

Optimisation of document infrastructure drives efficiency gains

Debeka is one of the largest financial services groups in Germany. The needs of its 6.3 million customers are serviced by more than 15,000 employees. Huge volumes of data and countless documents are processed on a daily basis. The group relies upon an innovative enterprise-wide document solution provided by Ricoh to ensure that information is communicated efficiently.

The Challenge

Like many organisations in the financial sector, Debeka's business is document intensive. Insurance proposal forms and policy documents comprise a contractual record that is relied upon in the event of a claim. To provide a fast and effective service for its customers, Group employees need access to effective information communication technology.

The Group's document infrastructure had developed over time and was based around equipment supplied by multiple vendors. Some machines had limited functionality; others no longer met business need. Employees moving from one site to another were faced with unfamiliar technology. The fleet was not energy efficient and was proving expensive to maintain.

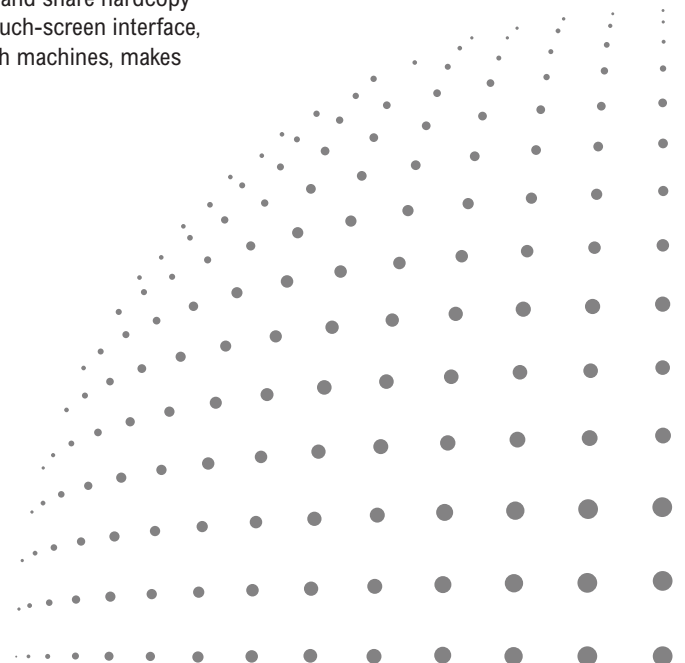
Recognising that, by optimising its document infrastructure it would simplify document processes, increase productivity and control costs, Debeka looked for a new supplier. The chosen technology partner would be expected to lead the group through the optimisation process and implement an integrated enterprise-wide document infrastructure.

Specific requirements included the need to provide an easy-to-use and homogenous solution which could be integrated in a Linux environment and centrally administered. As well as meeting everyday print and copy needs, the solution would have to provide the means to print confidential documents securely and capture and share hardcopy information.

Ricoh's Solution

Managed Document Services (MDS) is a structured and consultative development process through which Ricoh helps customers improve business efficiency by optimising their document workflows. Consulting with Debeka about its operational needs, Ricoh developed a bespoke solution which would help the Group improve business efficiency and reduce costs.

At the heart of Ricoh's solution is a fleet of modern multifunctional products (MFPs). The Ricoh MFPs are compact, versatile and effortlessly effective. They combine print and copy functionality and provide the means to scan, archive and share hardcopy documents. A colour touch-screen interface, common to all the Ricoh machines, makes them easy to operate.



As part of the evaluation process, Ricoh's solution underwent exhaustive field testing. The solution proved robust, reliable and effective. Ricoh project managed implementation throughout Debeka's headquarters and more than 260 field offices. In total more than 1,200 Ricoh devices were installed which together produce 50 million pages per year.

The Ricoh MFPs are connected directly to Debeka's Linux network. A Java application, developed by Ricoh, ensures document security. To print securely, employees simply enter their ID and password using the 'Confidential Print' applet. Work is held securely within the memory of the Ricoh MFP until released by the originator upon collection.

Ricoh monitors individual machine performance in real-time using its @Remote service utility. The tool allows Ricoh to diagnose and resolve many technical issues before they become apparent to users. The system also provides valuable utilisation data which is presented to Debeka in an Ongoing Fleet Management (OFM) report.

Customer Benefits

Debeka benefited from Ricoh's holistic MDS approach to optimisation. Rather than provide piecemeal replacements for ageing technology, Ricoh took care to understand Debeka's business needs and developed a bespoke solution which would integrate with existing IT systems to simplify document processes, increase productivity and control cost.

Implementation was managed by Ricoh and systems were put in place which would provide the means to govern the document infrastructure, controlling usage and reducing costs. Ricoh's Ongoing Fleet Management report, for example, provides the detailed performance and utilisation data which is used to optimise fleet deployment.

Ricoh's solution has delivered significant cost advantage. By optimising the utilisation of multifunctional products, fewer devices were required, reducing capital employed. An all-inclusive page price has improved transparency and is helping control costs, whilst the use of energy-efficient technology has cut power consumption and carbon emissions.

The Ricoh MFPs are proving easy to use. Fast and effective print technology has increased productivity. Using the integrated scanning technology, Debeka's employees are able to capture and share information. The Confidential Print facility has increased document security and, with print released upon collection, helped reduce waste.

Commenting on Ricoh's solution, Axel Schwab, Head of IT at Debeka said: "The aim was to introduce a homogenous and centrally administered print and document management solution across all business units, based on versatile and cost effective technology, and accessed via uniform and secure print drivers. We realised those goals with Ricoh."



- Managed document service
- Optimised document infrastructure
- Uniform, centrally administered solution
- High-performance multifunctional products
- Secure confidential print facility
- Ongoing fleet management reporting



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Office Solutions Production Printing Managed Document Services

www.ricoh-europe.com

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