

# SFS reduces the time for reviewing contracts by two-thirds and halves training expenditure

Company-specific tailoring of already available OpenText solutions brings about savings in maintenance and license costs and creates synergy effects throughout the corporate group

It all began with the foundation of "Eisenwarenhandlung Stadler" (Stadler ironmongers) in 1928. Today, the family-run Swiss company has a staff of over 7,000 and is internationally successful. With the three segments Engineered Components, Fastening Systems and Distribution & Logistics the corporate group generated around 1.3 billion Swiss francs, 75 percent of which was achieved abroad in 2013.

Each commercial transaction and relationship with customers, partners, and suppliers has its basis in a contractual document. These documents do not just contain information that is relevant to lawyers on the contrary: runtimes, delivery terms, liability rules, etc. are also relevant to operating business. For this reason, contracts should not only be archived and made accessible to the legal department, but also be part of the business processes. In order to achieve this goal, the Swiss SFS Group opted for a digital contract management solution from OpenText.

## SFS reduces the time for reviewing contracts by 70 percent

"In the service division of the SFS Group alone, we have around 1,000 active contracts. These include license agreements as well as leasing contracts for our IT equipment with desktops or printers," explains Patrick Bichler, Head of Technology & Operations at SFS services AG. "We require around 300 contracts at least once per year for example, in order to ensure that a maintenance contract is not automatically extended just because we overlooked the notice period."

## INDUSTRY

Precision-formed components, fastening systems, retail

## CUSTOMER

SFS services AG

## CHALLENGES

- In spite of a reminder database, contracts were not integrated in the business processes, so contract review and management were prone to error.
- The retention of contracts in paper form in the different specialist departments made it impossible to guarantee legal certainty.

## SOLUTIONS

- OpenText Archive Server
- OpenText Document Access for SAP® Solutions

## BUSINESS BENEFITS

- Time for reviewing contracts reduced by 70 percent
- The audit-proof archiving of digitalized contracts creates legal certainty
- The use of already implemented OpenText solutions saves on license and maintenance costs and halves training time.

**“With contract management from OpenText, we create legal certainty and protect the reputation and good name of the SFS Group.”**

GUIDO RUSCH, PROJECT MANAGER  
FOR IT DEV. SERVICES AT SFS  
SERVICES AG

For this reason, the Distribution & Logistics segment previously maintained a reminder database that, however, was not linked to the contract documents. If an employee wanted to check a contract, he had to go to the responsible specialist department, where the document was archived as a hard copy. Since the introduction of the contract management solution from OpenText, this is no longer necessary. The contracts are now digitalized and stored in a central archive. The employees access the documents directly from their desktops. The framework contracts are linked to the sub-documents so that users have a complete overview of the relevant contract terms and conditions. “We were therefore able to reduce the whole process for reviewing contracts by around 70 percent to under 5 minutes,” explains Guido Rusch.

### **OpenText solution saves on license costs and protects investments**

SAP® is the leading system at the SFS Group. All of the master data on employees, customers, and suppliers is located here, along with all roles and authorizations. “We did not want to enter the information twice, but rather transfer it to the new solution and use it there. This, of course, required seamless integration between SAP and contract management”, according to Guido Rusch. “In addition, there were no subsequent costs for the SAP licenses. This is because the 80 employees who use contract management based on OpenText already have the required SAP individual licenses. At the same time, they have read access to the contracts via the SAP portal, which is also licensed. The digital contract management of SFS relies on OpenText Archive Server and OpenText Document Access for SAP® Solutions, which were already used by SFS. Therefore there were additional synergy effects. This is because the contract management is used across all sectors.

### **Little time spent on training through seamless SAP integration**

Due to the integration between SAP and OpenText, as well as that of the SFS-specific design of the solution, there was little that users had to newly acquaint themselves with. “Normally we anticipate half a working day of training time per user for a solution of this size. In this case, we required only two hours. This is because the OpenText contract management solution is an optimized and simple platform, which offers exactly what specialist users really need,” emphasizes Guido Rusch.

### **Digital contract management ensures compliance and protects reputation**

Besides central storage and reminder function, one of the core requirements of the digital contract management was audit proofing. Legal retention periods and regulations should be fulfilled as well as possible. “We thereby orient ourselves towards the provisions of the VAT Act, which stipulates that documents are stored in an audit-proof way for 10 years,” explains Guido Rusch. “However, at least as important as this are the four authorization levels of the individual contract: ‘classified’, ‘confidential’, ‘internal’, and ‘public’. The reputational damage that could occur if certain contracts that only the management are permitted to see were generally accessible and public is unthinkable! With contract management from OpenText, we create legal certainty and protect the good reputation and name of the SFS Group.” ■