

## BASF IT Services

### BASF Creates Professional Scan Center with EMC Captiva InputAccel for Streamlined Customer Service



BASF IT Services, a BASF Group company, is a leading IT business process outsourcing (BPO) firm in Europe. The company specializes in providing successful IT solutions, managed infrastructure, and BPO services. Its expertise is based on years of experience in providing solutions to BASF, one of the world's leading chemical companies.

#### The challenge: Improve offerings to customers through a centralized scan center

In order to best serve its customers, BASF IT Services needed to provide all the advantages of digital file archiving, such as rapid access to data and the ability to easily search for and share information. BASF IT Services recognized that the electronic capture and archiving of documents increases efficiency and reduces expenses. To offer its customers these advantages, BASF IT Services created a centralized scan center. Here, approximately 1.5 million pages, representing a wide variety of documents from invoices to personnel files, would be scanned annually.

In selecting a document capture system for the scan center, BASF IT Services needed a solution that would quickly and easily process a wide variety of diverse documents and work with the scanners that BASF already had in operation. In order to identify and process the variety of structured, semi-structured, and unstructured documents, the capture solution would need the ability to perform optical character recognition (OCR) and intelligent character recognition (ICR). The OCR and ICR modules enable the software to recognize both machine-printed and handwritten text, thereby reducing the amount of manual data entry required by BASF personnel.

The variety of documents processed at BASF IT Services made system flexibility an important precondition for the solution because each document type requires different software modules. For example, the scanning of personnel files requires recognition of document types, while scanning invoices for financial accounting, the header and position data of the invoices must be captured. For travel cost accounting reconciliation, a travel number for linkage with the SAP® receipt must be identified; and for questionnaires completed by customers, values for statistical purposes must be collected. All these different requirements also meant that various output formats from the scanning system (TIFF, JPG, and PDF) had to be supported.

#### Solution: EMC Captiva InputAccel

"Due to its high degree of flexibility and an outstanding price-to-benefit ratio, we opted for EMC® Captiva® InputAccel®," explained Peter Reinhardt, the team manager of archiving and output management at BASF IT Services. "InputAccel has been used successfully since 1996 at BASF AG for scanning and archiving personnel files."

EMC Captiva first caught BASF's attention in 1995 at the Association for Information and Image Management (AIIM) show in Chicago. "At that time, BASF was impressed with the InputAccel client/server architecture, the simple operation, and the high scanning throughput. Moreover, the software also offers comprehensive customization so we can program our own processes and operational sequences," added Reinhardt.

## Results: Quick access to digital information and achieved savings objectives

In only three weeks, InputAccel was implemented by a team of three staff members. Due to its intuitive interface, it was not even necessary to train staff on the document capture software. Implementation was also eased by the fact that InputAccel is tightly integrated with the IBM Content Manager archiving software that was installed at BASF IT Services.

At the scan center, the documents are first prepared manually, to remove staples and paper clips, and then scanned by a Kodak i820 scanner. InputAccel ensures that skewed pages are straightened and colored backgrounds are removed. Poorly scanned pages are recognized by the software, corrected manually, or scanned again. Lastly, InputAccel exports the digitized documents into IBM Content Manager as a TIFF, PDF, or JPG file format for archiving.

**“The feedback from staff members has been extremely positive. They report having rapid access to all relevant data—at any time and from any location.”**

**Peter Reinhardt, Archiving and Output Manager, BASF IT Services**

Currently, there are 15 staff members at BASF IT working with InputAccel. The benefits have been immediate. The enormous paper quantities are scanned within a short period of time and automatically processed, making the documents almost immediately available in digital form at BASF locations throughout Europe. Additional benefits of the software include the high throughput, the failure safety, and its ability to work with any scanner.

“Most frequently staff members use the modules for scan, index, OCR, and exporting to IBM Content Manager,” reports Reinhardt. “The feedback from staff members has been extremely positive. They report having rapid access to all relevant data—at any time and from any location.”

Reinhardt and BASF IT Services have been very satisfied with the project results, saying, “The project stayed within the scheduled time and provided a high level of quality. InputAccel proved to be an extremely robust solution. So far, we have sustained not a single failure or loss of data. Also, the operation is a great advantage to us as a scan service provider and leads to direct savings for us. Thanks to InputAccel, our resources are being used optimally, the business processes were improved substantially, and the stated savings objectives have been achieved.”



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