



... and Don't Forget the Documents

Taking a closer look at a modern shipping and logistics company you discover that documents are not only necessary for accounting reasons – they are very much a part of the core business itself. Bills of lading, invoices, customs documents, delivery notes, certificates, etc. are an integrated part of moving cargo from A to B, and that to such a degree that managing the documents almost requires a truck driver license, a commercial driver license, or a shipmaster's certificate exam.

Document logistics can at times be even more complex than the actual cargo transportation logistics. At Norwegian J. Martens AS, MultiArchive helps managing the document logistics.

Two systems – one archive

As documents are an essential part of J. Martens' production, they have a special administrative system, Sysped, for handling all transportation related documents. And for the company's in-house administration J. Martens use the financial application Løsning1.

Tove Bogevik, who is a senior accounts officer with J. Martens, explains the reason for their choice of MultiArchive: "For years we had filed both reports from Løsning1 and invoice copies from Sysped – and therefore we wanted an archive solution to handle both".

Outgoing and incoming documents

But J. Martens wanted a solution which could do more than just handle the outgoing documents. In the daily routines much was to be gained by making the management of incoming documents more efficient.

The J. Martens head office is situated in Bergen on the Norwegian west coast. The company also has branch offices in six other Norwegian cities – and, in addition, own terminals and collaborating companies all over the world. So the organization is of a rather complex nature where the central adminis-

tration in Bergen is required to be in control of the accounting aspect of both outgoing and incoming documents and where, at the same time, the other offices' and terminals' document management represent a great deal of the work.

Interpretation of invoice line items

By means of the MultiArchive solution all incoming invoices are scanned and interpreted at the head office in Bergen – this goes for both invoices for J. Martens' general purchases and invoices concerning customer logistics services that are to be re-invoiced.

The line items on the invoices for re-invoicing are interpreted automatically in order to be able to split up the individual items and relate them to the relevant transport cases. A workflow ensures automatic forwarding of the interpreted invoice to the first relevant person who is then responsible for distributing the costs to the concerned departments and transport cases.

The employee then uses the flow to forward the invoice to other employees who owns transport cases related to the invoice. When all lines have been approved and delegated, the flow transfers the invoice for account specification in Sysped and for automatic update in Løsning1.

If all invoice line items have been interpreted correctly, and the case owner in advance has created budgets for them, the flow automatically forwards the invoice to account specification and update of the ac-

counts – provided of course that the budgets have not been exceeded.

Better control and financial profit

"The working processes have been made a lot easier and with much better control of where the individual invoices are in the process – and which tasks remain to be processed", says Tove Bogevik. "At the same time we have profited financially on several fronts. It has become a lot easier to ensure payment on time – both outgoing and incoming – and as a matter of fact we have also saved a great deal on postage as we no longer send out nearly as much regular mail to the other offices".

It may be that the logistics in the transporting business is complicated but J. Martens has managed it since 1880 and with MultiArchive handling the document logistics they also take an optimistic view of the future. □

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