

Migros relies on automated invoice receipt from Conextrade



Efficient digital solution

Migros-Genossenschafts-Bund (MGB) [the Federation of Migros Cooperatives] is the central service company for the Migros Group. As at June 2019, it had around 2,550 members of staff in full time employment. Every year MGB handles something like 260,000 supplier invoices in paper or pdf form.

With the help of Conextrade's digitalisation services, MGB has now significantly improved the efficiency of its invoice processing. The new system also results in sustainable cost savings and benefits to the environment. The project went into productive operation in successive phases, from March to July 2019.

Automated and time-saving processing of creditor invoices

In the past MGB processed all incoming paper invoices manually, and then entered them on its SAP system. The large quantity of goods invoices and operating accounts, together with the fact that incoming post was handled at three different locations, meant that a lot of manual work was involved, resulting in considerable time delays.

In the autumn of 2016, the decision was taken to implement an optimised architecture for all incoming and outgoing invoice formats and channels. This was to be extended to the entire Migros Group. The stated objective was to base the entire processing of incoming and outgoing invoices on a new and consistently digital solution. When the first results emerged in the summer of 2017, the further decision

was taken to digitalise all incoming and outgoing processes with the help of a single partner. MGB therefore started to evaluate

suppliers of automated invoicing processes and drew up a catalogue of requirements for the necessary innovations.

One aim of the project was to establish an electronic invoicing process that could be linked in digitally with existing workflows.

A questionnaire was then sent out to twelve possible candidates in the autumn of 2017, followed by an intensive evaluation of possible solutions.

In mid-2018 MGB was running a restructuring programme in parallel, which resulted in new energy being put into the project. This led to a readjustment of focus. With a view to cutting costs as soon as possible and simplifying procedures, incoming invoices were separated from outgoing ones. This speeded up the entire process of evaluation and decision-making.

It was very important for MGB to find the right supplier to provide the services envisaged. There were some foreign companies tendering, but MGB preferred to go with a local provider – one that would provide the best possible service and an impeccable standard of quality, while speaking the same language.

The chosen candidate was Conextrade, the leading platform in Switzerland for digital processes.



«Conextrade has met with its services all our requirements in the best possible way. We can now benefit from efficient digital processing.»

Felix Wirth, Head of Shared Services at Migros-Genossenschafts-Bund

Project implementation

At the end of November 2018 the first project was launched, involving the digitalisation of operating accounts. This went live soon afterwards in March 2019.

"From the signing of the contract to the live launch it was only three and a half months – and everything worked perfectly," says Felix Wirth, Head of Shared Services at MGB.

One factor that helped with the rapid implementation of the project was that the management staff concerned were on board right from the start. All those involved saw the benefits to be expected. MGB was also able to draw on the necessary internal resources, so the timetable could be efficiently implemented. Everyone was happy to contribute to a project they believed in.

After that the next stage was the digitalisation of goods invoices. This finally went live in July 2019.

Felix Wirth is emphatic in his judgment: "We deliberately chose to go with Conextrade, as an established full-service provider. Conextrade has excellent references, and we were able to build up a good relationship based on trust. They showed that their digitalised process would offer a good cost to benefit ratio. Conextrade has met

our requirements completely, with everything coming from a single source."

Automated and transparent processing of creditor invoices

Conextrade's "E-Invoicing", "Scanning2E-Invoicing" and "PDF2E-Invoicing" services give MGB a digital basis for the processing of all creditor invoices. This results in greater efficiency and transparency, as well as lasting cost benefits.

Throughput times for the entire invoicing process have been cut radically. And MGB has also been able to achieve a sustainable reduction in process costs, based on dispensing with the manual entry of paper invoices and the introduction of a consistent process and data format for all incoming invoices, irrespective of the original format (electronic, paper or pdf).

Unified structures, efficient procedures and cost benefits are thus guaranteed. Paperless processing moreover contributes to sustainability and helps protect the environment.

Felix Wirth expresses himself fully satisfied. "We have achieved our goal," he states. "Any future innovations affecting processes will also be implemented by Conextrade. So, all in all it has taken a whole load off our shoulders."

The reduced full costs, coupled with a high-quality standard and guaranteed on-the-day processing, are extremely important for MGB.

The project was a significant step in the direction of harmonising and digitalising business processes. Employees can work more efficiently as a result, wherever they happen to be located. This means that MGB's Shared Services division is left free to focus on its key tasks of data processing and analysis. With better tabs being kept on incoming data, suppliers – who are being urged in their turn to provide invoice data in optimised form – can now be managed more efficiently.

MGB as pioneer

MGB now hopes to play a pioneer role by stimulating an interest in digital accounting, highlighting the benefits of partnership with Conextrade and encouraging other companies of the Migros Group to take advantage of its digital solutions.

"Conextrade's innovative solution met all our requirements for automated digital processing. We couldn't be happier," says Felix Wirth in conclusion.

«Conextrade understood our requirements and met them to the fullest possible extent. It's a first-rate service!»

Felix Wirth, Head of Shared Services at Migros-Genossenschafts-Bund