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Heidmar in dot.com boost

INTERNET-based vessel management services have been promoted to the status of a stand-alone business division at Heidenreich Marine, the product carrier operator based in Connecticut, writes Rajesh Joshi.

Fritz Heidenreich, who is to head the new division, claims the higher profile will help Heidmar attract independent shipowner clients to its range of online products.

Mr Heidenreich is currently the group's vice president for information technology.

A bifurcation unveiled by the group last week establishes a new parent company called Heidmar Inc, which will control two entities: Heidenreich Innovations Inc and Heidenreich Marine Inc.

Heidenreich Innovations will concentrate on rolling out the new QFleet.com product this July, and will also market the existing Q88.com and QBulk.com questionnaire generators.

QFleet.com is described as a "product that can provide shipowners, ship managers and charterers with a web-based program that calculates voyage results, maintains voyage statistics, keeps track of vessel positions and provides real-time voyage information".

Mr Heidenreich told Lloyd's List QFleet.com will integrate Heidmar's existing information technology products, which include a local network based voyage management system and eFleetwatch.com, its online variant.

"Being spun off as an independent IT division allows us the independence to market our product to the market at large," Mr Heidenreich said. But he admitted that the initial new business push will target Heidmar's pool partners.

He said Heidenreich Innovations had added employees recently and has a staff of six, including one in London.

The parent Heidmar has a staff of 60 spread in the US, UK, Singapore and Venezuela. The rump group will continue life as the subsidiary Heidenreich Marine Inc, which will continue to handle commercial management for all 50 vessels operated by Heidmar. The rump group will also continue as general agent for the Star and Dorado pools.

The reorganisation has necessitated a round of musical chairs. Timothy Brennan, the existing group's vice president and general manager of chartering and operations, will become president of the new Heidenreich Marine.

Per Heidenreich, now the president, will become chairman and chief executive of the newly-formed Heidmar. Charles Tammara, vice president and chief financial officer, will become executive vice president and chief financial officer of Heidmar.

Jerry Townsend, managing director of the Star Tanker Pool, will also become executive vice president of Heidmar Inc.

In a statement, Per Heidenreich described Mr Brennan and the junior Mr Heidenreich as the "next generation of Heidmar employees that will assure our progression to becoming a logistics company in the oil service industry".

The executive was travelling on Friday and could not be reached. But Mr Tammara dismissed suggestions of a "passing of the baton".