers onboarded during the first decade.

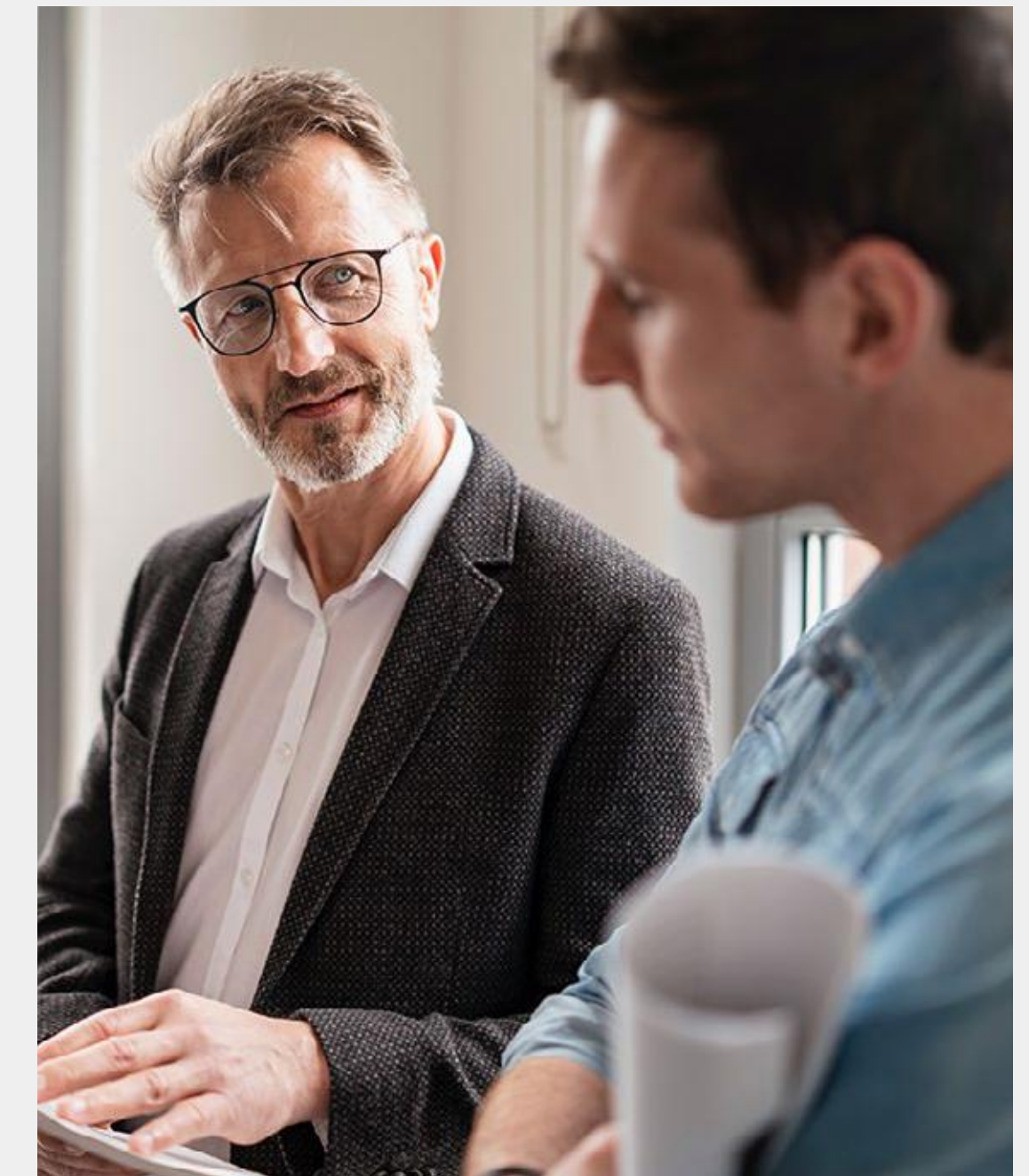
The dawn of the new millennium brought a brand-new challenge in the form of Salesforce – the world’s first SaaS-based product. SuperOffice saw the revolution headed their way but with 10,000 customers fully satisfied with the on-premise Windows application, were put in the tricky position of servicing their large on-premise userbase while at the same time starting on a web application from scratch.

“We had to do both in that transitional period and then we needed help from professional partners. 99x in that phase were engaged in doing testing and QA for the new and totally re-engineered web client and we thought ‘Wow! These guys really know what they are doing! Having a dedicated team of skilled, motivated QA-engineers really made a difference in our strive for quality and robustness in our software”, said Guttorm.

“The first phase with 99x back in 2006 was just consulting but after that, we formalized the cooperation, which has been very productive and we have seen a continued increase in the quality of our product.”



**“We found that closeness.”
Now, nearly 15 years later,
the SuperOffice team at 99x
have truly bought into the
idea behind the product and
several have worked on the
project for over 10 years!**



Forays into Ukraine and India before formalizing this decision made them realise how much they valued the closeness they felt with the Sri Lankan team. “I felt small in India, it was so industrialised,” observed Guttorm. He explained that while there are a lot of differences, the similarities in terms of structure, approach and culture in Sri Lanka compared to Norway have helped massively in making the offshoring model work. “We found that closeness.” Now, nearly 15 years later, the SuperOffice team at 99x have truly bought into the idea behind the product and several have worked on the project for over 10 years! When asked to share a key takeaway from his many years

of offshoring experience, Guttorm noted: “You have to invest in the relationship and have people on both sides working on this. The important thing is not putting the best developers or the best architects on the task, but having people (on both sides) who are committed to build strong relations and bridge cultural differences between team-members.”

“In this context, the efforts from SuperOffice’s JP (Jan Petter Hagberg) has been of vital importance. Relations needs continuous nurturing and attention from both parties. Ignore this and things will dry out. It is actually comparable to a marriage.”

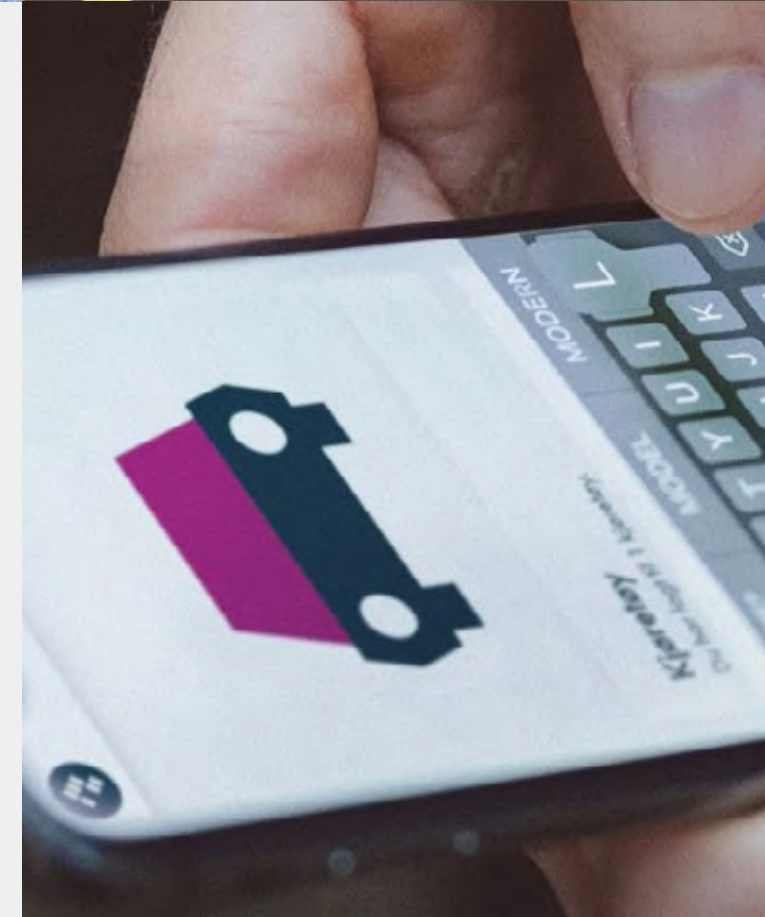
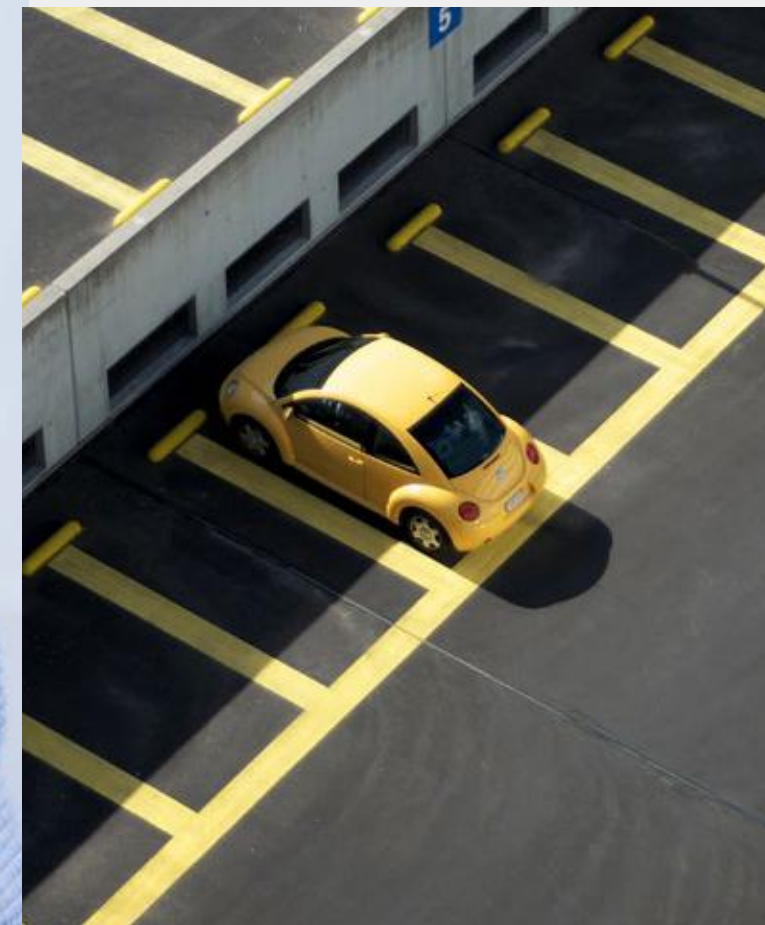
The image displays a sequence of four screenshots from a mobile calendar application, illustrating the process of accepting an invitation to renew a contract. Each screenshot shows a calendar view for 'Sep 2019, week 36' with a notification at the bottom: 'Tomorrow 13:45 -16:45 Renew contract Invited by - Matt Clarkson'.

- First Screenshot:** Shows the invitation sent. The notification at the bottom says 'Invitation sent'.
- Second Screenshot:** Shows the invitation with a large red 'X' over it, indicating it was declined. The notification at the bottom has 'Decline' and 'Accept' buttons.
- Third Screenshot:** Shows a list of notifications: 'Julia accepted your invitation', 'Casper accepted your invitation', and 'Waiting for Mark to respond'.
- Fourth Screenshot:** Shows the invitation again, but now with the date '7' highlighted in green, indicating it was accepted.



Parkly: Delighting customers through smarter parking solutions

Erik Herje, Co-Founder

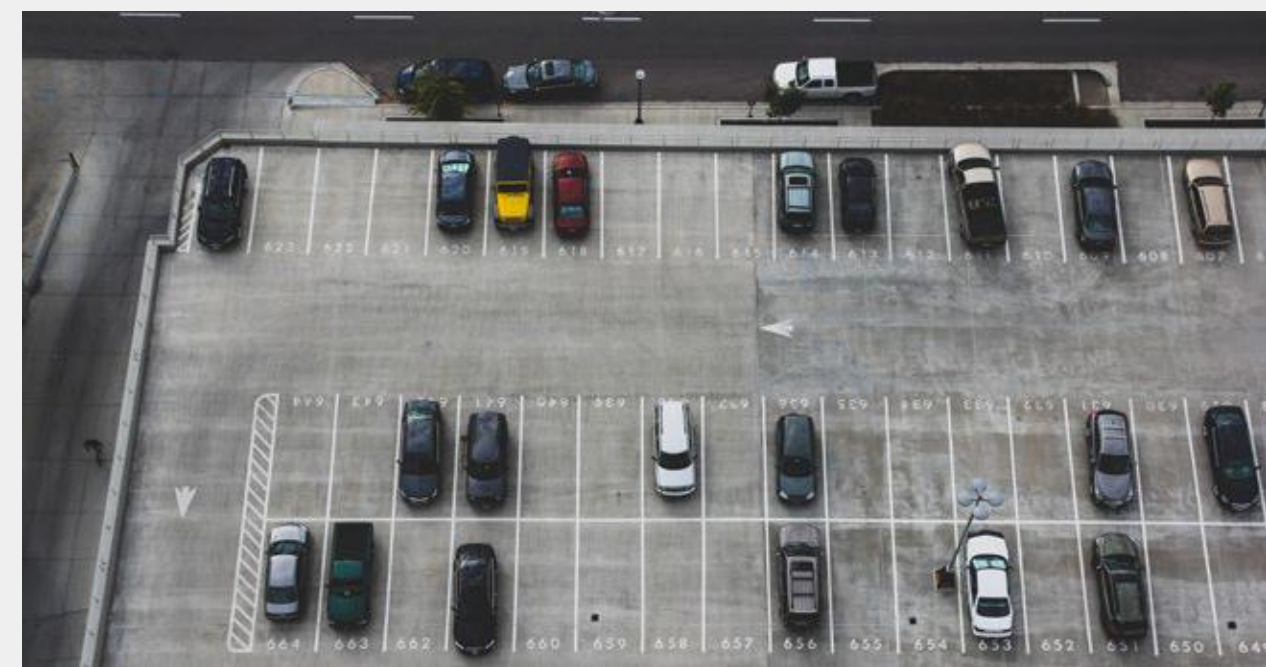


'Where do I park?' is a common question when driving into a city, anywhere in the world. Whether its as part of your daily commute to work or with your family during a weekend, the need to park securely in the city is unavoidable. This problem becomes acute as the number of vehicles entering a city keeps increasing while municipal authorities focus on greener city centers, reducing the number of parking slots available.

The user experience faced by drivers in most secure paid parking lots is anything but pleasant. Either you are forced to pay extra, fined for paying less or charged against another vehicle due to operator errors. "The result is a level of hostility and anger drivers have towards parking management companies which is possibly universal. No one ever seems to have a good experience in being able to park and pay conveniently for the service. The technologies used and the attitudes of parking management companies was decades behind what was needed to provide a better experience for drivers." This was the need which Erik Herje and his co-founders identified in 2019 as they founded Parkly.

“When we researched the market for parking solutions, we did find a couple of products which were more advanced. These did use automated number plate recognition, but their pricing models were very unfair to mid-sized parking-lot owners. So, for us it was about building a reliable, cost-effective solution for parking management using the latest image recognition technologies at a price-point where Parkly can also be profitable. Paid parking should be as simple as driving-in and driving-out with the system identifying the vehicle, calculating the fee, and processing the payment invisibly”, Erik added.

Parkly already has customers throughout Norway and will look to scale to new markets in 2021. Commenting on the advanced yet low-maintenance technology, Erik mentioned, “We only need power and the locations for our cameras. Nothing else - no local servers to manage! Five years ago, this technology was not available but now it is mature for commercial use. We can use Azure to run pure serverless applications able to scale horizontally and vertically.”



“I believe we are poised to see increasing adoption going forward as all our sales so far were through referrals. We have just initiated our focused marketing efforts and look forward to increasing our sales team in early 2021.”

Erik’s initial encounter with 99x was while working as a consultant for another company. “I realized that you knew how to build reliable applications and that’s why I chose to work with 99x again. In my view 99x is not a supplier, not even a partner but my development team to launch a successful product”. Having worked with multiple offshore providers in South Asia, Erik identified what was unique about the 99x culture. “I found out that my technical decisions were challenged. ‘Erik, did you really think this through?! When you are building a product, every person in the team has the right to speak and voice their opinion to create a better solution. I am so glad to have a team who care just as much about the solution as you do being the owner.”

“When my developers in Colombo started making fun of me, when they began to tell jokes back, that’s when I know that I have succeeded.”

“This is not something I have brought into my team but that you already have as the culture at 99x. This gives me a warm fuzzy feeling, even if I’m thousands of miles away.”

Erik stressed on the investment needed to build relationships, essential for an effective virtual team. “You have to make an even greater effort to bond with your co-workers offshore. That is possibly the most important driver for success. When my developers in Colombo started making fun of me, when they began to tell jokes back, that’s when I know that I have succeeded.”



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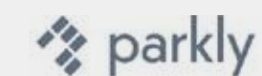
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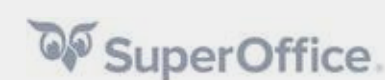
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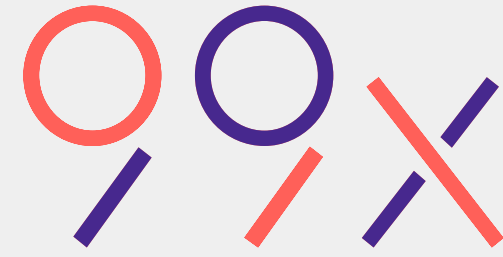
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