

Industry

Asset Management

Customer

MEAG

Business Challenges

- Reduced risk of error or loss
- Interface manually between ERP system and files
- Increase transparency of processing to more efficiently provide information to customers
- Optimise organisation and processes via a Modern Real Estate Management system

Business Solution

- OpenText ECM Suite for SAP® Solutions
- OpenText Archive Server
- OpenText Renditions
- OpenText Production Imaging

Business Benefits

- Centralised storage of tenant and property information from a wide range of systems, including ERP, in central electronic files
- End-to-end electronic support of the documentation processes
- Single source for all departments to simultaneously access information
- Process-oriented, inter-departmental, and parallel processing of customer enquiries
- Definitive and complete information to customers
- Enhanced process efficiency and quality, improved customer service, less risk

MEAG Switches to Electronic Files with OpenText

Overview

Tenant and property files are an essential element of the business conducted by the regional companies within MEAG's real estate division. That is why the group saw the integration of these files into its commercial processes in August 2006 as a logical step towards more efficient workflows, and also higher quality, better service, and less risk. In OpenText, MEAG found an Enterprise Content Management (ECM) specialist able to deliver the necessary integration into the process and IT environment.

MEAG is the asset manager for the Munich Re and ERGO Insurance Group. With managed assets of approximately EUR 182 billion, it is one of Europe's leading asset management companies. MEAG manages real estate assets worth EUR 13 billion. The regional companies provide efficient local property management for the German real estate sector. More than a million documents—contracts, correspondence, offers, and plans—are held in the approximately 25,000 files managed by the three MEAG regional companies in Munich, Düsseldorf, and Hamburg. Despite the best file management procedures, it is costly to find, copy, and distribute paper files. Faster access to documents would be helpful, and every department also needs to work with the same version of a document. If they do not, they cannot give definitive or complete answers to customer queries, and follow-up questions and resubmissions proliferate. There is also a risk of loss, either temporarily where documents are filed incorrectly or completely where they are inadvertently destroyed, or possibly damaged by fire or water.

Modern Real Estate Management

The aim of the Modern Real Estate Management strategy drawn up in 2005 was to optimise internal processes and organisation structures and to upgrade the supporting IT systems. The main objectives of this initiative were not only more efficient processes but, above all, better quality of service to customers. Computerising the files offered many benefits: the information would be more up-to-date and quicker to access, and there would be fewer errors in distribution. It would enable different cases to be dealt with at the same time by the relevant departments and provide secure protection against loss. The files could also be checked automatically for completeness. Well-defined workflows would provide transparency across departments over the current status of a document and enhance the quality of the processes. This would speed up these processes and improve customer service, with staff having immediate access to all the necessary information to provide definitive answers to queries.





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Thomas Lange,
Project Manager, MEAG

Depth of integration is crucial

In September 2004, MEAG decided to hold and process all documents electronically in the future. For legal reasons, certain documents, such as contracts, also have to be held in paper form, but all other documents are to be stored in electronic format only. To avoid replacing the previous practise of alternating between PCs and paper files with a range of different applications and user interfaces, MEAG looked for a professional document management provider with a solution that could integrate seamlessly into the existing SAP® RE-FX (Real Estate) system—in the back-end and the front-end.

“We wanted the front-end integration to make it as easy as possible for staff to make the changeover. The ideal choice seemed to be an ECM solution running within the familiar user interface, with the same look and feel for users as the main application. Any IT project is primarily a question of effective management, and user acceptance is the key to success,” according to Thomas Lange, Project Manager at MEAG. “OpenText was able to demonstrate this deep level of integration when we were evaluating suppliers and products. The OpenText solution is part of the main system.”

Another factor in the success of the project has been the involvement of the relevant specialist departments right from the start. This soon shows how far a software provider is able to satisfy the wishes and needs of the users with its own solutions. OpenText met this requirement too. The solution fits into MEAG’s long-term IT strategy and vision. All the document management applications currently deployed have used the ECM components from OpenText for many years. The IT project management approach used at MEAG has enabled the advantages of the OpenText products to be built

right into the application systems, directly benefiting the users and the company.

The indexing scheme and the file structures at MEAG were exactly reproduced in the OpenText ECM Suite for SAP® Solutions that was used. The second component of the OpenText implementation is the OpenText Archive Server, where the documents are physically stored. The document metadata is held in the ERP system, although it is managed by OpenText. OpenText Renditions are used to make any changes to the format of the documents that the particular task may require. Documents received in paper form, such as letters from tenants, are digitised using the OpenText Production Imaging solution and stored in the OpenText archive.

A workflow has been implemented in parallel with the OpenText solutions, providing standardised routing of paper documents for all regional companies. Outgoing correspondence created in the ERP system is automatically saved to the appropriate file when printed, including statements of ancillary costs, rent adjustments, and reminders. The whole project, in which the future users (commercial and technical property managers, staff in the property group, and the directors of the regional MEAG companies) were involved from the outset through representatives on the project team, was split into three parts. The six-month design phase was followed by six months of implementation, at the end of which the specialist departments acceptance-tested the solution. The third and final phase was dedicated to user training, which lasted one week per location. OpenText staff then oversaw the roll-out. As requested by MEAG, this was carried out consecutively at the three German locations and completed successfully in March 2007. Around 150 users are now using the OpenText solutions in live operation.



Support for essential core processes

MEAG handles five different file types with the OpenText solutions: tenant files to manage existing tenancies, offer and applicant files for new tenancies, and commercial and technical property files dealing with the management and operation of the leased properties. These support essential core processes of the regional MEAG companies.

Now, when MEAG receives a tenant enquiry concerning a statement of ancillary costs and a renovation issue, the letter can be simultaneously passed on to be dealt with by all relevant departments. Processing notes, progress, and status are transparent to all staff involved. They can then give an informed and binding response to a telephone query from a tenant. This results in greater process efficiency and improved customer service.

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