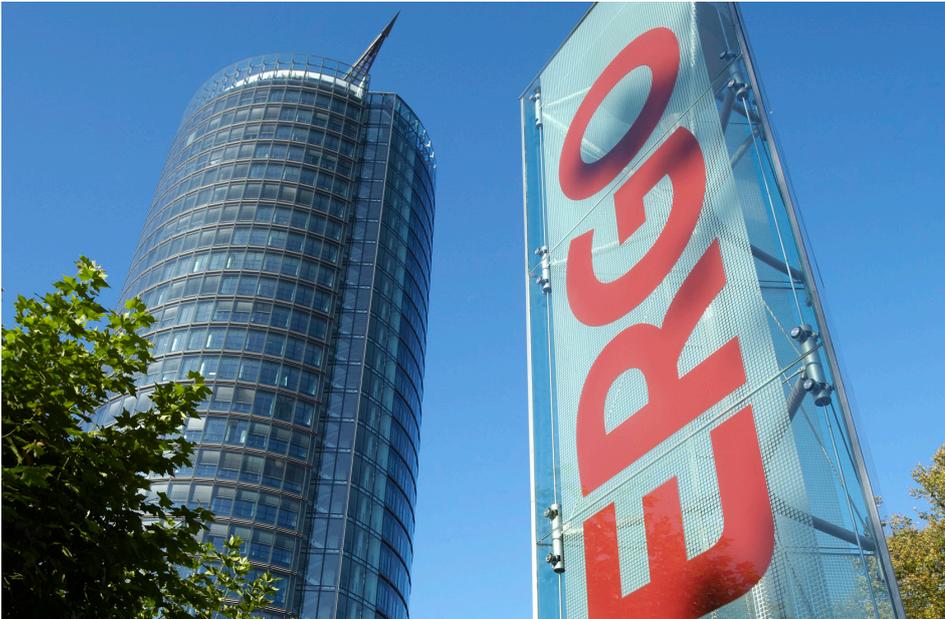# ERGO STREAMLINES ITS OUTPUT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM USING ICON'S SOFTWARE SUITE

With icon's solution, document processes are simplified and accelerated group-wide

FLEXIBLE SUPPORT FOR ALL OUTPUT CHANNELS

In icon Suite, document creation and output are separated: The document creation process can be either automated via standardized interfaces and in line with defined process flows or interactive via the integrated Editor.

The documents are saved in a document pool and are only formatted immediately before document output, optimized for the respective output channel.

ERGO, one of the major insurance groups in Germany, used since the early 1990s, among others a proprietary, Word-based software solution for creating texts and processing documents. However, this solution proved to be increasingly outdated, error-prone and inflexible. It could not be expanded and its administration was time-consuming. Therefore, the management decided to introduce a modern, high-performance and future-proof document creation system. The new solution had to include features such as the flexible integration of charts and images as well as the creation of documents in different formats from within the text system, e.g. emails for internal correspondence or, as a future project, De-Mail (the German E-Government communications service) for the expansion of digital customer communication.

SEARCH FOR A NEW CORRESPONDENCE SOLUTION

In order to find the optimum solution, other applications already in place at ERGO were first examined. The next step was to obtain references from other market participants. The insurance companies contacted all rated icon highly.

In addition, ERGO evaluated market research conducted by consulting companies and analysts and subsequently performed a Proof of Concept. During this process, the field of bidders was narrowed down from 30 to five before ERGO decided to opt for the standard software suite from icon Systemhaus GmbH and its modular enterprise solution for creating and formatting interactive, process-integrated and automated documents, called icon Suite.

DECISION IN FAVOUR OF ICON

According to Peter Kleinschmidt, Head of Department IV-Coordination of Central Systems at ERGO Insurance Group, the decision was an easy one because "the presentation of icon's solution was very convincing, self-explanatory and clear. We were looking for an expandable application which can be employed throughout the entire group for text processing – a one-stop solution – and that's exactly what icon offered us."

"All our technical and business requirements were fulfilled because icon quickly understood what we needed. And what is more, the new document creation system can be ideally integrated into our existing IT architecture."

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ergo Insurance Group is represented in more than 30 countries worldwide. It offers a comprehensive range of insurance cover, pension schemes and other services. In its home market Germany, ERGO ranks among the leading providers across all segments. 50,000 people work for the Group, either as salaried employees or as full-time self-employed sales representatives. In 2011, ERGO recorded a premium income of 20 billion euros and paid out benefits to customers amounting to 17.5 billion euros.

Meanwhile, about 1,500 employees of ERGO already work with the icon solution to process the insurance group's entire correspondence. In doing so, they use about 20 different templates and around 250 different document formats.

The following icon modules are employed: icon/Dialog,/Compose,/Server, /SmartAdmin and /Flow. The IT architecture comprises a frontend ThinClient/Citrix, a backend Windows server as well as MS-SQL as a database server.

THE FIRST STEPS IN THE PROJECT

The aim was to gradually replace the old ERGO software with the modular and scalable icon solution, both for individual and mass mailings. The applications have graphical user interfaces, are easy to operate and save time and money. They can be easily integrated into existing IT architecture, avoiding any media discontinuity. The management of ITERGO gave the go-ahead for implementing the project in the middle of 2010. In early 2011 the project was initiated in the field of individual letter creation by gradually migrating the documents and text components to the new icon solution. During this process, all letter

Peter Kleinschmidt, Head of Department IV-Coordination of Central Systems ERGO Versicherungs-gruppe AG

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formats were revised and checked for their adaptability and comprehensibility to live up to the group's guarantee to make its texts understandable. As a result, a significantly reduced number of completely new document templates was created, which already made the users' work easier even in the run-up to the project.

As of December 2011, industrial insurance was the first field to go live as part of the pilot project. The implementation process was successfully completed by February 2012, to be gradually followed by other complex insurance fields. While in April 2011 approximately 15,000 documents were processed using icon Suite, this figure had already climbed to around 37,000 letters in July 2011. The number of documents being processed with icon Suite continues to rise. The documents cover the entire range of correspondence, such as notifications of claim, insurance policies including enclosures, forms, changes of address, etc. in about 20 different templates and some 250 different formats.

Around 1,500 ERGO employees were working with icon Suite by mid-2012. "The complex way documents were previously created and formatted with our old software didn't make things easy for icon Suite. However, the icon solution mastered the challenge," says Peter Kleinschmidt, Head of Department IV-Coordination of Central Systems.

CONCLUSION AND FURTHER PROJECT STEPS

"We are very happy. Thanks to icon's solution we were able to examine our entire output management from scratch and replace or enhance applications to set the right course from the very beginning and implement improvements across the whole group. Now we have a future-proof document creation system," is Peter Kleinschmidt's positive assessment of the project.

"The solution and the service as well as the price/performance ratio have convinced us. We would like to thank icon for the good cooperation based on mutual trust."

The creative collaboration established between the ERGO and icon project teams even culminated in the joint development of the icon/Flow and /SmartAdmin modules.

THE COOPERATION CONTINUES

As a next step, the processing of mass mailings is to be switched over to icon Suite between 2012 and 2014. This change will initially be implemented with legal protection insurance documents. First tests have already been successfully carried out and showed that the solution can also handle mass documents. By the end of 2012, the proprietary previous solution will have been completely replaced.

In addition, ERGO and icon are still discussing potential new needs and innovative solutions for the future.

LEADING COMPANIES TRUST ICON

- 70% of Germany's 30 largest insurance companies
- Europe's largest direct bank
- Europe's largest automobile club

WHY ICON?

icon Systemhaus GmbH has been offering comprehensive customer correspondence solutions to leading insurance companies, banks, utility companies and industry since 1995. icon Suite covers the complete range of high-volume, individually oriented, interactive and process-integrated functionalities and is also used for the most sophisticated types of customer communication.

icon Suite is far more than just a solution for your correspondence. The icon community is a strong network of outstanding experts. It consists of customers, partners and specialists who work closely together to continue to improve icon Suite. In its Stuttgart headquarters, icon Systemhaus GmbH employs more than 100 highly qualified specialists.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR SOLUTIONS?

Simply call us at +43 1-99 460 6607 or send us an Email at info@iconinternational.eu.
We kindly inform you personally about all the possibilities and advantages of our solutions.

www.iconinternational.eu