

## ECM as a Service: eGovernment Platform for the Whole of Austria

The Austrian Federal Computing Centre (officially known as the Bundesrechenzentrum) offers OpenText-based ECM services to the country's public administrations and ministries

### Industry

Public administration

### Customer



### Business Challenges

- Electronic processing only on the data page
- Risk of losing the documents
- Process inefficiencies for administrations and citizens

### Business Solution

OpenText ECM Suite

### Business Benefits

- Location- and system-independent access to documents
- Consistent electronic processing
- Comprehensive eGovernment platform
- Higher process productivity
- ECM as a service in the ASP model
- Cost-efficiency in output management

As long as information has to pass through the strongly document-loaded administration processes on paper, eGovernment will stay a mere vision. In 2004, the Bundesrechenzentrum (BRZ) in Austria therefore decided to implement a uniform ECM platform for all supported applications and systems and to offer their management clients these functions as a shared service. In the course of this, OpenText got the chance to become the ECM vendor since it offers an attractive price-performance ratio in addition to its wide range of functions and scalability of its ECM-Suite, with considerable references in the SAP environment.

Bundesrechenzentrum GmbH is the ICT service provider of the Austrian public administration. Its core competences are outstanding IT know-how and extensive knowledge about the special needs of the public administration, which make it the leading eGovernment partner. The company's role is to act as an integrator between the processes of public authorities, the developments of the IT industry and the operators' needs as well as to support the alignment and standardization of the public authorities' ICT. With its 1,200 employees and a total annual (2008) turnover of 226 million Euros, the BRZ successfully develops and provides eGovernment services for federal ministries, universities, social security providers and public organizations among others. The BRZ is in fourth place in the national ranking of IT service providers (IDC 2007) and runs one of Austria's largest computing centres. Furthermore, it has the most up-to-date hardware and software as well as its own parallel computing centre, which provides the highest system availability, operational safety and data protection. The BRZ deploys approximately 320 IT processes, equips 1,200 locations throughout Austria with infrastructure and serves about 30,000 workplaces.

Administrative procedures are not determined by data but rather by the documents that run throughout the relevant end-to-end process. "For this reason our supported administrative processes were unusually marked by parallel procedures, which had to be synchronized manually from an electronic data process and a document process on paper. This not only resulted in inefficiencies, but also obstructed the vision of eGovernment, which enables our citizens to search for relevant files on the Internet", explains Robert Grim, Head of New eGovernment Services at the BRZ.

### Thinking in long timeframes and huge dimensions

Typical examples for this were the land and commercial registers of the Austrian Ministry of Justice. They had been managed digitally since the 1980s and could be viewed on the Internet after payment of a fee since 1999, but the paper documents were stored at each court house, the only places where they could be viewed. Besides huge costs for archive maintenance, there was also a risk of losing the original documents. Even as the pilot study for an electronic





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filing system was developed, BRZ received ever more inquiries from administrations on if and how documents may be managed and stored electronically. “It quickly became obvious to us that we could no longer think only in project-related terms; rather, we had to build a scalable ECM solution that could meet the increasing demands of our customers,” states Grim.

At the beginning of 2004, therefore, a tender for ECM software and storage hardware was issued. The main criteria for selecting the best solution were not limited to cost/benefit ratio and functional scope, but also included performance, integration ability and scalability. A further criterion was the management of metadata. Since the scope of application of the company’s customers is versatile and characterized by both standard solutions and a wide variety of individual solutions, which are perfectly customized for process requirements of, for example, finance management—mostly in the form of reliable and efficient mainframe applications. The expenditures needed to handle the metadata management of documents by amending this application as well would have been considerable. “That’s why we were looking for a comprehensive ECM solution, not only an archive. Furthermore, this put us in a position to grant the users direct access to documents regardless of the process,” Grim points out.

Against the background of the project dimensions, suppliers offering only archive solutions and smaller businesses soon dropped out of the evaluation procedure. Eventually, two big suppliers were pitted against each other. OpenText’s successful and comprehensive SAP projects contributed to the centre’s decision to choose OpenText since SAP dominates among the standard applications of the BRZ’s clients. Together with its storage partner HP, OpenText could also offer a favourable cost/benefit ratio.

### **Commercial and land register showcase project**

After the decision was reached in the middle of 2004, everything went very fast. The concept for the electronic commercial register was created in August and September 2004, and the pilot and test systems were implemented simultaneously. This project was able

to be completed by the end of the fourth quarter together with the interface development for the connection of the register application and the electronic archive for notaries, which had already existed. Already in January 2005, the archive could be viewed online. Since then the archive, may be accessed online via a register application and needs a memory cell of one terabyte. Only fifty percent of the new documents are now sent to the courts in hard copy to be scanned; the remaining fifty percent are already being delivered electronically.

“Because we can guarantee for many years the authenticity of the electronic originals, the documents may not only be viewed but also exchanged, as is the case with the archive of notaries and lawyers. Besides lower costs for archive maintenance, there are much greater process efficiencies concerning the land and commercial registers—both for companies and private individuals. Now that the documents can be viewed anywhere, administration costs are reduced and Austria as a business location is strengthened as a whole”, Grim explains. Its solution to digitize the documents of the Austrian Ministry of Justice was a finalist for the European eGovernment Awards of 2007 and was awarded the Good Practice Label 2007.

### **Platform for eGovernment**

Since 2005, the BRZ has expanded its OpenText-based ECM infrastructure to become an eGovernment platform for seven individually developed administration applications. Their document volume has reached five terabytes by now. The ECM platform spans six different SAP applications for the Austrian Ministry of Finance, several Austrian universities, and the BRZ itself. Its ECM portfolio also contains several OpenText Content Server systems for managing, searching and legally archiving emails, projects, contracts and order management content at the Finance Ministry and the BRZ. In order to find and access documents from various data sources (internal systems, the Internet, ECM systems) they enhanced their OpenText Content Lifecycle Management and Document Management systems with the federated search capabilities of OpenText Federated Query Server.



The individual solutions were integrated into the platform by using the OpenText standard interface. The metadata management is the component for Transactional Content Processing from OpenText ECM Suite. This allows the full automation of metadata extraction and management, whereby application-specific metadata sets are produced. Among others, auditors will benefit from this platform. They will find an archiving structure that is specifically customized to their needs and which they use for their audit reports and other documentation. Once they are put there, the metadata are extracted in the course of the archiving, so the documents may immediately be retrieved for the next audit many years later.

### ECM as a service

The realization of each of the projects took between a few weeks to several months. In addition to the ECM team, the relevant application managers of the BRZ were involved and took on the development of the application service provider. "Since the first project started in 2005, our expenditures have been limited because we implemented a scalable infrastructure from the beginning. Due to this, we are able to approach our customers and promote the advantages of the ECM services for their process landscape. Indeed, this has been very well-received," says Grim. "The transparency of costs of our ASP model proved especially popular because customers pay only for the services they actually use without having to worry about the associated IT costs."

However, the ECM platform of OpenText not only results in a higher process productivity, but also in cost savings within the BRZ itself, which in turn are passed on to the customers. A prime example for this is the field of output management. The BRZ prints and delivers more than 30 million documents on order of administrations. Because documents have to be reproducible in their original layout for many



years, not only the document contents but also the corresponding templates are kept within the mainframe applications in which the layouts are produced. "On the other hand, it is much more cost-effective to archive the originals without amendment on the ECM platform after they are produced in the application. This simplifies the mainframe applications considerably and reduces the administration costs accordingly. Admittedly, the project we started with the Finance Ministry for this purpose will take several years including the redesign of the applications, but the potential for savings associated with it is immense. Both we and our customers benefit equally," reports Grim.

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