

BMW Group, Munich, Germany

Technical Purchasing with Documentum



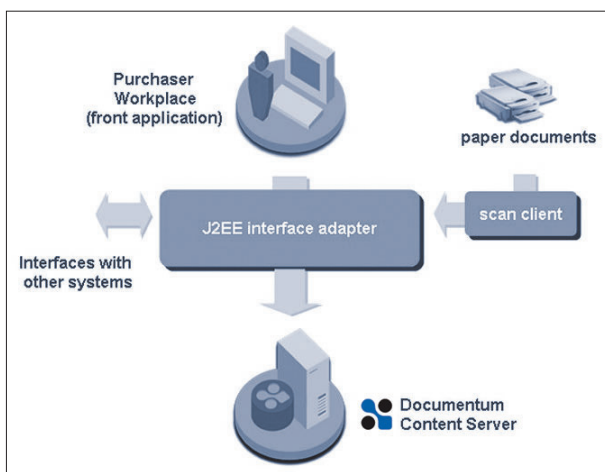
One of the objectives of the e-business SRM (Supplier Relationship Management) programme within the BMW Group was to electronically support BMW's technical purchasing processes. For this purpose, a purchaser workplace (EAP) was developed, which allows the purchaser to handle all processes electronically, including the approval, forwarding and storage of the documents that are important for each process. It should also be possible to exchange these documents with the internal process partners (requisitioners) or the external suppliers.

PURCHASING WITHOUT PAPER DOCUMENTS?

With this modernisation, the Technical Purchasing Management team principally hoped to increase the efficiency of the processing process, which would give purchasers more time to concentrate on their primary tasks and thus improve the quality of their work. In addition, greater transparency of the processes, faster processing times and corresponding cost reductions were anticipated.

The project was based on the idea of creating a »paperless office« – a concept that requires the secure and efficient electronic management of all documents that are relevant for the purchaser, whether they are directly transaction-related or are simply of a general nature (supplier information, etc.). For this task, a decision was made in favour of Documentum as the document management system and fme AG to take over the development of the repository functions within the new EAP. Due to its complexity (including around 3,000 users in the final stage of development across all corporate divisions, integration into an existing customised software, interfaces to other systems), the project presented a major challenge.

Scenario for the purchase support system



The BMW Group manufactures cars and motorbikes under

BMW Group

the BMW, MINI and Rolls-Royce global brands. It produces vehicles and engines at plants in Germany, Austria, the UK, the USA and South Africa. The BMW Group employs over 100,000 people worldwide.

CENTRAL DOCUMENT STORAGE

fme AG designed and implemented the functions of the central document storage between mid-2003 and the end of 2005.

- The front-end application (EAP) was linked to the Documentum DMS via a back-end adapter in order to make the necessary document management functions available to the purchasing workflow systems and thus the users.
- An extendible document type model and the special rights concept make it easier to store and find the documents within the purchasing process.
- Orders from the Group's order creation system (GPS) i.e. for technical and materials purchasing are also automatically transferred to the central document storage, which means that all of the relevant documents can be found here.
- A web application based on the standardised Documentum interface (WDK) has been developed for the digitisation of paper documents. This application prepares the digital data recorded via a central scanning department and subsequently imports the recorded documents into the Documentum repository with the correct attributes.
- The search function has been specially tailored to purchasing needs, meaning that the entire inventory of purchasing documents can be searched through efficiently.

- A Documentum Webtop in the BMW corporate design has been adapted and extended in order to store electronic, supplier-related documents.

HIGHER THROUGHPUT, TRANSPARENCY AND QUALITY

Since the introduction of the system, the throughput time of the purchasing processes has been significantly reduced. As a result, there are no hold-ups in the process and specialist departments and suppliers can be served more quickly and flexibly.

The concept of paperless processing is gaining ground and has been accepted very quickly. An increasing volume of electronic documents is also being received from suppliers. Documents that are still in paper form are now being fed into the repository electronically via the scan interface.

Support from the automatic workflows in the EAP and the fact that all of the documents associated with a transaction are available in electronic format at any time significantly increases the transparency of the workflows, speeds up the processing and, above all, improves the quality of the processes. When requests are made, it is no longer necessary to search for papers on desks because all the documents can be accessed immediately from any workplace, depending on the access rights. Furthermore, the status can be traced by the specialist departments and even telework is supported by the intranet.

Approximately 200 purchasers throughout Germany are currently working with the new system. In addition to these there are another 2,000 employees from the specialist departments triggering demand who also have limited access to the system.

SUPPORT FROM MANAGEMENT AND ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF ALL DEPARTMENTS CONCERNED

In addition to the good work carried out by the internal and external team members involved, the noticeable and sustained support from the management proved to be very positive in the implementation of this project. Furthermore, the continuous, active support from the purchasing departments concerned ensured that all of the users' important requirements were

met. And last but not least, the well-planned introduction management, in which selected purchasers, who were trained prior to the system launch, were involved, contributed to the project's success.

OUTLOOK

The purchasing management already considers the system to have been particularly effective and regards it as being a huge step towards state-of-the-art and efficient purchase handling. The international roll-out of the system is thus planned starting in 2006.

TECHNOLOGY

- Documentum Content Server 5.2
- Unix Sun Solaris 8/9
- BEA Weblogic 8.1
- Java 2 Enterprise Edition (J2EE) 1.4
- Enterprise Java Beans (EJB) 2.0
- Documentum Webtop 5.2.5 SP2
- Documentum Foundation Classes (DFC) 5.2.5 SP2
- Documentum Business Object Framework (BOF)
- Documentum Web Development Kit 5.2.5 SP2

FURTHER INFORMATION

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