

MÜNCHENER VEREIN: ELECTRONIC MAILBOX REDUCES PROCESSING TIMES

Following the discontinuation of the previous solution by the manufacturer, Münchener Verein insurance group had to evaluate and implement a new mailbox solution for the division of life insurance in a very short time. Not only did the existing data stock have to be migrated – at the same time, the scope of the system’s function and its architecture needed to be upgraded. Following careful evaluation, the company decided on the easily-configurable iNbox & eFile product from Macros. Its most convincing argument was the fact that the departments themselves can define and change the distribution rules. The solution by Macros Reply was gradually rolled out in the group: today, it is used in the Life Insurance, Health Insurance Application/Contract, Central Service and Health Insurance Claims Processing departments. The introduction of the Macros Reply product, staggered according to department, and associated paperless processing were implemented both on schedule and within the budget. The modern architecture enables the connection of the EMC Centera mass storage device and an easy adaptation thanks to administration and configuration tools. Following on the success of the Life Insurance department, these days the Health Insurance department is benefiting from a higher degree of transparency, faster processing times and much improved member service. At the same time, a solution for the acquisition, recognition and checking of data was integrated. The prepared expansion for dark processing (automatic checking) has been deployed productively in order to save the Health Insurance Claims Processing department time-consuming, manual tasks.



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Rainer Scholz, Project Manager DMS at Münchener Verein.

THE CUSTOMER

MÜNCHENER VEREIN Versicherungsgruppe – mutual insurance company: MÜNCHENER VEREIN Krankenversicherung a.G. and MÜNCHENER VEREIN Lebensversicherung a.G. have traditionally existed as mutual insurance companies. The around 1,250 employees in back office and sales administer over 640 million premiums. Insurance companies do not have any investing shareholders – instead, they have members. The insurance business is not operated with the primary intention of realising profits, but rather primarily for

CHALLENGES AND SOLUTION

In 2005, the provider of the DMS mailbox workflow solution at MÜNCHENER VEREIN at the time discontinued its services. The provider recommended implementing an upgrade to the coming system within one year. However, the decision-makers at MÜNCHENER VEREIN were hesitant. "This meant an extensive new development for us. Since we would have had to have started out right from the beginning, we took a good look around the market to see which document management systems were out there," recalls Helmut Sommer, Head of IT at MÜNCHENER VEREIN. Practically all renowned providers replied to our call for bids. Following the selection process, three companies were then invited to provide a test installation. "We wanted a workflow-oriented system. From an IT point of view alone, Macros Reply had a lot going for it, such as the modern architecture and the opportunity of using our EMC Centera mass storage device directly. Our old system and some of our competitors still work with performance-degrading jukebox emulations. Naturally, the ultimate decision for Macros Reply and the time of the introduction were down to the departments," is how the Head of IT describes the choice of the system.

FLEXIBLE CONFIGURATION OF DISTRIBUTION RULES BY THE DEPARTMENTS

MÜNCHENER VEREIN is a mutual insurance company. The policy-holders are also members, and recruit the supervisory bodies from amongst themselves. Maybe this is why the influence of the departments on decisions is greater than at other insurance companies. This also applies to the choice, the implementation and the configuration of the IT system. In a very modern interpretation of IT, the IT team headed by Helmut Sommer sees itself as a service department that provides the technical infrastructure for IT-supported processes in the departments. "In a workflow-oriented filing system with electronic mailbox, the distribution of the processes to the employees is of the essence. Depending on the process, the incoming documents have to be distributed according to

keywords, types of document, insurance numbers, addresses or, as in our claims processing departments, percentage. Our new filing system allows employees to freely define distribution rules, even during the introductory phase. These can even be independently changed during daily business without necessitating any action from the manufacturer or the IT departments," according to Rainer Scholz, Project Manager DMS from the department of Business Management at MÜNCHENER VEREIN. The turnkey solution by Macros Reply is extremely flexible in this point since it comprises three modules which can be configured in a plethora of ways: the electronic file, the mailbox and the rules and regulations. The mailbox solution comes with a special administration tool for the parameterisation of the distribution rules – this tool enables the department employees to make changes to the distribution rules. Almost all employees can define the rerouting of processes when they are on holiday or on sick leave, for instance. More complex changes, especially those which affect more than one department or graduated rules are the preserve of trained / authorised employees. The access possibilities are regulated in detail via an assignment of permissions.

PHASED INTRODUCTION

The introduction of the filing system by Macros Reply commenced with the migration in the Life Insurance department. The system went live back in October 2006 – with the migrated data and considerable additions compared to the former system. The roll-out took on the form of a "big bang" moment: on a predetermined day, all processes were switched over to the new system. The success motivated the management to use the new technical possibilities in other departments. The Application/Policy area in the Health Insurance department followed shortly after, in 2007. Once again, the project team switched over to the new system on a specified day. The Health Insurance Claims Processing department (HICP) followed in April 2008. In this case, a phased introduction was decided on. First of all, certain employees worked on all process stages using the new system, forming a "mini HICP", as it were. Following the success of a practical test, all other employees in the department were included within a matter of weeks. "The

various introduction scenarios were governed entirely by the requirements of the departments. Training and the switch-over were not allowed to disrupt business, and a phased introduction was recommended in larger departments. The system and the supervisors were also very flexible in this respect,” according to Rainer Scholz.

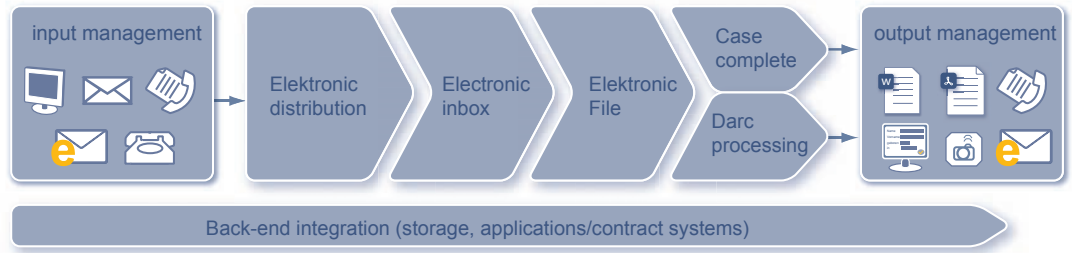


Illustration: Macros eWorkplace (Inbox & eFile) supports the entire supply chain

CONSIDERABLE REDUCTION OF PROCESSING TIMES

The change-over to the electronic file presented the departments with a huge challenge. This was particularly true for the members of the HICP department. “Until then, we worked with paper. The direct leap into paperless processing via a workflow-oriented filing system with mailbox was therefore unique – especially when you take into consideration the short time of the project. Unlike larger insurance companies, we also have to handle large projects with our internal resources, and ensure that the claims approval and payment to our customers are not delayed,” according to Rodrigo Perez, Project Manager in the HICP department. However, the leap has been worthwhile. The training concept was an important factor in its success – with experienced users from the test groups training the rest of the colleagues. The entire run, from the receipt through to the conclusion of a process, is now considerably shorter.

IMMEDIATE INFORMATION INSTEAD OF WAITING TIMES

For Rodrigo Perez, a further effect is crucial in the positive evaluation of the system: improved service quality. “Unlike processing using paper, all authorised employees have online access to the documents. This transparency enables colleagues in the internal service centre to quickly reply directly to customer enquiries regarding processing statuses. Earlier, they could only ask them to call back, and then had to spend considerable amounts of time on a paper trail in the records or carry out researches with the processing staff. The fact that

the members of the service centre can offer this depth of information means that the people actually working on the files are disturbed less often, more processes can be worked on, and Münchener Verein provides a discernibly better service for its customers.” And acceptance by the employees? The intensive cooperation of the departments set the course early on, since the employees felt involved. The clarity of the software and the more or less self-explanatory mailbox increased the level of acceptance. “Even during training, it became clear that we could provide good answers even to provocative questions and were able to reproduce all processes,” reports Rodrigo Perez. Suggestions for improvement put forward by the employees and departments were soon reacted upon. And thus the employees’ workstations are equipped with two large, swivelling flat screens. The larger working area increases clarity and makes it more comfortable to process the various stages.

INTELLIGENCE RIGHT AT THE COLLECTION STAGE

In the area of incoming documents, the insurance and DMS experts at Macros Reply were tasked with the conception and the selection of an intelligent collection solution. The objective was to considerably speed up the processes associated with document collection and to supply more documents for processing in the same time at excellent recognition rates. It only took 9 months from the conception through to the successful going live of

the turnkey solution with the recognition software smartFIX by Insiders and the mailbox and file system for HICP – an extremely short length of time for a project of such complexity, and respected in the industry. Macros Reply was responsible for the realisable conception of the turnkey system, coordination with the implementation partner, the seamless integration and the interaction between collection and mailbox solution. In mid-2008, day after day, over 16,000 pages were processed using smartFIX FREE FORM and over 12,000 using smartFIX PKV

CONTINUOUS PROCESS IMPROVEMENT

The roll-out of the file system at MÜNCHENER VEREIN is coming along at a good pace. Currently, the incoming post at an increasing number of branches is being diverted to the central collection and digitization point in Munich. Furthermore, MÜNCHENER VEREIN and Macros Reply are jointly planning the integration of new functionalities. "It is a great help that the consultants from Macros Reply are extremely specialised when it comes to the design, introduction and operation of the system, and that we simply clicked," Rainer Scholz is convinced. And so MÜNCHENER VEREIN and Macros Reply are now working on implementing extensive statistics functions. These will help

employees in the departments in the optimisation of the distribution rules in future. Additionally, the project team in the HICP department has planned the use of test software. This is being used to realise the fully-automatic allocation (dark processing) of medical services and insurance tariffs with their various reimbursement rates. The cessation of the checking and allocation work which has been done manually to date will make the processing process in the HICP department even quicker and more productive. The software integration for the cooperation of the test software and the mailbox is complete, with "live" use planned for November 2008. "We have an excellent reputation and a good market position in the industry. With the introduction of the mailbox and file system, we wish to consolidate this position by means of increased service quality and an improved cost structure," according to Rodrigo Perez. MÜNCHENER VEREIN has obviously succeeded in its endeavour.



As a specialist for document management systems within the Reply Group, Macros Reply uses innovative software to optimise its customers' business processes. Company-wide information and document management systems, archive solutions, process monitoring and mailbox / file systems from Macros Reply have won over numerous renowned customers.

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