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So the chamber knows what it knows

Complete introduction sets up extensive knowledge management function

With *ELOenterprise*, the Stuttgart Region Chamber of Trades and Crafts is focusing on integrated knowledge management – in keeping with the motto: so the chamber knows what it knows. The ECM software was set up in a way that was precisely tailored to the needs of the Stuttgart Region Chamber of Trades and Crafts with the help of the ELO business partner.

Trades and crafts are essential for the Stuttgart region. The work of the Stuttgart Region Chamber of Trades and Crafts is also essential. It represents the interests of the trades and crafts of the region at all levels of economic, political and social life. It performs public tasks and provides professional services for the member companies, particularly in the fields of consulting and training. Membership of the Stuttgart Region Chamber of Trades and Crafts and the associated obligation to pay contributions is binding for all independent tradesmen.



“The ELO business partner has succeeded in tailoring ELOenterprise to the needs of the Chamber of Trades and Crafts. Our employees particularly benefit from this service with regard to user-friendliness.”

Dietmar Trommer,
head of the IT team at the Stuttgart Region
Chamber of Trades and Crafts and project manager for the introduction of the ECM system



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High standard of service thanks to modern technologies

“At the beginning, a great deal of discipline was demanded from all those involved in the definition of the structures. However, we repeatedly met with the ELO business partner, and modified and automated everything to such an extent that it could not be easier to use. As a result of this, any uncertainty that the employees may have had evaporated very quickly and when they tested the software their scepticism disappeared completely.”

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It is all the more important to win over the members with exclusive service offerings from a modern service centre. For that reason, employees are available to answer any questions concerning the operation. The Stuttgart Region Chamber of Trades and Crafts supports approx. 30,000 member companies. The rural districts of Böblingen, Esslingen, Ludwigsburg, Rems-Murr and Göppingen and the urban district of Stuttgart belong to the region of Stuttgart.

Future rooted in tradition

With the introduction of an Enterprise Content Management (ECM) system, the Stuttgart Region Chamber of Trades and Crafts has decided to safeguard and further increase the high standard of service using modern technologies. “The decision in favour of an ECM system was also a decision to carefully examine and optimise our complete internal processes and structures”, said Dietmar Trommer, head of the IT team at the chamber and project manager for the introduction of an Enterprise Content Management system.

After evaluating relevant manufacturers, the Stuttgart Region Chamber of Trades and Crafts opted for the **ELO**enterprise ECM software at the beginning of 2005. In addition to the high level of system functionality, it also impressed with its ease of use, as Dietmar Trommer confirms: “ELO has simply moved the familiar organising mechanisms of archive, cabinet, folder and index onto a digital platform. The motivation to use the ELO software is correspondingly high among our employees. They are working with familiar structures – just electronically and much more efficiently.”



Rethinking old methods of working...

Before the ECM system was introduced, the files were stored and processed in different places. Each division maintained its own physical files; in this way, the one department dealt with contributions and the other dealt with consulting services. There was no central and transparent overview of all the different activities relating to a partner company. In the event of site visits by management for example, all the important information had to be researched in a time-consuming process.

...creating new possibilities

The introduction of **ELOenterprise** put an end to long searches for information. The ECM solution was connected to the Datax D'Org master data management system. The accounting department (cash office) was also integrated with incoming and outgoing documents, as was seminar and training administration for education and further training. The result is a complete electronic partner file with filing plans for suppliers, member companies, associations and institutions. This makes it possible to see at a glance which divisions are involved for a partner. Complete support is guaranteed.

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Intuitive user interface



“In event organisation, we use ELO in a very dynamic way. We not only file all our information there but we also work with the documents within the archive. In return, we can also deal with the 180th version of a document, as transparency with regard to activities and information lifecycles makes our work within the team a great deal easier.”

Christine Schwab,
responsible for the organisation of events at the
Stuttgart Region Chamber of Trades and Crafts

Integrated approach for complete success

From the start of the project it was important to the Stuttgart Region Chamber of Trades and Crafts to select an integrated and thus forward-looking approach. Together with the **ELO** business partner, all the project participants considered how all of the business documents could be consolidated. To this end, the existing structures and files of the Stuttgart Region Chamber of Trades and Crafts were researched and discussed. This was important preliminary work for the project, which it was essential to carry out before even starting the project, as Dietmar Trommer explains: “A large number of companies launch straight into projects without thorough preliminary considerations. The changes that are made afterwards generally cost a great deal of time and nerves in normal operation. We wanted to avoid this at all costs. We spent over one year thinking about it intensively and drew up a filing plan, which has been repeatedly reviewed. When **ELO** was then finally installed, we already had the complete structure for all the departments and we have been benefiting from this to date.”

Christine Schwab, **ELO** Power User and responsible for the organisation of events, also agrees with Dietmar Trommer: “The integrated approach carries many more advantages; the partner file and the company file are just a small part of the whole. It is important that we can work in a truly connected way using the structure in **ELO**, including between divisions and offices. Before we had to always take notice of who had access to which drive. This is completely eliminated today. In addition, thanks to the version history in **ELO** transparency is created in the cooperation and anyone can see who edited which document when.



Organisation of 250,000 addresses

The Stuttgart Region Chamber of Trades and Crafts supports approx. 30,000 member companies and maintains approx. 250,000 addresses for them in the database. Each time a partner is worked on within master data management, **ELO** checks whether the customer exists in the archive structure and adds the relevant information to the partner file. If the customer is not yet present in the archive, **ELO** automatically creates the partner file. If an employee changes a customer's address in the master data for example, this is updated automatically in the ECM archive. The communication between the systems is seamless in both directions. The primary access to the partner file is via master data management. Access parameters here are the partner's customer number, name or address data.

Automated filing of correspondence

Employees have two options for filing their correspondence (individual letters or form letters) in **ELO**. The **ELO** business partner has made special adjustments for this purpose for the Stuttgart Region Chamber of Trades and Crafts. So on the one hand, the employee can select pre-defined indexes via the index form and **ELO** then files the correspondence automatically. On the other hand there is the option of freely selectable filing. The employee selects a destination in the index form and then adds this destination to their favourites. The favourite filing location can be quickly selected again if necessary.



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Tailor-made ECM solution

Overview

Country: Germany
Industry: Public administration

The company

As a regional umbrella organisation, the Stuttgart Region Chamber of Trades and Crafts champions the interests of its approx. 30,000 member companies at all levels of economic, political and social life. The rural districts of Böblingen, Esslingen, Ludwigsburg, Göppingen and Rems-Murr and the urban district of Stuttgart belong to the region of Stuttgart.

Challenge

Connection to the main administration system, the Datax D'Org system. Central information access to all the data of the Stuttgart Region Chamber of Trades and Space of the volume of paper.

Solution

Introduction of an integrated ECM solution with a bidirectional interface to the main administration software. Implementation of a partner file with specification of a detailed filing plan, integration of the accounting department (cash office) with incoming and outgoing documents, seminar and training administration course for education and training. Cross-divisional knowledge management. Linking of two sites.

Benefits

With **ELOenterprise** all the information is managed centrally and is directly available to employees. As a result, there are no waiting times, transactions can be processed more quickly and the central information overview speeds up the preparation of decision-making processes. The volume of paper has been reduced and teamwork has been made easier.

In addition, an **ELO** administration tool has been specially set up for the Stuttgart Region Chamber of Trades and Crafts, which enables the standardised and simple maintenance of the partner file structure. If an employee requires a new structure element within the partner file, he selects this in the administration tool. **ELO** then creates the structure element, including the authorization rule, automatically for all available partners, without the employee having to update 250,000 elements manually.

Altogether, a large number of smaller tools were set up by the **ELO** business partner that make it possible for employees to work easily and efficiently with **ELO**.

Reducing paper provides greater transparency

In the financial accounting department, all postings are now scanned in and automatically archived in the partner file in **ELO**. The posting is given a barcode within master data management. When it is scanned in, **ELO** reads all the necessary information for keywording using the barcode and based on this information **ELO** knows where the document should be filed. Each authorised employee can now view invoices centrally from his account. Multiple copies and different filing locations are therefore a thing of the past.

The same procedure is performed with the demands for payment from the assessment of contributions. The demands are sent to a service provider for processing and are printed out at the same time using the **ELO** Softmate Link Printer. This reads the index information and then archives the demands for payment in the relevant place within the partner file.



Seminar administration made simple

Another important area is the organisation of training – such as final traineeship examinations or the seminars offered by the training academy of the Stuttgart Region Chamber of Trades and Crafts. The whole area is now created automatically by course and examination type including subfolders. **ELO** primarily provides support here with project work, e.g. training initiatives. In connection with this, the training academy in Weilimdorf has also been connected to **ELO** via a standard line. External employees also now have central access to the information of the Stuttgart Region Chamber of Trades and Crafts.

Employee acceptance is a given

The Stuttgart Region Chamber of Trades and Crafts attached a great deal of importance to the individual divisions being fully able to navigate through the virtual structure. The employees were therefore repeatedly involved in decisions within the ECM project. At the start of the project, there was however limited enthusiasm. Dietmar Trommer explains why. "At the beginning, a great deal of discipline was demanded from all those involved in the definition of the structures. However, we repeatedly met with the **ELO** business partner, and modified and automated everything to such an extent that it could not be easier to use. As a result of this, any uncertainty that the employees may have had evaporated very quickly and when they tested the software their scepticism disappeared completely." The training of all the employees only lasted one day.



Reference

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Clever concept for a future-proof solution

Divisions can work independently thanks to ELO Power Users

The Stuttgart Region Chamber of Trades and Crafts also came up with a clever concept with regard to employees keeping 'genned up', as Dietmar Trommer explains: "To limit the extent to which the divisions are dependent on the IT department, each department has appointed an **ELO** Power User. This division employee takes part in all the internal meetings on the subject of **ELO** and passes his knowledge on to his colleagues. Employees can also contact the relevant Power User if they have specific change requests with regard to the substructure of their own filing plan."

Outlook

With the introduction of the ECM system, the Stuttgart Region Chamber of Trades and Crafts has made an important step towards a modern and future-oriented method of working. The individualised implementation has proven highly successful, as Dietmar Trommer confirms: "The **ELO** business partner has succeeded in tailoring **ELOenterprise** to the needs of the Stuttgart Region Chamber of Trades and Crafts. Our employees particularly benefit from this service with regard to user-friendliness. The fact that the **ELO** business partner is based in Stuttgart is also a definite advantage as this means that the distances are fairly short and the response times are very fast."

For the future, the Stuttgart Region Chamber of Trades and Crafts is considering digitalising all of the incoming mail and implementing an electronic mailroom with workflows.