


ACHMEA

INSURER LOOKS FORWARD TO FULL DIGITISATION

Achmea adds digital archiving services and online processes to physical document outsourcing agreement

CHALLENGE:

Document storage had to keep pace with an increasingly digital business environment

SOLUTION:

Partnering with Iron Mountain for physical and electronic archiving and retrieval

VALUE:

More flexible working practices, better space utilisation, reduced staff costs, and regulatory compliance

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Bart Voortman
 Director of Group Facility Services
 Achmea

CLIENT

Achmea is not only the largest but also the oldest insurance company in the Netherlands, with roots going back one hundred years. Today, Achmea provides a full spectrum of financial products including life insurance, health insurance, and pensions through 22,000 employees. The company offers its services directly by phone or over the internet, and indirectly via Rabobank and intermediaries. Its mission is to be a committed, leading, and innovative service provider in financial services, insurance, and healthcare.

CHALLENGE

The Dutch insurance industry is rapidly digitising. Bart Voortman, Director of Group Facility Services at Achmea, thinks that within years the company will support virtually all of its processes through the internet. “This is already happening for health insurance,” he confirms. “All communication with hospitals and GPs is already digitised.”

This continuing trend has many consequences for Achmea Group Facility Services, which has responsibility for document archiving

as well as housing, maintenance, catering, and logistics. Bart Voortman explains: “Achmea is the result of many mergers and acquisitions. Every new party had its own systems and suppliers.”

SOLUTION

Since 2007, all physical archiving activities for Achmea have been executed by Iron Mountain. Bart Voortman underlines the key nature of that relationship: “To align activities, we signed a general agreement with Iron Mountain for managing our physical archives. At that time, we were looking for a company that could offer more than just services. Iron Mountain could meet that requirement. We want partnerships with suppliers that help us prepare for the future. There are many developments in the digital world and we want to be part of that. At the same time, we work with confidential information on a daily basis and cannot experiment with our data. Therefore, we co-operate with our suppliers in finding solutions and making the right choices that support us in keeping our clients’ trust and enabling cost reduction.”

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In 2009, Achmea decided to further extend the agreement with Iron Mountain into a ten-year contract, which is exceptionally long for the insurance industry. One of the main drivers was that contracts with suppliers at other Achmea units were coming to an end. Bart Voortman says: “This enabled us to fit these activities into the general agreement with Iron Mountain. In addition, digitisation kept increasing. We needed a partner who could provide us with knowledge and expertise.”

VALUE

Bart Voortman reinforces the Achmea motto that ‘a deal is a deal’: “Naturally, all details are written down in contracts, but the main thing is that a supplier does what it is supposed to do swiftly and professionally. When we have the arrangement that a file must be on someone’s desk within 24 hours, it has to be there.”

The digital archive is becoming increasingly important. In addition to physical storage (which spans some 100 linear kilometres) Iron Mountain offers digital services under which physical documents are scanned and can be accessed through a web portal. This enables Achmea employees to work independently of time and location. “In turn, this enables us to create flexible concepts

in the way we operate,” notes Bart Voortman. “We can, for example, address traffic congestion issues as well as the expected decline in the labour force.”

By extending its outsourcing agreement with Iron Mountain, Achmea has not only been able to reduce personnel cost, but also to better utilise available accommodation. In addition, Iron Mountain processes ensure that Achmea is fully compliant with current rules and regulations. A company-wide preferred supplier policy ensures that all Achmea subsidiaries have the same archiving approach, which boosts efficiency. Additionally outsourcing enables the company to transform the fixed costs of records management to variable costs on usage-based payment terms.

Achmea sees many options for innovative and efficient archive management. “We will discuss them regularly with Iron Mountain in order to create a basis for future developments,” concludes Bart Voortman. “We aim for partnerships with suppliers that help us prepare for the future, based on their expertise. Iron Mountain meets this requirement. As a result, it is a preferred supplier for our physical and digital archiving services.”



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