Case study: Process optimization of document management

More speed for the workflow

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More speed for the workflow

Mikron Agie Charmilles AG with place of business in Nidau (Switzerland) concentrates on the development, production and purchase support of high-speed and high-efficiency processing centers with 3, 4 or 5 axes incl. automation, for the toolshop and die making as well as for the production of valuable parts.

The offer includes a complete range of milling machines. The customers come from most different industry segments like electronic, vehicle construction, whiteware, aerospace, engineering, medical engineering, toys, telecommunication, watches or also from the packaging technology.

> "Within only 8 weeks, we initiated a complicated archiving system, because our internal SAP systems should be combined afterwards"

The thing, everything gently revolved around in a factory for geer wheels at the beginning of the 19th century, nowadays counts among the fastest of their type: The high-speed milling machines of Mikro Agie Charmilles AG, Nidau.

The swiss company naturally accelerated the pase also during the realisation of the process optimation project with the Information Management Group (IMG).

Essentially accelerating of distribution and final control of incoming invoices

Within two months, the "Integra Archiv", an automated archiving system for the acceleration of the internal document workflow incl. invoice audit, was started.

"Within only 8 weeks, we initiated a complicated archiving system, because our internal SAP systems should be combined afterwards", Beat Ambros, leader Finances and Controlling at Mikron Agie Charmilles, remembers the deadline of the process optimization with the name Integra Archiv which was started in summer last year.

According to the words of the manager, within the engagement, it should arise a classical form of the paperless office with that the archiving, assignment, distribution and final control of incoming invoices could be essentially accelerated:

"Our processes formerly were simply too slow. Invoices came back, Cash discount could not be regarded because of long processing times of up to 4 weeks", Ambros calls the defining bureaucratic and economical braking facts by name.

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At a first glance a trivial intention of the former archiving, which during the implementation however did became a real challenge not only because of the tight time fence: In addition to the reorganisation of the once manually organised inhouse mail to digital format, the documents had to be marked with appropriate escalation levels as well as absence management after the capture for the correct forwarding. These were enough reasons for the team around Ambros to firstly look for a modern archiving solution for the workflow processes of the 200-headed company;

„ With the aid of the Integra Archiv we can again concentrate on our core competences, instead of engaging ourselves with the processing of bureaucratic processes for weeks"

Together with the Information Management Group (IMG) being an internationally active company, specialized in the implementation of innovative business models in processes and systems with head quarters in St. Gall (Switzerland), the crew around Ambros decided in favour of the biz²-product family of the inPuncto GmbH, Ditzingen (Germany), including the partial solutions "biz²Scanner", "biz²ScanServer" and "biz²Validator".

The ERP system SAP R/3 which is implemented company-wide at Mikron Agie Charmilles as well as Microsoft Office on the desktops functioned as a basis for the inPuncto product range. Here, Ambros: "The IMG in the past already gave proof of its established know-how at the area of process optimization in a similar project, while the SAP and Microsoft partner inPuncto with a convincing cost effectiveness was qualified for our specific requirements." Basis for the work of the IMG is Business Engineering, a systematics that was developed by the consulting with the university St. Gall. Through numerous projects, it stood the test through analytical and engineer-wise procedure.

The starting shot then did not tarry for a long time: "SAP R/3 should certainly be kept as leading system with its entire business logic, the SAP Business Workflow as well as the management and authorization concepts and should be complemented with the possibilities of the scanning tools for the document workflow", Pascal Rueff, Senior Consultant at the IMG says. It includes a fully automated scan procedure of single invoices as well as of batched papers in the background and the add-on analysis and provision of documents for appropriate advisors of the concern via SAP workflow (incl. email notification). In addition to that, the biz²Validator allows to make corrections within receipts or to mark single invoices with comments/annotations.

Manager Ambros explains the procedure by a typical example: "Invoices are now checked for known SAP characteristics during the scan procedure. This includes information about the supplier or else if it is about an invoice of the inland or foreign countries". These data, the leader Finances and Controlling continues, afterwards can be already used for a fist control and specifically allocated to specific group of people or advisors.

inPuncto solution works on the basis of "intelligent" algorithms

The highlight: In opposition to conventional procedures with Optical Character Recognition (OCR) that have to look for information at predefined positions on the sheet, the inPuncto solution works on the basis of "intelligent" algorithms: "It is searched for syntax, terminologies and logics so that the sales tax number or the final amount can be written at any position on the sheet", Dr. Frank Marcial, CEO of the inPuncto GmbH complements: "During the first scanning, the system automatically identifies about 70 percent of the contents, while up to 88 percent of the information can be accurately assumed after firm-specific complements", Dr. Marcial figures the first successes after only eight weeks of project duration. After a final validation through the finance advisor, finally, the invoice can immediately be booked provided that the system did not identify any price or amount distinctions.

Résum Ambros: "With the aid of the Integra Archiv we can again concentrate on our core competences, instead of engaging ourselves with the processing of bureaucratic processes for weeks". An invoice process can now usually be managed already at the day of receipt.

Learn more: Process optimization in SAP & workflows

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