WGV is opening up new markets through internationalization using PITSS.CON

"We can now present a functional, global and attractive product to the market which has been developed by specialists for specialists. Thanks to Oracle Forms and PITSS.CON, the preparation for international use was very efficient." – *Olaf Bechtold, Account Manager in Sales and Customer Support of ICIS customers, Württembergische Gemeinde-Versicherung a.G.*

About 15 years ago, international use was not paramount for the development team of WGV-Versicherungen as, at that time, they were trying to implement a sector solution for insurance companies. The aim was to fully cover all value-adding processes of the insurance industry and also to offer other insurance companies a standard solution for insurance in the new Insurance Company Information System (ICIS). International use did not gain real momentum until long after the turn of the millennium. In order to optimally support foreign subsidiaries or Swiss insurance companies, which serve their customers in three different languages, ICIS had to be put on a new, multilingual compatible base.

This was no easy venture for an application with more than 600 different masks in Oracle Forms alone, which is being continuously maintained and further developed by a team of about one hundred technical and specialized staff. Thanks to PITSS.CON, however, this conversion could be carried out very quickly by an average of just two to three colleagues – at a fraction of the costs that would have been imposed on the company if the conversion had been carried out manually.

One solution for all requirements of an insurance company
The Insurance Company Information System (ICIS) is a multi-sector and complete inventory management system for all insurance sectors. Even life insurance companies can be included in the inventory management system. The approved complete solution, which covers insurance-technical content such as a set of sample products including examples for service-oriented correspondence, can be easily tailored to individual requirements in a very short period of time. ICIS manages all customer data, the product portfolio, the contract inventory and all damage or service claims. Several functional modules, components and program modules make for a flexible and comfortable handling.

Thanks to internet components, collaboration with customers, agents and brokers is optimized around the clock. Computer Telephone Integration (CTI) combines telephone and ICIS data and makes telephone traffic very efficient. When a contract customer calls, he or she can be put directly through to the responsible contact, who has the corresponding ICIS mask with all current information on the screen at the same time. The integrated solutions for Customer Relationship Management, Management Information Systems and Document Management make ICIS a highly modern and complete solution that covers the whole value-adding process of an insurance company.

Oracle Produkte & Services:

- Oracle Database,
  Enterprise Edition 11*g*
- Oracle Forms
- Oracle Reports
- Oracle Consulting

Benefits:

- Internationalization and modernization of the Forms-based application allows access to new markets
- Automation of the conversion to multiple languages led to cost savings of approximately 60%
- Use of PITSS.CON sped up development by around 80%
- Implementation in a short period of time by a small team (2 WGV employees) thanks to PITSS and Oracle Consulting
- Translation into other languages can be performed by the customers themselves.

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Thanks to the long lasting development, ICIS offers a comprehensive, functional scope of service. The modern, browser-based Oracle technology on which ICIS is based enables the provision of business processes via internet without the requirement of separate functionality. All this leads to an extremely high-performance business process development, both in processing and in software development and operation. ICIS therefore possesses a very large marketing potential, which goes far beyond the German-speaking market.

Due to requirements of customers with subsidiary companies outside the German-speaking area, WGV had to make ICIS available to insurance companies in other languages. It soon became clear that this would not involve just one translation.

Automation instead of „punishment"

"In order to be able to react as flexibly as possible in future, it should be possible to change the language dynamically during operation. A language should not be provided by a separate module, but should be available as customizing in the basic version," says Account Manager Olaf Bechtold, who is also responsible for the international marketing of ICIS.

The conversion to multiple languages should be carried out with the used Oracle components – Oracle Forms, Oracle Reports and the Oracle Database – so as to be able to fall back on a consistent system without discontinuity of media as before. To keep expenses within limits when converting to multiple languages, the WGV evaluated various automation options and decided on PITSS.CON from Oracle Gold Partner PITSS GmbH.

"For the implementation of Forms applications on the market, PITSS.CON was unique in terms of functionality, speed and quality. The tool offers a feature for automated conversion of Oracle Forms to multiple languages, from which we were hoping to gain great benefits," explains Bechtold. "And practice has shown that our expectations were not too high."

In an initial and very brief preparation phase, the development team took all measures required to convert the application. Then all Forms masks were converted by two employees using PITSS.CON. All text blocks were available in isolated form after just two weeks, allowing the pure translation to begin. The hard-coded texts were automatically placed in their own tables for this by PITSS.CON. Subsequently, the texts were shown in any desired language using this table structure during operation. Along with the Forms masks, value tables and all master data in the database, such as products or tariffs, were also converted to multiple languages. In the final phase, the overall conversion was completed and was subjected to thorough testing by the employees of WGV before the international version – initially in German and English – went into production.

"Of course, the automation for multiple languages also has its limits," says Bechtold. "Due to the different text lengths in the various languages alone, a visual inspection of all masks is inevitable. Matters such as letter layouts or country-specific contract clauses, which can

effect our policy writing, cannot be automatically implemented by a tool. But it was decisive that we have automated all routine activities using PITSS.CON and were able to reduce avoidable efforts to a minimum."

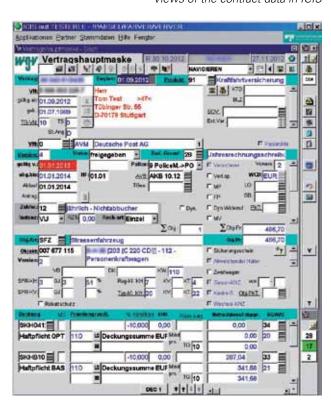**Well equipped for new markets and future requirements**
ICIS is already operating internationally and has proven extremely successful for more than 20 insurance companies. For the first Hungarian installation, the whole translation was carried out by the customer themselves as part of the introduction. Other country-specific versions are being prepared. Olaf Bechtold sees great potential in Switzerland for ICIS, which also enables the parallel operation of several languages, since the local insurance companies here are confronted with great challenges due to the various languages spoken: "Once a language is first updated, you can change which language you want to work in during operation. Depending on whether a customer on the phone speaks French, Italian or Swiss-German, the system reacts at the press of a button. We have to thank PITSS.CON and the flexibility of the underlying Oracle Technology for the fact that this is so efficient."
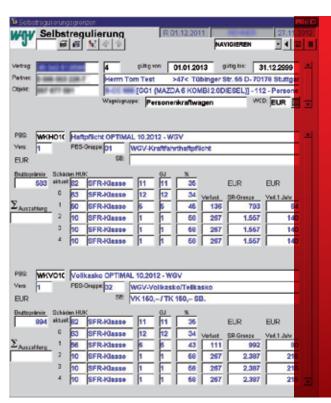
Why Oracle?
"Oracle was already a leader in the market at an early stage and continues to offer exactly the right technology building blocks for modern, but also sustainable, software development. 20 years ago, for example, this was Forms; now it is SOA, among others. Doing this ensures that investments are not wasted. Performance, stability and scalability of the Oracle database as well as the development tools are a basic requirement for the success of our business. Oracle simply has to work, and it does – and has already done so for years", says Olaf Bechtold, summarizing the approach of WGV. "Even the collaboration with Oracle Consulting in the area of database conversion proved, as usual, to be extremely purposeful and efficient."

Why PITSS?
With PITSS.CON, the experienced Oracle Gold partner PITSS offers a high performance Oracle Forms development platform for the analysis, migration, further development and continuation of Forms applications. PITSS.CON automates Oracle Forms/Reports projects over all development stages. For the international use of Oracle Forms applications, PITSS.CON Multi-Language

offers an extremely fast and flexible language conversion for multilingualism. Users can quite simply and dynamically change their language selection. With PITSS.CON Multi-Language, translations are easily implemented and interactively engaged, meaning that new languages can be added quickly at any time.

"By using PITSS.CON, we were able to save approximately 60% of costs when internationalizing ICIS compared to a manual implementation, and in a fraction of the time. I assume that we have managed to save time by a figure of around 80%", summarizes Olaf Bechtold. "The PITSS.CON employee serving us was extremely competent, not just in terms of the tool itself, but also in terms of Oracle Forms and the database."

WGV Versicherungen

Customer:	Württembergische Gemeinde-Versicherung a.G. www.wgv.de Stuttgart, Deutschland
Sector:	Financial services, insurance
Employees:	around 800

Württembergische Gemeinde-Versicherung a.G. has made a name for itself as a local insurer and special insurer for employees in the public service through good and reasonable insurance coverage. Via the subsidiary company WGV-Versicherung AG and the internet insurer wgv-himmelblau.de, this good and reasonable insurance protection will be offered to everyone in the federal territory; independent financial tests of various aspects continue to confirm this. Life insurance policies can be taken out from the subsidiary company WGV-Lebensversicherung AG. WGV-Informatik and Media GmbH is responsible for the smooth processing of all matters regarding IT, advertising and marketing. It is the central provider of software development and information technology as well as advertising and marketing services of WGV-Versicherungen.

ORACLE Deutschland B.V. & Co. KG
Riesstraße 25
D-80992 Munich
phone: 0180-2672253
www.oracle.com/de

Oracle Software (Schweiz) GmbH
Täfernstrasse 4
CH-5405 Baden-Dättwil
phone: 056-4833111
www.oracle.com/ch

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