



A perfect fit

Customer Story | Compart



With an invoicing volume of 7 billion euros, the Dr. Güldener Group of Companies is one of the largest billing service providers in the German healthcare market. The group's dental billing specialists, the German Dental Data Centers (DZR) make a significant contribution to its success. The data centers rely on state-of-the-art document processing – and one of the system's core components is DocBridge Mill software. It is used to convert the electronic records submitted.

The German DZR generate and send out several million invoices per year on behalf of their customers (dentists, orthodontists, and oral and maxillofacial surgeons). Additional accompanying documents include diagnostic findings, installment agreements, dunning letters, and correspondence. For privacy reasons, the documents are printed in house and sent exclusively in paper form by regular mail. Data protection regulations currently prohibit the use of e-mail and other electronic media. But this situation may change over the next several years. «We are considering all innovations positively and with an open mind,» states Claudius Homolka of the DZR.

«Once a legally binding business communication process has proved itself, we are more than willing to invest in the technologies,» continues the Head of Output Management. Security of transmission is key, according to Homolka, because protecting patient data is a top priority at the DZR. Homolka adds that De-Mail, E-Post, and Regify have not yet established themselves as credible alternatives to traditional mail.

Initial steps toward digitalization

Although communication with patients takes place primarily on paper, communication with dentists is already shifting to digital form. Here,

traditional paper correspondence is on the wane, and the DZR are now relying on electronic data exchange.

Specifically, the dentists upload all the necessary billing data to a portal provided by the DZR. If laboratory results are available, they can either be uploaded at the same time or submitted later by mail. The automated invoice generation workflow then begins. The DZR system checks the submitted data for completeness and plausibility and generates a transaction number. One pain point in this process is the variety of different formats of the documents the DZR must handle, ranging from every type of image file (e.g., jpg, tif, etc.) to PDF.

The documents are output in PostScript (for printing) and PDF (for archiving). PostScript was the logical choice, explains Homolka, because it is so far superior to most other formats where

image quality is concerned. «AFP, for example, which is often used for bulk printing, cannot deliver the necessary nuance and fine detail for gray areas.»

Diversity in format knows no bounds

Against this backdrop and in light of the high invoice volume, fast and reliable conversion is crucial. In the past, the DZR relied on open source software but encountered limits: Poor performance («too slow») and excess use of storage resources were the least of the «evils». The main problem was the limited functionality of the old system: It could convert only scanned image formats.

That was reason enough for Claudius Homolka and his colleagues to replace the former converter with a new solution. They chose DocBridge Mill. «Conversion using the Compart

Executive Summary

You have millions of documents you need to convert quickly and reliably, but your software can handle only a limited number of formats. What do you do? The German Dental Data Centers needed to do very little: they simply replaced their former open-source converter with DocBridge Mill. The solution developed by Compart supports nearly every input and output format and is designed for high-volume document processing. The benefit for the DZR: higher conversion performance and fully automatic enveloping without manual intervention.

High performance for conversion

software is magnitudes better than with the old system. I don't know of any tool that supports as many formats as DocBridge Mill.»

They did look at another comparable solution, but the Compart solution ultimately won out – due to its wide range of functions and compatibility with nearly all the popular operating systems, such as Sun Solaris, which the data centers are still currently using.

The DZR's have been using DocBridge Mill since 2014, initially for converting electronically submitted laboratory results into EPS (PostScript) for printing and PDF for archiving. Claudius Homolka: «In principle, we can convert virtually any type of document using the new application, although DocBridge Mill does support formats that aren't relevant for us. Still, it's good to know that any-to-any conversion is possible.»

Everything is automatic: conversion, printing, enveloping

DocBridge Mill also easily handles documents that contain not only text but scanner-generated image data, such as the PDF invoices created by laboratory software that the data centers frequently encounter. In addition to speed and reliability, DocBridge Mill offers yet another benefit: fully automatic enveloping, including inserts.

Dentists sometimes make use of outside services, such as those of a laboratory, in which case the external invoices are also submitted to the DZR's, either by regular mail or electronically as scanned documents. Classifying the hardcopy as an «external record» (laboratory invoice) obviously takes more effort, and because it is in paper form and lacks a control code for enveloping, it has to be fed into the enveloping machine manually.

Processing the digital variant is far easier. The dentist simply scans the laboratory invoice and transmits it along with the data for services rendered. The system automatically classifies them as documents for one and the same

transaction. The scanned record and the separate invoice are printed downstream. Both get an enveloping code and can therefore be sent automatically to the enveloping machine. There is no need to manually match up the invoice and external record and feed them by hand into the enveloping machine.

Everything in only 24 hours

For Claudius Homolka, that is a valuable asset of the new solution – the time-savings really bolster the bottom line. And speaking of efficiency, the manager also appreciates the other resource-savings the system offers. «The documents converted with DocBridge Mill are compressed so well, they take up very little storage space.»

Switching over to the new system took just a few hours: After the swift introduction of DocBridge Mill, only the call to the converter needed replacing. Homolka: «Working with Compart was smooth and glitch-free. There were a few support cases after startup, but every one of them was handled promptly and competently.» The manager recommends that organizations with similar requirements carefully weigh the available options. The decision on whether to purchase tried and tested software from the best supplier or to develop a solution in-house depends on a number of factors. In any case, the decision is extremely important to the efficiency of document processing, Homolka adds.

The user

The DZR's with locations in Stuttgart, Hamburg, Neuss and Munich are part of the Dr. Güldener Group of Companies. With approximately 1,000 employees at multiple locations and a billing volume of nearly 7 billion euros, they are a leading supplier of healthcare billing services.

Other companies in the Group include the Optica Billing Center and the Pharmacy and Physicians Billing Center. Ludwig Güldener laid the cornerstone for the Group of Companies in 1953 with the founding of the Ludwig Güldener KG Pharmacy Billing Center in Frankfurt am Main .

The DZR's have the highest private invoicing volume in the dental sector. They have been relieving their customers of administrative tasks for more than 40 years, creating liquidity through factoring and safeguarding against bad debt.

The DZR's cite innovative services, a strong customer orientation, and powerful IT systems as the basis for their long-term success. www.dzr.de

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