

Bayer AG implements COI-BusinessFlow®

Europe-wide Accounting Processes via Intranet Workflow Application

Bayer AG is an international operative business in the pharmaceutical-chemical industry. Customers are provided with a wide assortment of products and services, ranging from the fields of health, nutrition and synthetics to special products for the chemical industry. Bayer is research-oriented and places the emphasis of its core activities on technological leadership.

With sales of 30.3 billion Euros in 2001 and approximately 120,000 employees in 350 individual companies worldwide, Bayer AG is counted among the largest global corporations and is one of the best known global players.



■ The initial situation

Bayer AG began a process of restructuring in 2000, comprising the use of synergy effects by means of consolidating central services (shared services) such as accounting. Within the scope of this consolidation, two service centers in Leverkusen and Barcelona have been established in order to centrally handle the complete accounting of all associated companies in Europe.

In this way the individual accounting departments of the more than 130 European companies of the Bayer corporation can continually be centralized, coordinated and rationalized. This restructuring process demands high standards of the formation of new processes within the corporation.

It makes intensive co-operation mandatory, both site-wide and country-wide. Indispensably connected to this of course is electronic process handling across the various sites. Thus now, for example, the invoices of a Finnish company will be centrally collected and accounted in Barcelona.

In the event of queries with respect to the necessity for professional acceptance of documents, for example approval of an invoice, communication and the exchange of information and data with the companies outside Germany nevertheless remain possible. The basis for this is central archiving which is the starting point for electronic processing.

■ The yoUR-DOCeS project within the Bayer corporation

The Bayer AG yoUR-DOCeS concept (Project Document Enabling System for Shared Service) continuously maps accounting processes in an electronic and paperless way. Building on a Europe-wide accessible data pool in the form of an optical archive, all users can now participate in the respective processes on the level of their usual application.

Access via an intranet workflow application is thus made available, alongside an efficient workflow client for the respective administrator. Access from ERP systems or the cost center information system to the process documents is used by operators intensively in combination.

Documents which go into one of the two European service centers pass through a differentiated and complex workflow after being scanned in. In this way, invoices which require approval by a so-called requirement prime are automatically forwarded to the competent administrator.

This individual could be in any of the 60 affiliated companies of Bayer AG, for example Bayer Hispania. The individual will receive the document by mail and can open it via a Web application. In doing so the request distributed to the requirement prime can vary considerably and so it is especially important that the user is guided and supported in using the workflow application.



Displayed to the individual are not only options for further editing such as approval, forwarding etc., but also information relevant for that individual according to the request. In this way all detailed approval processes in the workflow are mapped and the user is individually led through the necessary operational steps.

The comprehensive rights and roles concept secures access which is controlled and compatible with requirements.



The following requirements were consequently built into a new system:

Implementation of a paperless working process by means of early archiving

Incoming invoices and receipts are scanned in at the mail arrival point and prepared for digital processing. This early archiving process facilitates an improved information capability and faster availability of information. In addition it leads to an acceleration of the process by means of digital data transfer and distribution. The loss of receipts and relevant documents is minimized.



Implementation of an independent, efficient archive system with workflow combination

The concentration of processing in company-wide service centers entails the handling of mass processes. In this regard it must remain guaranteed that ERP systems such as SAP R/3 are not impaired in their performance. In the case of a capacity volume of 20 million pages per year, the rapidity of applications as well as the guarantee of retention periods of individual documents takes highest priority.

The requirement for data transfer and continuous data exchange is an interface to all ERP systems implemented within the corporation. On average, each receipt is used several times in the work process. A further component is therefore the comprehensive process support of the system.

The distribution and processing of the documents is governed by a sophisticated workflow. The electronic distribution not only accelerates the process cycles, but also logs them. Tracking of the processing status of a document is thus possible at any time.



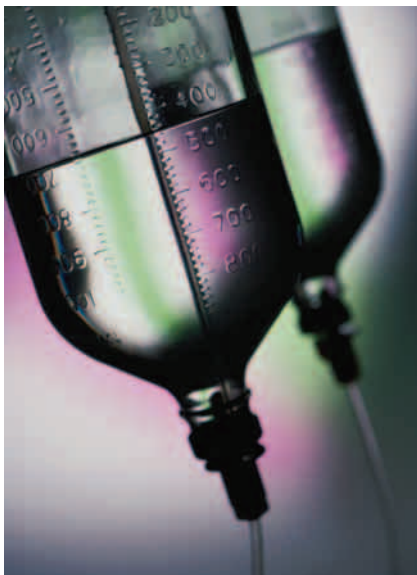
Implementation of a unified, business-wide system

Due to the centralization of accounting, the unification and simplification of processes and systems was necessary as a first step. Consequentially, the archive system should thus be multilingual in order to facilitate the integration of 100 companies in 13 countries and to increase acceptability.

The demands on the product with regard to security and reliability necessitated a sophisticated, differentiated authorization concept as well as effective control structures.

■ Fulfilling objectives with COI-BusinessFlow®

The development of a comprehensive archive portal which reflects the entire process of the handling of incoming invoices succeeded with the use of the approved COI-BusinessFlow product of COI GmbH, Herzogenaurach. This high-performance system enables Bayer AG to monitor accounts site-wide and provides the user with convenient operation in a familiar user interface.



COI-BusinessFlow fulfilled all system requirements and has long established itself in many projects in large scale industry. It thereby guarantees highest data security and its reliability will contribute to an increase in the standard of service at all sites. The efficiency of COI-BusinessFlow is oriented towards extremely high archiving volumes.

Due to its modular construction, high degree of standardization and high flexibility, the system can be seamlessly integrated into existing systems in a rapid, simple and uncomplicated manner.

■ Prospects

The implementation of COI-BusinessFlow within the Bayer corporation ran without delay. COI GmbH specializes among other things in the performance of large scale projects within guaranteed timeframes.

Peter Oster, Director of Business Development Systems, Enabling Technologies (BBS-EAR-BES-ET), evaluates the collaboration as follows: "We were satisfied of the professional and technical competence of COI within this project in many instances. Just now with such a short period to realization it is important to have the right partner. The high standard of service from COI was in this regard a fundamental milestone in order to reach the goals set."



COI GmbH
Erlanger Straße 62
D - 91074 Herzogenaurach
Tel. 0 91 32 / 82-44 44
Fax 0 91 32 / 82-49 59
www.coi.de
info@coi.de