

Uniper

Case study





BSI spoke to Angela Betts, Information Research Officer at Uniper about how they've used BSOL to improve their standards management processes.

Instant Access to Standards Onsite and in the Field with BSOL

Uniper is a leading international energy company headquartered in Dusseldorf, Germany. With operations in more than 40 countries, it has approximately 12,000 employees. Its main operations include power generation in Europe and Russia and global energy trading from the Americas to Asia.

In the UK, Uniper employs around 1,000 people across 11 locations, and has a diverse portfolio including power generation, gas storage, trading and engineering services. Its Intelligence and Information Department provides technical data to employees. For standards information, the Department relies on BSI.

"We have 13 disciplines on site in Nottingham alone: electrical engineers, chemical engineers, civil engineers, metallurgists, integrity specialists, software developers and more," says Angela Betts, who handles information and intelligence services for Uniper. "Nearly all departments use standards at some point."

Since the 1970s, Uniper has had an onsite library in its Nottingham office that contained all the hard copies of standards that the company used. "We had a full-time person looking after the standards, loose leafing them and switching out old materials for updated versions," and, "they're not small documents. They took up an entire room."

"It was time-consuming, and the updates had to be done correctly. When people were going into the power stations to use those standards, it was important that they had the right information."

Uniper's library experienced a flood in 2016 that ruined many of the hard copies of the standards, so continuing to use and manage standards in the old way came with too much risk, as well as being too time consuming.

Making the easy switch to BSOL

Today Uniper has multiple locations and hundreds of employees. With increasing demand for standards, the hard copies have been phased out in favour of British Standards Online (BSOL). "The switch to standards online was organic" says Angela Betts, and "the demand for standards has grown. Fortunately, most people know what standards they need. It's so much easier to let them have a log-in and get the information themselves. As for the library where we used to keep the hard copies, it's now a meeting room."

"Without BSOL today, I don't know how we'd manage. We'd certainly need a bigger team...[and] the updating of standards is all done for us by BSOL!"

Uniper engineers use BSOL to obtain current standards when doing testing work at each of the stations, but they also refer to it for old, withdrawn standards. "For example, Ratcliffe Power Station was built in the 1960s," Angela Betts explains. "Our engineers need to know what standards the station was built to and the particular parts used. With BSOL they can get both the new and withdrawn standards online."

Ticking all the boxes at audit

Uniper recently underwent a quality audit and needed standards to show that they were compliant. "One of the areas the auditors always look at in our industry is standards," Angela Betts says. "We ticked all the boxes because we were able to show that we manage standards well. That's a huge, huge thing."

Angela Betts says that those audits were also the reason Uniper was getting interest in standards management from other power stations.

"If you've not got a system in place, proving compliance is quite difficult. BSOL ticks all those boxes."



Quickly finding the information needed

Ease of navigation is also key for Uniper, as information literacy varies from user to user:

“Fortunately, BSOL is intuitive, and it doesn't matter if someone hasn't used the system before, they can still find exactly what they want. That's really important.”

Many of Uniper's people are out in the field all day. “They don't sit in front of a PC or laptop,” says Angela Betts. “Giving them access to standards while they're out and about on-site via their smart phones is extremely useful. They can get on with their jobs without having to return to their office and do research.” However, sometimes users will still prefer support from the office:

“Engineers from out in the field often call us to quickly answer questions like, ‘Can you see what metal this should be?’ Or, ‘What calibration should this be?’ We can research their queries ‘on the go’. BSOL is perfect for that,” Angela Betts says. “And now we have more time to use standards to provide company and market intelligence to our customers who are trying to get into new areas and build customer relations, which is important to our growth. There's always more work to be done.”

Angela Betts concludes that BSOL ensured that anyone who needed standards can now have fast, easy access, which is critical to quality and productivity:

“This industry can't function without standards. BSOL centralised them and quickly became the best and most comprehensive way for everyone to have access to them.”



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