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## Vaisala Services: from technical support to strategic partnerships

Vaisala is making substantial efforts in its service organization and offering. Scott Sternberg was appointed as Director of Vaisala Services in June 2007, and a new and improved organization will start operations in January 2008. The goal is to provide you with superior support and services, according to your particular needs.

Vaisala Product Services provide easy access to professional support over the life cycle of our equipment. Such services include preventative and corrective maintenance, technical support and spare parts.

Vaisala Observation Services provide choices for environmental data generation and management. Services range from network operation and raw data

supply to strategic partnerships, where Vaisala can contribute significantly to your decision-making processes.

Vaisala Services are presented in the following two examples: Vaisala Product Services' unmanned sounding system case in Sweden and Vaisala Observation Services' partnership with healthcare solutions provider Medixine.

### **Product Services – Ensuring your equipment runs like clockwork**

The Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute, SMHI, operates two auto-sondes delivered by Vaisala in 1994. One is located at Sundsvall-Midlanda Airport and the other at Gothenburg Airport.

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Both autosondes are used for aviation and the national weather service.

To ensure the autosondes' data quality and availability, the SMHI has a Service Agreement with Vaisala. The agreement includes annual, 3-year and 6-year maintenance, 24/7 support, spare parts (dispatched within 24 hours), and remote diagnostics, which means that Vaisala service personnel are able to access the customer's systems remotely and provide support also off-site.

SMHI's Network Manager Hans Lund is happy with the service relationship: "Since we have only two sites and these are rather sophisticated systems, there is no point in trying to keep this know-how in-house. The cooperation with Vaisala system engineers is working well, and data availability is excellent."

### **Observation Services Information to suit specific requirements**

Environmental information can be refined to cater for the needs of particular audiences. Raw data can be processed, delivered and presented so that it turns into ready-to-consume, valuable information for the user. Health is a good example of an application where new innovative service concepts can be developed. Weather and environmental factors play a significant role in health issues.

Vaisala is partnering with Medixine Ltd., which combines expertise in healthcare, software technology and Internet services to e-enable healthcare and

wellness industries. Medixine supports the management of any and all chronic diseases and provides solutions for other healthcare monitoring and communication needs. The solutions are Internet-based and support both traditional and mobile terminals. Medixine has already delivered solutions in Finland, the UK and France and has now won its first projects in the USA. Partnership with Vaisala guarantees a global reach and an unbeatable combination of precise environmental data, healthcare expertise and software solutions.

Another important partner of Medixine is the UK Met Office, with whom they developed a revolutionary aide for people suffering from respiratory illness. Chronic Pulmonary Obstructive Disease (COPD) is a debilitating condition that causes suffering, breathlessness and coughing. Each year there are 100,000 COPD related hospital admissions in England alone. The UK National Health Service spends £600 million annually looking after people with COPD.

There is a link between cold weather and COPD, and symptoms often increase in the winter. This link forms the basis of a new innovative service based on environmental data combined with an automated software solution, which can be used with the existing communications technologies (e.g. landline and mobile phones). When the weather forecast indicates that the patients' risk of illness is high, the patients receive an automatic call from the Medixine system.

The call includes a recorded explanation of the expected weather conditions. The patients are also asked to respond to questions regarding their condition. The automatic voice-controlled system understands simple "yes/no" responses, and provides easy instructions for the user. As part of the same automation, their responses are then made available to their practice nurse or doctor for follow-up as required.

### **Significant cost-savings for the health service**

This interactive and highly automated "telemedicine" service results in significant cost-savings for the health service, as it helps to reduce the risk of admissions to hospitals. Trials in Cornwall, UK, during winter 2006/7 showed that the service helped reduce hospital admissions by up to 52% when compared with the previous year. This winter the service is being extended to cover up to 5,000 people in Cornwall and the Met Office is in the process of offering the service to other primary care organizations across the UK. ■

**Further information:**  
[www.medixine.com](http://www.medixine.com)