

Chapter 1

A Broader Perspective: Supporting Today's Communication with Historical Facts

Henning Morgen
A.P. Moller – Maersk

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Images: A.P. Moller – Maersk



Henning Morgen

Records Manager

A.P. Moller – Maersk

Henning Morgen was born in 1963. He has been employed by A.P. Moller – Maersk since 1998 and has worked in archives and records management, including email and digital asset management. Henning Morgen is a member of the Danish Archives and Records Management Society, of ARMA International and of ICA/SBL. He has worked in ISO committees on records management. Today, Henning Morgen is responsible for history documentation and communication.

A.P. Moller – Maersk Group

The A.P. Moller – Maersk Group is a worldwide conglomerate. We have a workforce of about 110,000 employees and offices in around 130 countries – with global headquarters in Copenhagen, Denmark. In addition to owning one of the world's largest shipping companies, we are also involved in a wide range of activities within the energy, logistics, retail and manufacturing industries.

A.P. Moller – Maersk was founded in 1904 by Mr. A.P. Møller. Upon his father's death in 1965, Mr. Mærsk Mc-Kinney Møller assumed the leadership of the Group, which has grown into a major international business. Mr. Mærsk Mc-Kinney Møller, today 98 years old, has played an important part also in formulating our deeply held values, which govern the way we deal with our customers, our employees and society in general.

A.P. Møller – Mærsk A/S, the parent company of the Group, is listed on the Danish Stock Exchange and has around 70,000 shareholders. However, the main shareholder is The A.P. Møller and Chastine Mc-Kinney Møller Foundation, which was established by Mr. A.P. Møller to ensure that his life's work would always be owned by parties that held a long-term view of the company's development.

The Maersk archives include historical information dating back to before the company was established in 1904. The archives are managed to document and communicate historical facts to reinforce A.P. Moller – Maersk culture, values and reputation.



Image 1 – Maersk Line Container

A Broader Perspective: Supporting Current Communication with Historical Facts

Henning Morgen
Records Manager, A.P. Møller – Mærsk

1. Introduction

This article aims to introduce the company and function I represent and two cases of supporting current communication with historical facts – or in other words; how we make use of the Maersk Historical Archives in day-to-day communication.

The headquarters of the A.P. Møller – Mærsk Group is located in Copenhagen, Denmark, but the activities of the business units take place at sea, on land, underground and in the air all around the world.



Image 2 – A.P. Møller – Mærsk Headquarters, Copenhagen, Denmark

“A.P. Møller – Mærsk A/S” is the company that is listed on the Copenhagen Stock Exchange. The majority of the shares in that company is owned by three foundations related to the founding family. The founder was Mr. A.P. Møller and his son, Mr. Mærsk Mc-Kinney Møller, who is 98 years old, is still the chairman of the foundations. Other than the foundations and Møller-family members, A.P. Møller – Mærsk A/S has around 70,000 other shareholders.

As for myself, I have been employed with Maersk since 1998 and have been responsible for archive and records management operations. This article will focus on history documentation and communication.

It is the objective of Group History Documentation to carry out research and to produce fact based information, aimed at a relevant audience. The purpose is to deliver timely and correct information to support the company's culture, values and reputation. Research is carried out based on requests from either the Maersk organisation (management and business units) or external parties. Requests range from, for example, assistance on establishing the Maersk history in a particular country (for management or marketing/communication purposes) to supplying information on historical vessels to interested parties, be they professional or private. A conservation programme secures the life of paper based records and our large photo, video and film archive is being digitised.



Image 3 – Maersk Museum

Internally history communication is done by means of presentations, tours of the A.P. Moller – Maersk Museum, articles in the in-house magazine as well as on @maersk (intranet). We have produced the history content on maersk.com (internet).

History communication with Maersk is changing. Before, requests for historical information usually came from top management and were focused on the history of the general company and central persons. Requests – and answers – focused on the past and had little relevance to today's business operations. Now, Group and business unit communication

departments are requesting information that may support their up-to-date communication needs. Requests – and answers – focus on today, building on yesterday.

To understand the needs of the communication departments, we have learned about their approach to communication. All communication has three dimensions; a topic, a business activity and a geography (country, region). Based on the research, any information from us should take into account these three dimensions.

The main customers for historical information in the context of business activity related communication has changed from top management to communication/HSSE (Health Safety Security Environment)/CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) departments, middle management in business units and anyone with customer and partner relations. To a lesser degree, employees and external contacts also contact us for historical information.

2. Case 1

Case no. 1 is about our environmental performance. The background for the case is a visit from shipping trade journalists, who focused on technical and environmental issues. From Maersk, two departments were involved: Maersk Maritime Technology and Group Relations. The research question was: Do we have something about the historical use of technical standards?

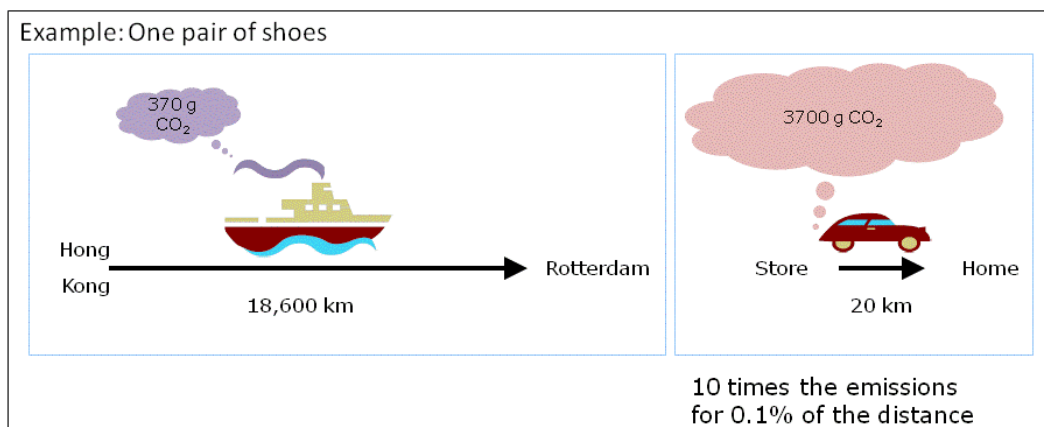
Image 4 – Maersk Line container vessel



Maersk Line (container carrier) works to meet our customers' expectations on low environmental impact from the transport of containers. For example, IKEA (furniture chain) have stated, that "Suppliers are also obligated to continuously strive towards minimising the environmental impact of their operations." Also, public awareness about the environment is growing and end-consumers (the customers of our customers) require transparency about the products they buy. Thus, focus on minimising environmental impact is a pre-requisite in the commercial market today.

Transport by ship is by far the most energy efficient mode of transport; transport by air, truck and rail cannot compete. For example: When a consumer drives by car from her/his home to the shopping centre to buy a pair of shoes, that consumer uses 10 times the energy compared to transporting one pair of shoes from Hong Kong to Rotterdam. But even that situation has been improved; Maersk Line has introduced "slow steaming", meaning that the container vessels slow down and use less fuel – and therefore significantly reduce energy consumption and environmental impact.

Image 5 - The carbon footprint of shipping is less than other modes of transport.



To answer the research question, it was interesting to demonstrate that Maersk has had focus on efficient transport for a long time. In order for us to understand today's focus on vessel energy consumption, we asked Maersk Maritime Technology to introduce the IT systems that measure and control fuel consumption onboard. With those in hand, we knew what to look for in the archives and were able to find a number of examples of vessel reports and instructions about the subject – we chose one from 1994 and one from 1962.

As requested, we were able to establish a link between now and then, and we were able to demonstrate a long-term focus on the issue. In their preparations, the journalists had concentrated on today and our information introduced a broader perspective on the management of the issue.

3. Case 2

Case no. 2 concerns local impact of our operations.

The background for the case was a theme about CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) in the Maersk in-house magazine. The research question was: Have we “done CSR” in the past?

Adding to the above background, Maersk has a mission to have global presence and to have local impact. So while we strive to expand business to all corners of the world, we should not forget to make a positive difference for the people and the administration in the places, we do business.

We chose to focus on Tanganyika Planting Company, a sugar plantation in Tanzania. We owned the company from 1930 to 1980 and, as production expanded, the number of employees grew to over 4,000. The company provided free housing for the employees and their families and in the 1970s the total population on the plantation counted more than 11,000 people.

Image 6 – Tanganyika Planting Company

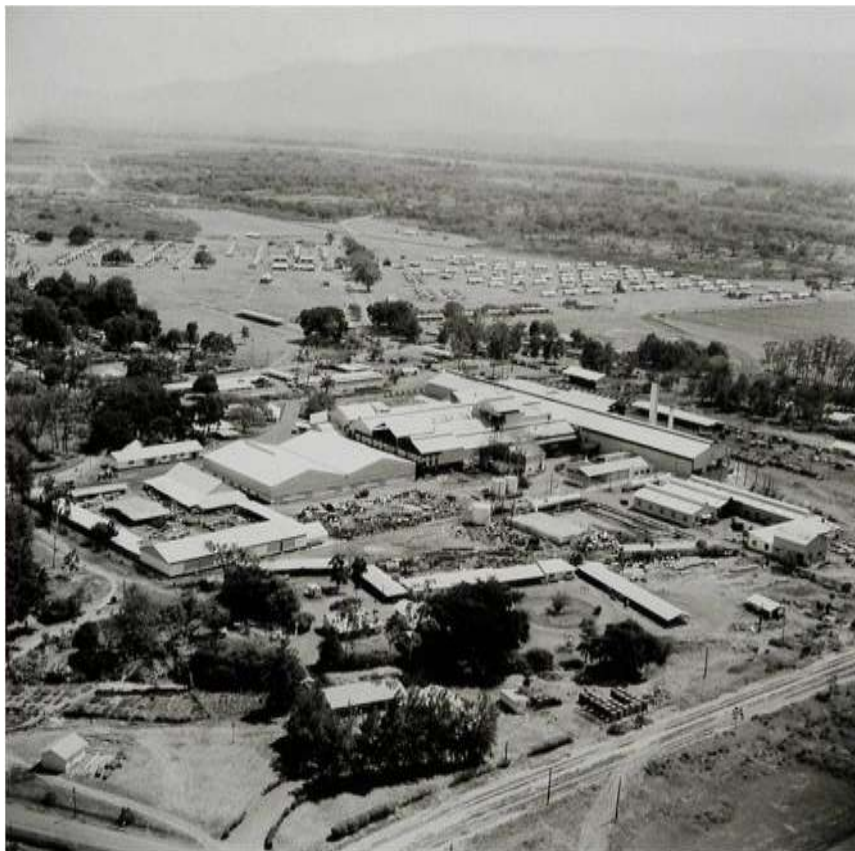




Image 7 – Tanganyika Adult School

Starting in the 1950s schools were established for children and adults. In 1960, a hospital was opened and it served not only the inhabitants on the plantation, but also the local population. Based at the hospital, a range of social services were introduced.

As requested, we were able to establish a link between now and then, and we were able to demonstrate a long-term focus on the issue. Instead of incorporating the information in the general article on CSR, the communications department asked us to write a separate piece based on the research findings.

Hopefully, these two cases have demonstrated how we make use of the Maersk historical archives in day-to-day communication.