

Case study

Ardmore's Director of Commercial Operations, Robert Gaina, talks about DA-Desk



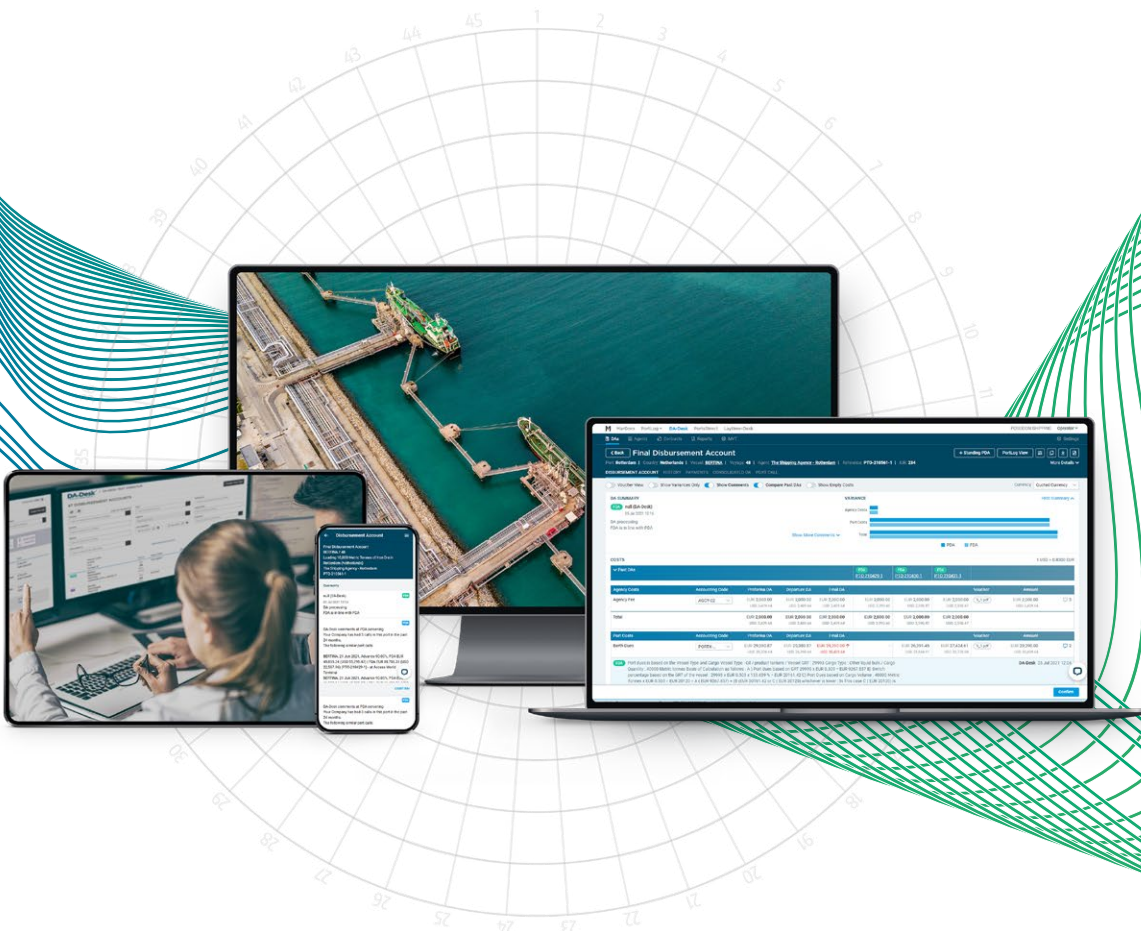
Ardmore Shipping

DA-Desk®



Robert Gaina From Ardmore Shipping kindly agreed to chat with David Hardy, Group Marketing Director at DA-Desk

Ardmore has been a customer of DA-Desk and Marcura for the last five years. They operate a fleet of 30 vessels, making approx. 800 port calls a year.



Collaborate to create a solution

David Hardy: Can you talk about working with DA-Desk for the last five years?

Robert Gaina: Firstly, I like my gadgets. Let me start with that – I'm a fan of technology, and that's essentially what DA-Desk is.

During the pandemic, we realised that technology could be used, particularly, to establish efficient flow automation. Crucial to the success of this solution, Ardmore is backed up by a DA-Desk team ashore who deal with all the intricacies of disbursement accounting, invoices, and agents - all over the world.

DA-Desk's team of professionals provide a sterling service to owners and operators. Our dealings with DA-Desk are a pleasure, with their system consistently prompt and accurate. We also use another Marcura product - Laytime-Desk - which has assisted us greatly in processing our laytime calculations. As a DA-Desk customer, we always feel heard, and have enjoyed a long-standing, collaborative relationship through which we're able to find effective solutions to the challenges we face.

"DA-Desk has a team of professionals who provide a sterling job to owners and operators."



Weekly validation and safety check reports

DH: Do you benefit from validation checks on other line items on DBAs?

RG: Absolutely. All these safety checks, barriers and parameters are exactly what we're looking for. Answers to questions such as 'What are your safety parameters?' and 'Was that process completed?' are invaluable to efficient operation.

The time report sent every week is also hugely valuable.

DH: When you say the safety checks, what do you mean?

RG: Because safety is not only about the human element, but also about the accounts and their safety parameters, this is an important factor in maintaining the success of each operation. As a publicly listed company, we conduct a rigorous audit report every year, meaning that an understanding of the pre-defined limits is crucial.

This collaboration with DA-Desk is of a great assistance to us, seamlessly providing us with cybersecurity and core business data through cutting-edge artificial intelligence systems.

"This collaboration with DA-Desk is of a great help to us because you provide us with the data around cybersecurity."



Reliance on compliance VMS Integration

DH: Are the payment compliance checks we do on your behalf helpful?

RG: Yes, absolutely — the compliance element is majorly benefit to us. Presently, compliance is crucial, and we rely completely on DA-Desk's scalability to conduct the required checks and action related notifications as needed. It's very helpful.

DH: What about DA-Desk's integration into your VMS?

RG: Integration nowadays seems like a buzzword, but it is true that if you don't have integration, you will have problems. With efficient chartering in mind, we have always prioritized integration, providing the right tools to customers from day one.

Our integration with Veson is working well, offering the unified platform required for DA-Desk to meet its objectives easily and efficiently.

"The compliance part is a major benefit."



Ardmore Shipping

Efficiency and savings Life at sea

DH: How do you financially quantify the benefits of DA-Desk?

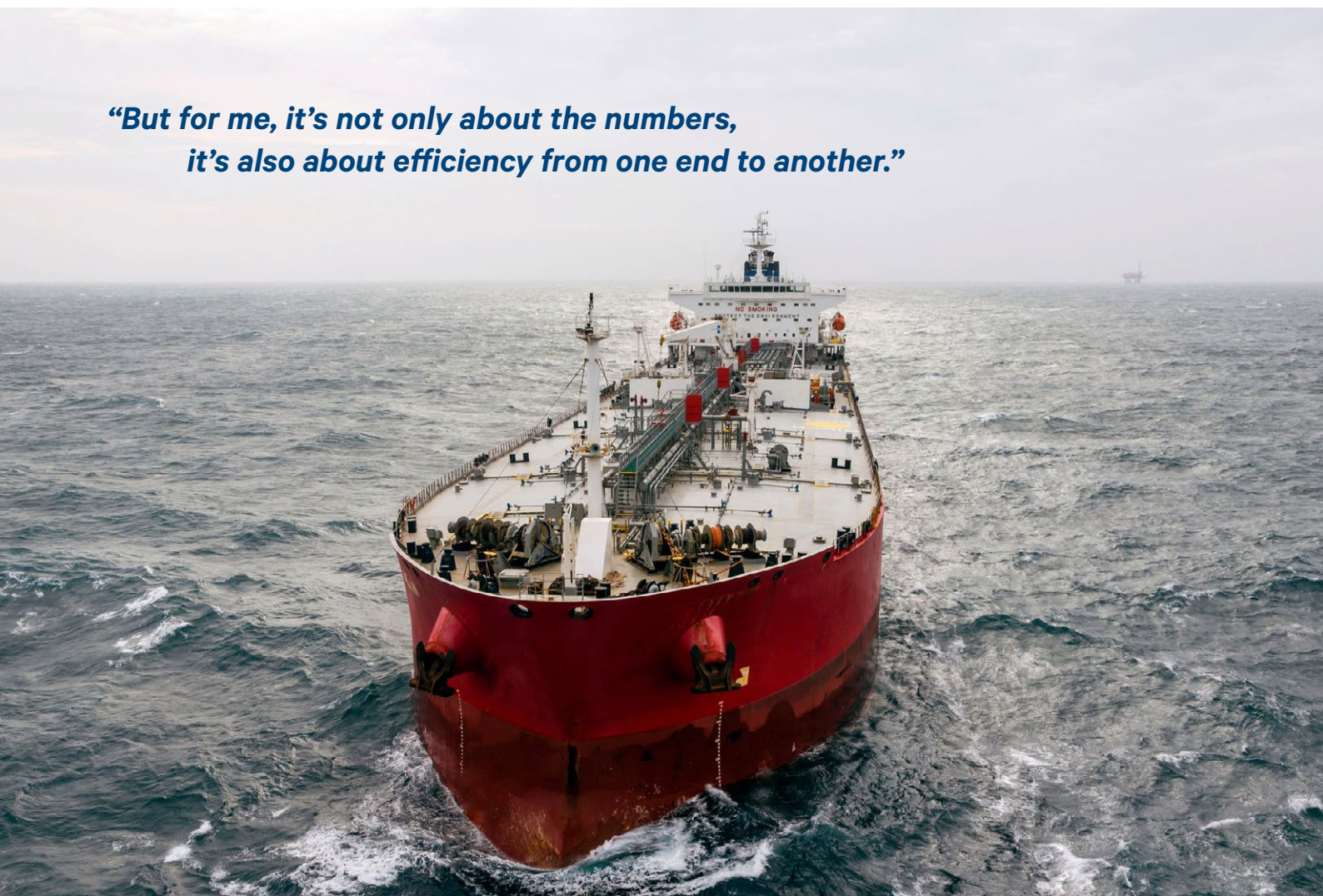
RG: There are two aspects here. One, is it efficient? And two, what is the cause of any inefficiency?

In short, I quantify it in efficiency. Since signing the contract with DA-Desk, we've compiled quarterly and annual reports, highlighting savings achieved. However, it's not only about the numbers for me, it's also about efficiency and quality of service from start to finish.

DH: What do you miss about being at sea?

RG: Probably the morning coffee, the silence you experience out in the middle of the ocean, and being alone with your thoughts. For those 15 minutes, you feel like the king of the world, right? That's what I miss the most, to be honest. I also miss the incredible sunsets and some of my past colleagues and crew — they were great teammates.

***“But for me, it's not only about the numbers,
it's also about efficiency from one end to another.”***



The history of Ardmore

DH: Can you tell us a little about the history of Ardmore?

RG: Ardmore Shipping is quite a young company founded back in 2010 by Anthony Gurney with the help of a private equity firm Greenbrier. In the very beginning we were based on a third-party model and agreement.

When vessels were employed on long time charters - two years with extensions or commercial pool management – everything was based on third-party agreements, and so there was no real in-house operation from a commercial standpoint.

When we went public in 2013, it created a unique window of opportunity and – with additional funding, we went from eight vessels to 25. Around the same time, we started new building programmes at MRC shipyards in Korea, including chemical tankers, Henleys and Dead weights. Today, we are operating over 30 ships in the Ardmore fleet.

In 2015, we found some of our vessels were delivered right from the time charter and this is when our Chief Commercial Officer decided to try spot operations because the markets were indicating this was the right time. In start-up mode, the first spot operation wasn't very commercial – there were no Banker or Agency contracts in place as we were essentially starting from scratch.

By 2018 Ardmore had completely transformed from full third-party management to a totally in-house operation, operating around 25 ships.

Headquartered in Cork, with offices in Houston and Singapore, we now offered global coverage and were more commercial for it.

This was around the time that DA-Desk came into Ardmore's picture. We were running a different voyage management system at the time but had heard feedback from the industry, and some partners, that DA-Desk was a viable solution. We quickly partnered and have been working together, successfully, ever since.

DH: Tell us a little bit about yourself?

I'm ex Master, having started out at sea back in 1998 as a cadet, going on to finish my studies in 2002. I got promoted to third officer and then to first officer where I went on to work with different companies, from Capital Ship Management to Champion Tankers. In 2010 I was promoted to Master Marina: my first command. I joined Ardmore Shipping in 2012, onboard Ardmore's Seamaster.

By 2015 the fleet had grown, and we were looking to move into Spot Operations. I accepted an offer to come ashore and joined the company in Cork. I remember landing at Dublin Airport from my home in Constanza, Romania - a summery seaside town on the Black Sea - and not being very impressed with the weather. 2015 was also a particularly bad year for weather in Ireland and I must admit to not settling in very well. In fact, I hated it at first, but thankfully now I love it!

An aerial photograph of a large harbor filled with numerous ships, including cargo vessels and smaller boats. In the background, a range of mountains is visible under a clear sky. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter.

DA-Desk[®]

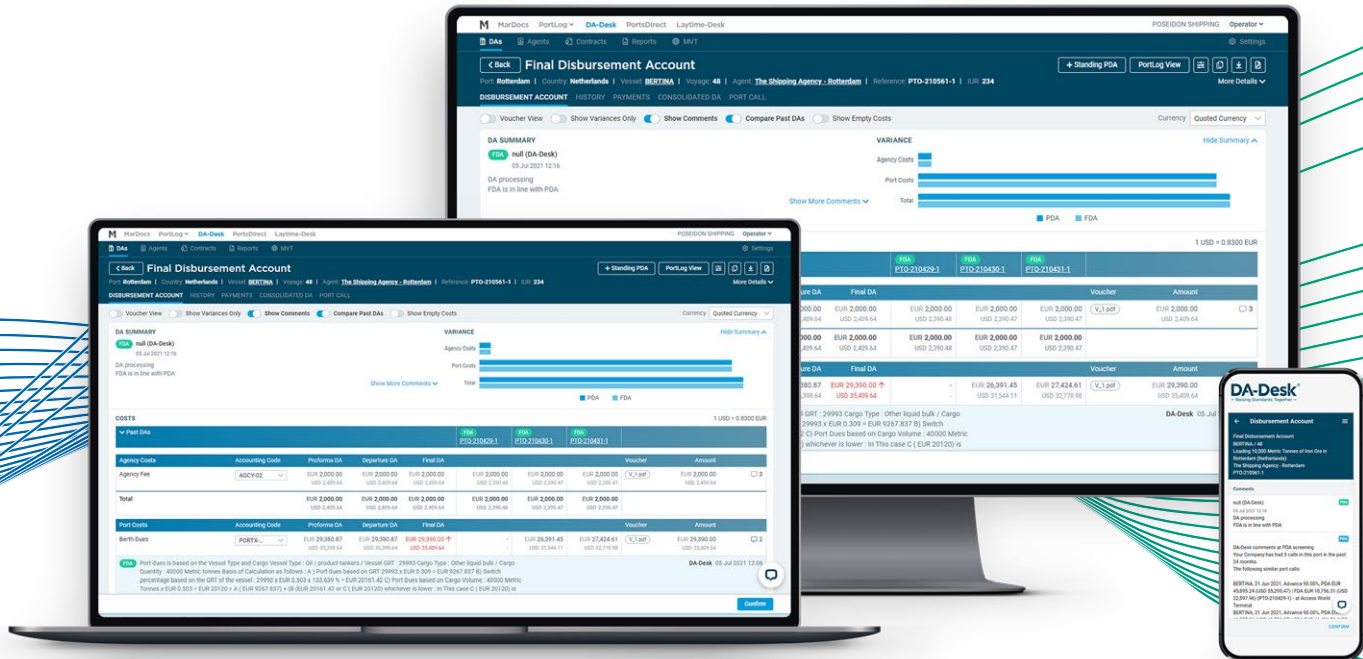
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Disbursement Accounts made easy

Digitise and automate
Save time and money
Improve compliance
Elevate your process

DA-Desk®



From agent appointment to voyage closing, from managing payments to maintaining regulatory compliance, we know just how complicated and costly juggling the demands of international port calls can be.

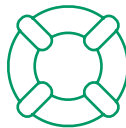
That's why we've spent over 20 years pioneering solutions, harnessing the power of digital shipping to open new possibilities:



**Driving
efficiencies**



**Saving
money**



**Mitigating
risk**

350+
Customers

200,000
Port calls/year

\$10bn
Payments/year

360
Team members

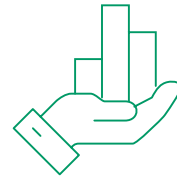
2001
Established

The four foundations of DA-Desk



Risk reduction

Mitigating exposure to legal, financial, transactional, regulatory and operational risks with due diligence, regulatory compliance, end-to-end transparency and IT security.



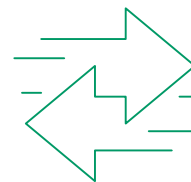
Smart operations

Spend more time making operational decisions by automating and streamlining lengthy manual and repetitive administrative tasks.



Reduced costs

Reduce operational costs with competitive supplier quotes, favourable FX rates, reduced bank charges and screening of all port charges.



Integration

Easily connect and share data in real-time with your VMS and accounting system.

An aerial photograph of a large harbor filled with numerous ships, including cargo vessels and smaller boats. In the background, a range of mountains is visible under a clear sky. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter.

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