pitney bowes

VKBit achieves unparalleled flexibility, integrity and productivity through investment in state-of-the-art technology

Customer profile

VKBit Betrieb GmbH

- Subsidiary of the Versicherungs-kammer Bayern Group
- Responsible for the reliable and seamless operation of IT services within this major insurance group and its subsidiaries
- Covers the complete range of insurance products for its clients, from document creation and printing to mail inserting and dispatch

Overview

VKBit Betrieb GmbH is a subsidiary of the Versicherungskammer Bayern (VKB) Group, which is a provider of personal and property insurance. The group is the largest public insurer and one of the ten largest primary insurers in Germany. With 15 insurance companies and the three strong regional brands Versicherungs-kammer Bayern, Feuersozietät Berlin Brandenburg and SAARLAND Versicherungen, it is often known as the "insurer of regions." VKBit Betrieb GmbH is responsible for the reliable and seamless operation of IT services within the company and its subsidiaries. As an IT service provider, VKBit is a technology driven enterprise that covers complete product ranges for its clients, from document creation and printing through to inserting and dispatch.

Challenge

With the rise of digitalization, VKBit has seen decreasing mail volumes for some time. "Today, physical letters are a premium product due to relatively high mailing costs. If our clients choose physical mail for their communication, the documents must be high quality and exclusive," explains Christian Raith, Head of the Print and Output Center at VKBit.

"We are thrilled by the service readiness and the technical support provided. Their flexibility is outstanding, especially when unexpected week-end work or quick call-out service is required."

— Christian Raith, Head of the Print and Output Center

VKBit meets its clients' expectations and, as a result, offers its clients the greatest possible variety of applications. However, this makes its workload more complex. Production has been standardized to enable the company to work in a cost-effective manner. "We take in all the data from the systems that generate it via our central output control and distribute it to different channels. Whether a PDF is generated for an online portal or a document is printed for mailing is immaterial," explains Raith. "For us, simply what matters is that the document generated arrives at the client complete and on time."

Solution

Four high-performance inserting systems from Pitney Bowes have been in use at VKBit since 2009. To be able to react even more flexibly, promptly and individually to market requirements, VKBit has invested in two fast and highly flexible Epic multiformat inserting systems, as well as a high-performance inserting system from the Mailstream Productivity Series (MPS).

Before the contract was awarded, an invitation to tender was performed in which proposals were received from a range of manufacturers. VKBit chose Pitney Bowes because of the outstanding technology and excellent value for money. In addition, service quality was also an important factor. The company was already impressed by the technical support provided by Pitney Bowes during their many years of partnership. "The availability of a machine is mostly also dependent on the service, at which Pitney Bowes is excellent. We are thrilled by the service readiness and the technical support provided. Their flexibility is outstanding, especially when unexpected weekend work or quick call-out service is required," Raith explains.

Special characteristics of the Pitney Bowes product family include its high flexibility, minimal setup times made possible by automatic format changeover for different job changes, and considerably reduced maintenance times. The two Epic™ inserting systems process up to 21,000 mailpieces per hour in DL envelope format and up to 14,000 mailpieces per hour for C4 envelopes. The inserting systems have a high-volume cut sheet feeder, which processes up to 50,000 sheets per hour, and a continuous cutter, which delivers up to 72,000 sheets per hour. They are also fitted with Hunkeler unwinders. One of the two Epic inserting systems also features a stapler, making it possible to process applications with and without staples as part of a set of documents. The MPS also has an automatic envelope traying system from HSW so that pre-sorted mailpieces are automatically placed into postal trays and the corresponding label attached. This process reduces considerably the time spent preparing mailpieces before they are dispatched to the post office.

The Epic installation at VKBit was the first in Germany, and has demonstrated impressive and highly stable performance since it was commissioned. "The machine delivers exactly on the performance it was designed for. It ensures the highest level of productivity without downtime," emphasizes Raith.

"Thanks to our long-standing partnership of many years, we have the advantage that Pitney Bowes really understands the needs of our clients. Therefore, fewer consultations are necessary and our annual plans run much more efficiently."

— Christian Raith, Head of the Print and Output Center

Service benefits

It is particularly important for VKBit to guarantee an available in-house backup in addition to an external backup. "If a machine breaks down, we need to be able to carry on working immediately on a second machine, without any downtime. When this happens, no mailpiece can go missing or be sent in duplicate," says Raith.

Thanks to the multiformat concept provided by the two Epic machines, the company now has a backup for C4 and DL envelopes in a single machine. Thanks to uniform data preparation and processing technology VKBit is flexible in its production capability. Further processing of the jobs—selection of the machine or the envelope format—has no effect on the printing process.

Jobs can be processed on several machines at the same time, without letters being sent in duplicate, using the Pitney Bowes Direct Connect software. "Everyone knows the situation: A paper jam means that a mailpiece is printed twice by mistake. As long as the last link in the chain—the mail inserter—recognizes this duplicate mailpiece and excludes it, it's not a problem," explains Raith. "The technology we use helps prevent operator or process-related errors." At the end of production, VKBit has fully auditable documentation at its disposal, with an exact log of which operator inserted which letter on which machine and also whether the mailpiece contained all the necessary enclosures. Security and data integrity are absolutely guaranteed.

In order to offer clients the greatest possible flexibility in customizing their communication and further optimizing their production processes, VKBit decided to install two Print+ Messenger™ inkjet systems for dynamic, full-color envelope printing. "This allows us to offer our clients personalized envelopes. They can even change the appearance of the envelope quite spontaneously," explains Raith. A further benefit of the Print+ Messenger was the elimination of the pre-printed envelopes. VKBit can now print every envelope inline with an individual customer logo or with address information, as well as provide audit documentation, at a full speed of up to 26,000 envelopes per hour. This also means that marketing campaigns can be implemented quickly and reliably.

VKBit has continued to develop its infrastructure on an ongoing basis through its partnership with Pitney Bowes and has therefore been able to meet increasingly demanding client requirements.

"The project follow-up and management was outstanding. Thanks to our longstanding partnership of many years, we have the advantage that Pitney Bowes really understands the needs of our clients. Therefore fewer consultations are necessary and our annual plans run much more efficiently," Christian Raith emphasizes.

Thanks to the new technology, the company is a recognized service provider for the implementation of marketing campaigns. "We not only

"Thanks to this investment in innovative technology, VKBit now has one of the most state-of-the-art print and mail centers in Germany, with an unparalleled combination of flexibility, integrity and productivity."

— Christine Häfner, Senior Account Manager at Pitney Bowes

take care of production but also design and invoicing of campaigns like these. Our clients get everything from a single source," explains Raith. VKBit has recently also established a printer driver to provide a central print gateway for its clients. This means that clients can now send smaller printing jobs that need to be dispatched via the German national postal service directly to the Output Center for processing and delivery. This saves time and money.

"VKBit has consciously decided to invest in innovative technology," adds Christine Häfner, Senior Account Manager at Pitney Bowes. "And this decision has proven to be the right one. VKBit now has one of the most state-of-the-art print and mail centers in Germany, with an unparalleled combination of flexibility, integrity and productivity."

Call us today or visit pitneybowes.com to learn more.

United States
3001 Summer Street
Stamford, CT 06926-0700

pitney bowes

Pitney Bowes and the Corporate logo are trademarks of Pitney Bowes Inc. or a subsidiary.
All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.
© 2016-2017 Pitney Bowes Inc. All rights reserved.

RECYCLE PLEASE
recycleplease.org

17MKTC03429_US