

Motor Presse Stuttgart:

Decision in favor of ecspand SAP Incoming Invoice Processing, ecspand Workflow and ecspand Contract Management



Motor Presse Stuttgart GmbH & Co. KG was chiefly seeking a solution for processing incoming invoices including the audit and authorization workflow, and secondly a solution with which they could easily manage existing contracts. These had all to be based on Microsoft SharePoint.

Motor Presse Stuttgart stands for a print production company founded in 1946 that has since become an international company. Today, worldwide about 140 magazines in the subject areas motoring, lifestyle, sports, and leisure are being published. For some years now, Motor Presse Stuttgart has been

investing also in new business fields and is now going beyond its traditional core competence. In the meantime, a wide variety of online products, TV activities, events, and services has come to enhance the portfolio of Motor Presse Stuttgart.

■ Integrated SharePoint Solutions

Integrated SharePoint solutions are more promising for the future than isolated solutions for Markus Ilka, Director of Information Management at Motor Presse Stuttgart GmbH & Co. KG. *“Every individual solution needs to have the proper conditions for technical operations in place in advance. This technology must be embedded into the IT infrastructure, managed, maintained, and not least kept future-compliant. Also the specific administration of users or, for example, the management of rights in the various applications is always causing us problems. If there is any way of avoiding this by using an integrated platform such as SharePoint, then we have already made great progress.”*

One of the main reasons for preferring SharePoint solutions at this successful Media print production company located in Stuttgart, Germany, is also the better use of available know-how. The mechanisms and tools in place remain identical and can still be used flexibly for the different requirements and solutions.

The strategy at Motor Presse Stuttgart: in analyzing requirements of projects where documentary and/or role-



Picture: Motor Presse Stuttgart

based processes have priority, the first approach for a solution is to use the existing platform of the Sharepoint-technology. *“If this is possible, the very first advantage is that we will not have to face the matter of a complete technical realization. We are also prepared for a solution where some compromises have to be made with regard to comparison of the ranges of functions, as the total costs in using the available infrastructure of SharePoint are in our experience noticeably less.”*

■ Point of Departure

There were no digital components in the processing of incoming invoices. At the end of the procedure the paper invoices were manually entered into the SAP system by the accounts department.

■ The Goals of Motor Presse

■ All invoices should be digitally filed centrally, be ready for audit-proof archiving and enable direct access from SAP

and availability for all members of staff involved in the respective authorization processes. Thus, the automatically available digital incoming invoice record should include improved controlling mechanisms.

■ The manual paper handling process and the time-consuming and sometimes duplicated processing of information should be stopped, and all information on the invoices made immediately available to the appropriate departments for processing and recording.

■ Selection Strategy

Markus Ilka has been following the DMS and SharePoint-market for many years already. *“For me, SharePoint is both simultaneously and chiefly a document management platform. It is furthermore perfect for collaboration mechanisms. At the time of making the decision, d.velop with ecspand was the only complete professional solution under SharePoint. No other products or established DMS components were required. Also the existing ERP know-how, as in our case for SAP, was a decisive factor for the selection of a solution provider. With the ecspand software we can file all the necessary documents via SharePoint so that they are audit-proof, and we can flexibly incorporate our work-flow requirements.”*

■ Project “SAP Incoming Invoice Processing”

The IT team at Motor Presse Stuttgart has split the project into three stages:

Project Stage 1:

Simultaneously with the project set-up, the invoices from the previous year and the current financial year were scanned by a service provider, transferred into the digital accounts archive via ecspand, and then linked with the SAP documents. Scanning the current invoices after entering (“late scanning”) was done by the accounting department. The documents were then directly available in SAP via d.link.

Why was your decision made in favor of ecspand, the SharePoint-ECM-solution by d.velop?

All our desired requirements could be handled by ecspand. ecspand Contract Management supports all necessary business processes over and above the entire contract lifetime. In addition, the incorporation of the ecspand workflow and the SAP incoming invoice processing, which Markus Ilka of Motor Presse Stuttgart has described in this report, brings a clear improvement of the data flow and sees to greater transparency between the financial accounting and the operating departments.

The early digital invoice recording simplifies the internal following up of invoices enormously.

There are no longer any manual paper archives; each invoice is directly accessible for the financial accounting department via SAP and SharePoint and also for the operating departments in the portal, according to access rights.

The operating departments no longer maintain duplicate paper archives. Any information on account assignment or indications from the workflow is maintained for the transfer to SAP.

Project stage 2:

The “early scanning”: The documents were already scanned prior to the invoice circulation, the account data readout with OCR and the corresponding validation and—similar to pre-posting with SAP—transferred to the d.velop process monitor. The invoice approval process thereafter took place in paper form as usual. Concurrently, the staff members were introduced to the new working procedures.

Project stage 3:

The last project stage concerned the introduction of the work-flow, where the accounts are transferred to SharePoint after pre-posting. Hereby, the responsible employees can select from a number of work-flow types. According to the selected work-flow type the approval process differs. All the necessary parameters for the work-flow are stored by the financial accounting team in SharePoint and managed in the master database. Account allocations or other relevant information can be included in the approval process by the employees. Before the data is returned to SAP for automatic posting, the financial accounting department can do an audit

at the end of the authorization process. Markus Ilka: *“An excellent solution: any differences between the pre-posting and the processing are optimally highlighted during the approval process.”*

■ Further procedures

SharePoint is set up as the central platform at the Motor Presse premises.

“We shall purposefully continue with the strategy we have started for realizing our requirements consistently and fittingly within SharePoint.”

■ Conclusion

In the beginning, when introducing SharePoint, it was difficult to convey the long-term goal and the strategic focus within the company. The different working procedure in handling document management and the possibility of cooperating together in work spaces via websites was something initially unknown to a lot of the staff. But with the consistent enhancements to the SharePoint platform with content and applications the staff at Motor Presse have now adopted the new processes. Markus Ilka summarizes: *“The decision in favor of SharePoint and ecspand was 100% the right one.”*

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