

Meter reading service opts for pixometer

German company replaces paper lists and carries out meter reading of more than 1,500 meters successfully

The same procedure as every year – during the reflective christmas time on top: Martin Schleger, managing director of Kosten-Management-Schleger (KMS), has to brief five employees in order to send them out all over to all the tenements assigned to his company. The first challenges comes with the arrival at the correct address: in dark basements with nooks and crannies the meter readers need to find only those meters that have to be read by them. Based on this the tenement management sets the billing for the running costs. The second challenge: A reference photo of the meter is demanded for documentation purposes. Experience shows that several approaches are necessary due to the disadvantageous conditions in the basements. But the subsequent data editing in the office proves itself as more costly than the actual collection of the meter counts: pager lists with the read meter values have to be checked page per page, handwritings have to be deciphered and the values have to be typed into the correct cells of the excel sheet – hoping that the meter readers have picked the values correctly. All this a work of three weeks.

After meeting pixolus at the industry fair E-world 2016, Mr.



Martin Schleger,
Managing director, KMS

Schleger seized the chance to simplify the meter reading process by using *pixometer*. Martin Schleger: „Having a reference photo directly assigned to the reading is one of the greatest advantages of *pixometer*. This makes a costly manual sorting obsolete. Collected values are available immediately online. We can track which meters have been read already. It is much easier for our meter reading personal to scan meters than to note them into paper lists by pen.“

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Digital year end readings 2016

Together with their team Mr. and Mrs. Schleger startet collecting approx. 1,500 meter values in November und December in numerous properties in Cologne and surrounding. The import of the meter list (excel file) for 2016 was taken over by pixolus. Henceforth users can upload meter and reading task lists via the *pixometer* webportal by themselves.

In order to keep process costs low KMS opts on renting hardware instead of buying. They use iPads because of their screen size. But as a consequence meter readers need to carry a torch with them for the darker corners as iPads do not contain a flashlight. Other *pixometer* users have gained

very positive experiences with iPod Touches as they are less expensive, offer wifi connection and contain a torch light. The result of KMS' two-week reading tour: The file with the reading results included correct meter values, reference photos, date and time information as well as employee notes. All further steps – the forwarding of the data to the tenement management and the energy suppliers – did not change, except of the fact that all was proceeded clearly quicker and a sharp documentation photo could be provided.

App vs. pen and paper

The meter reading process end of 2016 came with some essential changes for the meter reading personnel, too: while they had to pore over numerous paper lists to find the correct addresses and to note meter values in the correct row in a huge paper list, now the *pixometer* app shows them at a glance to with places they need to head up. Then it takes just a single click in the app to identify the correct meter via barcode and to scan the meter count in one go. In cases where the automatic scaring did not work the value could be entered or corrected manually without problems. Thus 100% of the data needed was available digitally at the end.

Results

A clean database consisting of meter number, meter type and digit count has proven itself as important during the



Angela Schleger,
Head of cost controlling

import step into the *pixometer* system. Angela Schleger: „Investing some time into the preparation of the meter and tour lists is definitely worth the effort. On-site collections of meter values will run all the better“. As *pixometer* will recognize meter types automatically as a new feature, readings are supposed to become much easier.

About pixolus

pixolus is a cologne-based startup that has developed *pixometer*. Interested parties may start immediately with using *pixometer*: After registration on <https://pixometer.io> meter lists can be uploaded easily to one's account. The readings can then be done by the same-named app *pixometer* (iOS, Android).