

## Ratiodata IT-Lösungen & Services GmbH

Process development made easy thanks to modular operation and an open SOA architecture: these are the qualities that make ReadSoft XBOUND™ from Kofax predestined for use in large BPO enterprises like Ratiodata.

When discussing a large systems house, the best proof of its size is in the raw numbers, and with 400 employees, over 1,000 customers, and an annual turnover of 115 million Euros, Ratiodata IT-Lösungen & Services GmbH is just one of the largest IT service providers in Germany. At its two digitalization centers in Münster and Duisburg, the firm, member of the GAD group, processes 100 million documents every year in its “scanning and document services” division. Ratiodata has set up more than 1,200 different processes for this work, and it can handle up to one million pages per day.

The more varied the documents to process, and indeed the processes themselves, the more it pays to use a central production platform. This is why Ratiodata chose XBOUND. The software displays customer processes along the entire production line, and its scalability and flexibility provide Ratiodata with plenty of future-proofing.

Ratiodata has used Kofax ReadSoft™ scanning software since 2004. As many of the systems on the market are designed for handling individual tasks, Ratiodata needed several solutions from many different suppliers, in order to meet the wide range of customer demands. The end result was a lack of standardized production technology and high development and testing costs for individual projects.

### Standardized processes mean fast project start-up

“What we needed was a system to handle all jobs,” said Martin Greiwe, Managing Director at Ratiodata IT-Lösungen & Services GmbH. “We wanted a modular solution that would allow us to quickly and easily develop processes in individual building blocks. We could then implement this as standard for



- ◆ Ratiodata has set up more than 1,200 different processes for this work, and it can handle up to 1 million pages per day.
- ◆ Ratiodata uses XBOUND to organize all 1,200 production processes in its scanning and document services division.
- ◆ Using modular processes in XBOUND, Ratiodata can keep reusing processes and develop customer-neutral templates, and quickly adapt to the customer’s needs.
- ◆ By speeding up its process development, Ratiodata can now put their services on the market for less, increasing its competitiveness.

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all customers, enabling us to start new projects much more quickly – without needing to closely customize each process.” Ratiodata also needed to be able to use a best-in-breed approach to implement the newest, best possible technologies.

In co-operation with the software provider, then, the idea of using the XBOUND platform took root. The pilot project, in 2007/08, was carried out in the mail room of an international bank. There, Ratiodata processed between 50,000 and 100,000 documents daily using a classical client server application. New challenges appeared in the form of automatic classification, multi-channel input (letters and faxes) and integration with a new banking system. With the new platform, less than 30 per cent of the work required new development. The rest was simply a question of expanding know-how.

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**Martin Greiwe**, Managing Director, Ratiodata IT-Lösungen & Services GmbH

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## The entire scanning production line, displayed in XBOUND

Today, Ratiodata uses XBOUND to organize all 1,200 production processes in its scanning and document services division. This makes the system the technical foundation on which all of Ratiodata’s scanning work is displayed. After digitalization, documents are handed over to the platform. This is where text recognition and classification take place. The extracted information is then prepared for other systems to carry out production data capture, accounting, billing and Track&Trace, as well as for subsequent export to the customer.

Ratiodata can integrate a wide range of modular functions into this XBOUND process, for creating PDFs, performing OCR or processing invoices – whatever is needed for each step in the process. “XBOUND provides a decisive advantage by allowing us to assemble processes out of modules that work

on the production platform in a standard fashion, independently of one another”, explained Dr. Jörg Sandmann, Head of Scanning and Document Services at Ratiodata.

Creating modular processes in XBOUND means that the Ratiodata team can develop and test standard activities that can be used for any customer. Entire processes can be copied, or derived from templates, and essential modules can be used in every single process. Central functions, such as document structuring, are permanently available as modules, removing the need to implement them individually for each process. “This means we can keep reusing processes and develop customer-neutral templates, so to speak, that we can then quickly adapt to the customer’s needs. Individual processes can also be given higher or lower priority”, explained department manager Sandmann.

## Significantly reduced development and testing costs

Ultimately, this approach results in significantly reduced development and testing costs when setting up new production lines for customers. A current project, processing 50 million pages over three years, shows the scale of the reduction thanks to reusability and standardization: a saving of around 50% compared with the previous production management system. And because specialist functions are only used where they are actually needed, Ratiodata can also use its installed software licences as efficiently as possible.

The BPO service provider was also able to balance the relationship between automatic and manual data entry across its entire project portfolio, thanks to XBOUND. Some documents lend themselves well to automatic processing, but others require manual checking. XBOUND allows the user to scale to the optimal level of automation. Finally, the solution allows the IT service provider to monitor every element of production, providing process reliability and transparency for every step of the procedure.

## Easily integrate new technologies thanks to the best-in-breed approach

A production platform needs to keep adapting to new technical standards and market demands. Additional engines need integrating and components need exchanging – and all of this with a minimum of disruption to existing processes.

XBOUND contains standardized interfaces for this very purpose, allowing the user to implement the best possible solution without having to change the entire system. Technically speaking, the software is based on a service-oriented architecture (SOA). "This is another advantage of the system," said Greiwe, "as it means we can operate our two data centers in Münster and Duisburg completely redundantly." In the past, when Ratiodata ran production for a customer in both centers, the technical equipment at each location would require constant synchronization. The SOA-based system now makes it much easier to distribute work and to carry it out in two places simultaneously. Now each job for the customer is handled only once, regardless of where different parts of it are being processed.

XBOUND has not sped up Ratiodata's scanning production, but rather its process development. "This increases our competitiveness, and we can now put our services on the market for less," said Greiwe. Scanning work at Ratiodata is in fact just as fast as before. The project as a whole, however, up

to the point where the scanning processes are actually defined for a new customer and ready to start, has been made significantly shorter. This means Ratiodata's customers ultimately benefit from the reduced software development and consulting costs.

"BPOs worldwide are a critical target group for us as we grow internationally," explained Torsten Malchow, Vice President, BPO – Kofax Enterprise Software. "Our experiences from completed projects are fed directly back into our product roadmap. The relevant ingredients for success, along with the product and the technology, are staying close to customers and supporting them in implementing their business models."

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