

# KENDOX



## JAF INTERNATIONAL SERVICES GMBH

CASE STUDY

## JAF International Services GmbH

From digital archive to comprehensive business portal

With the help of Kendox and TQS, the international timber wholesaler J. u. A. Frischeis has placed its document management system on a modern, digital footing. What started as an archiving solution for paperless, revision-safe storage of all documents has now become a centralised business platform which helps to save time and paper as well as streamlining processes.

**Customer**

- JAF Group
- 2.700 employees
- 58 sites
- 19 countries

**Industry** Timber trade

**Project**

- Migration of legacy archive
- Revision-safe archiving solution
- AS/400 and ERP integration
- Invoice processing
- Integration with online shopping system



J. u. A. Frischeis is a wholesale merchant with around 2,700 employees across 58 sites in 19 countries which offers timber, inlays, boards, assembly units and a range of services. As part of its business operations, the company receives over two million documents every year, all of which need to be stored securely. Frischeis' existing archive system stored invoices for the Austrian and German market in digital format, while its offices in other countries simply stored paper documents. "Our old IBM AS/400 spool file-based system was a very lean solution, but it was no longer suited to the times. It did not support the latest server platform releases, nor could it store other types of documents such as quotes, work orders or delivery notes in PDF format. We therefore started to search for a modern system which could seamlessly continue our revision-safe archiving operations", said Markus Schlaghuber, IT services representative at J. u. A. Frischeis, describing the initial situation.

## WANTED: FLEXIBLE ARCHIVING SYSTEM

“In the course of our investigation into a suitable solution, one of our IT suppliers put us in touch with Kendox. Following an extensive comparison with three other products and a practical demonstration from a reference customer, we chose the company’s InfoShare software”, explained Schlaghuber. “A critical factor here was the ability to integrate the old AS/400 platform and the existing InforAS ERP system. In addition, the system is easy to configure, supports multiple languages and can be expanded as necessary – and as a web-based system, it does not require any client-side installations. Kendox was also able to offer a simple solution for migrating the old archive. Finally, the provider’s on-site support and high flexibility were also important”, said the IT expert.

## GOING LIVE IN NO TIME AT ALL

The installation of the new archiving software, the move from the old system to the new one, and the creation of the interface with the ERP system took a total of just three months. At the start of 2012, the first stage of expanding the solution into regular operations began. “During the implementation process, we were able to resolve smaller bugs and set up the majority of the functions for ourselves. This was important, as one of our declared goals was to understand, operate and configure the system ourselves”, said Schlaghuber. Using single-sign-on registration, all employees in Austria and elsewhere in the world can now directly access the archived data through the ERP system. This means that by searching for index values (such as customer numbers or document reference numbers), they can quickly and easily find the corresponding documents in the central archive and gain a complete overview of customers’ orders. Thanks to Unicode, the Kendox system supports all user languages and also guarantees high data security. This is because the documents cannot be deleted before a given date – usually corresponding to the legally-defined storage period. Servers and their associated storage units are also securely operated in a data centre.

*“We are highly satisfied with the Kendox solution, as this open and clearly-structured system functions reliably, is highly scalable and offers a wide range of functional and technical options”, said Schlaghuber, describing the benefits of the system.*

## CENTRAL ARCHIVING PLATFORM EXPANDED

The next step was to work with Kendox to find a solution to automatically import and classify incoming invoices, such as those sent by email. “We wanted to achieve the same level of process optimisation that we had been used to for outgoing invoices for years, including fast document searching and retrieval, online access from a range of applications, automation and – of course – a corresponding reduction in costs. In addition, many suppliers have already switched to digital invoicing. This meant that many invoices were already arriving in electronic form, giving us an opportunity to further optimise our processes”, said Schlaghuber. To find a solution to these challenges, Kendox brought its partner TQS and the relevant specialist departments into the mix. In order to streamline the invoice processing system, TQS implemented the SmartFIX extraction solution – a practical tool which automatically analyses both previously scanned paper invoices and those arriving by email, extracting all information needed for further processing.

## INTEGRATION SERVER ACTS AS DATA HUB

Meanwhile, TQS also constructed an integration platform which used the necessary adapters to bring together all existing subsystems. This allowed optimal integration of Kendox InfoShare for DMS/ECM, the extraction solution

SmartFIX, the ERP system InforAS and the accounting software Portolan. The interface, integrated into InfoShare, also allows specific invoices' account allocation details to be processed directly in the ECM interface. Kendox assumed responsibility for the ongoing operation of the basic system, as well as the support and the addition of several extra functions and interfaces needed to implement this design. "By interfacing with the Kendox web service, the integration server initiates and monitors all activities and processes within the document flow, from manual user tasks such as manual invoice approval, to completely automatic system tasks such as automatic status updates for individual documents. This means that we can carry out both automatic and manual accounting tasks, as well as vertical redundancy checks on the relationship between the ERP and accounting systems. Aside from all of this, all data sets requiring processing are returned to the archive", reported Schlaghuber.



## MORE TIME, LOWER COSTS

Now, Frischeis holds all incoming and outgoing invoices in its digital archive, as well as quotes, work orders, delivery notes, contractor copies of the same and other contract-related documents. Every year, over two million documents are now stored, including over 60,000 incoming invoices. This means that the digital archive and central management portal also offers a number of other benefits: for one thing, Frischeis employees can now track documents throughout the process, work with them as appropriate for their permissions, and monitor all processing steps in full. For another, since the process of physically storing documents has been brought to a halt, it also saves space and reduces storage costs.

"We previously needed around two hours per day to print, sort and stamp documents. Now, this time requirement has been reduced to a fraction of what it once was, and cancellations and corrections have been dramatically reduced thanks to automatic recognition and security measures such as double-checking processes. Our team can now process more documents than before, helping to increase our sales. Another advantage is that the system is available at all sites through a web interface, allowing us to roll out updates and changes more quickly and significantly reducing both the amount of technical work required and the number of potential sources of errors", said Schlaghuber.



## INTO THE DIGITAL FUTURE

The successful integration project is now being rolled out across all Austrian offices and others worldwide. The next steps are to implement the various user languages and (in particular) to adapt the overall solution to meet local legal requirements. "This will significantly simplify international collaboration and avoid unnecessary process redundancy", said Schlaghuber confidently. Future high priorities include the subject of e-billing, since 60 percent of incoming invoices already arrive in digital format, moving directly into the workflow.

“Alongside paperless document management, HTML5 is the next big step for us. As one of the technologies of the future, it offers device-independent operation and mobile access to all relevant information”, explained Schlaghuber. The IT professional now believes he is ideally equipped for the future: “Since 2003, we have massively promoted digitisation within our business, and the results have been of real benefit for years – for example in our online shop which has been in place since 2008, in our long-term use of EDI and of course our integrated digital document management processes. We have therefore created a unique Frischeis world within the IT sector. Kendox and TQS have been highly competent partners throughout”, concluded Schlaghuber.

## ABOUT KENDOX

Kendox are the experts in digital document management and process automation for offices and administrative bureaus. With years of experience providing solutions using its own in-house technology, Kendox works in particular with customers in industry and manufacturing, trade and e-commerce, services, and logistics as well as with public institutions, schools and universities.

Kendox's applications are supplied and operated in the cloud from the company's own virtual data centres in Germany and Switzerland. Its software solutions are based on forward-looking technologies and meet today's security and data protection requirements.

Kendox's document and process automation solutions integrate with Microsoft 365, leading ERP solutions and many other specialist applications. Thanks to Kendox's collaboration with other solution providers and integration partners, the Kendox software platform works in any number of diverse use cases.

Kendox AG is based in Oberriet, Switzerland. It has branches and sales and consulting offices in Oberhausen (Germany), Puchheim (Germany), Vienna (Austria), and Serbia, as well as other locations in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. Together with its partner network, Kendox provides ongoing support to over one thousand customers.

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