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# IMMOBILIEN ZEITUNG

## FACHZEITUNG FÜR DIE IMMOBILIENWIRTSCHAFT

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SÜDWEST BROADCASTING COMPANY

## Setting free resources for a better programme

The broadcasting companies under public law have to economize. Competitive pressure exerted on them by private companies, the decrease in advertising revenue, stagnating licenses and the ever-increasing costs for film and TV productions force the public companies to cut down expenses. The SWR is exemplary in this respect. In the field of real estate management, for example, the broadcasting company in the southwest of Germany has made considerable progress.

The Südwestrundfunk (SWR) emerged from a fusion of the Süddeutsche Rundfunk (SDR) and the Südwestfunk (SWF) in 1998 and is the second largest broadcasting company within the ARD-group. "After the fusion we have been restructuring our company and continuously improving our programme and have got rid of double structures. Now we are well-prepared for the future in which we will have to face a rough wind," SWR-director Prof. Peter Voß explains.

By improving economic and organisational efficiency a long-term cut of expenses is supposed to be achieved thus setting free financial resources for optimizing the programme. The real estate management plays an important role in these efforts. The SWR owns ten studios, eight regional offices and eleven correspondents' offices all over Rheinland-Pfalz and Baden-Württemberg. 14,150 rooms in more than 1,300 locations covering a total area of 400,000 m<sup>2</sup> have to be used and managed as efficiently as possible.

This is practically impossible without ITsupport. As early as 2001 the SWR decided to work together with the Bensheim provider of CAFM-solutions speedikon Facility Management AG. "The user-friendliness of the system is one of the important criteria. We were able to install the central base of speedikon FM's Area Management software, a system consisting of individual modules, unproblematically and to start immediately with the data input - without any adaptations needed. As the existing data could be imported simply 1:1, the old system was replaced in no time," Dipl. Ing. Klaus Simon, responsible for the building management and projects in the Stuttgart broadcasting studios, reports looking back on the past five years.

### "User-friendliness is an important criterion"

The architect Wolfgang Wienk-Borgert is responsible for the building management of the broadcasting studios Baden-Baden and Mainz and is head of the AEC - expert group. He reports: "Our employees have soon realized the advantages. Now there is only one central department in our house dealing with floor plans. Before that, all people involved in building management - architects, electricians, EDP-networkers, and the broadcasting engineers - had their own data and plans on paper and updated them individually down to the last detail. The effects of this practise had become all too obvious: Often the floor plans of areas and rooms originating from different systems and brought into circulation differed a lot from one another - as, for example, reconstructions had been made. Often, not all experts had an updated copy of the data and plans available on their desks or on site. "Since we started updating this data centrally and making it accessible to all employees at any time, much double work has been avoided and a considerable amount of time and money has been saved."

### "Avoiding double work by optimizing internal coordination"

The coordination of internal meetings between different departments runs smoothly now. Long discussions on who has got the "better" plan have been a thing of the past since a consistent data basis accessible to all employees came into existence. For introducing this original building data into the system the SWR had hired students and temporary workers. "For this kind of work we did not need experts. It could be done quite easily, but due to the large number of rooms - more than 14 000 - it cost a lot of time. But it was worth it", Wienk-Borgert points out.

Whenever the room sizes or other details change due to the restructuring of editorial staff, productions or technical equipment in the broadcasting studios or regional offices, the data in the area management system will be updated correspondingly by the persons responsible. For this task three employees have been authorized for the broadcasting studios located in Stuttgart, Baden-Baden and Mainz.

If, for example, a partition wall has been removed, all departments will be informed of the new room structures via e-mail. They may then immediately access the new data and floor plans and have the latest updated plans printed out at any time. "If you want to use data efficiently, you always have to keep them up-to-date. We have decided to capture only the data which is of real use to us. Therefore the speedikon FM solution - being user-specifically applicable thanks to adjustable standards - has been tailored to our specific needs thus remaining very 'slim'," Simon explains.

He is convinced that this factor has contributed decisively to the immediate acceptance of this solution: "There was no need of extensive training, as all our employees - being already familiar with the Windowsapplications - were able to familiarize themselves step by step with the user-friendly interface of the area management software and the options it offers."

### **"Additional modules create synergies and more efficiency"**

Positive side-effects of the state-of-the-art area management system help solve old problems: The internal telephone directory, for example, is now based on the building data the terminology of which has been standardized and can be updated at any time. Thus quick connections are guaranteed: It facilitates the operator's work and helps all employees with the search for colleagues and their current extensions, which used to be an often time-consuming process in the past.

Additional modules create more synergetic effects and efficiency: This is true for the key management, the move management and the allocation planning for conference rooms. Another way of supporting the company's efforts to cut down expenses has proved to be equally successful: The number of internal business trips has been reduced - by so-called 'combi rooms' which have been established in each of the three main broadcasting studios and can be used for video conferences.

Since the introduction of the room reservation module of the FM system in autumn 2003 it has been possible to determine by whom and for when which of the 51 conference and meeting rooms in Baden-Baden, Mainz and Stuttgart have been booked. Thanks to this additional module all of the more than 4500 Intranet users have been able to access information on the equipment and occupation of the rooms available for booking.

### **Booking conference rooms via Intranet**

Through the use of the Intranet the booking of rooms has become easy and clear, as time-consuming telephone calls and inquiries are no longer necessary. Depending on the desired date and time, the location, the number of persons and the equipment needed, the system automatically offers the user suitable rooms which are still available. The rooms may also be booked for cyclical events (such as the jour-fixe of the editorial staff) or the bookings may be changed or cancelled.

Compared to the various management tools for the booking of rooms which had been used before in the individual locations, the new system facilitates and economizes the booking operations enormously. In the past, the bookings used to be done by phone - three employees spent most of their working hours on the room booking management and many of those trying to book a room got annoyed by finding the phone occupied all the time and being finally informed that the room they desired to book had already been blocked. Now the booking procedure has become transparent, standardized and clear. This does not only cut the expenses but also improves the employees' job satisfaction, as the location managers point out.

### **Optimizing the structures: move management improves efficiency**

As none the less the general situation will remain difficult and the cost saving pressure is not likely to subside, the SWF continues making every effort to optimize the structures: this results in a large number of moves which can be carried out in a much more efficient way with the help of the speedikon move management module. Rainer Vollmer, responsible for the area and move management of the SWR estimates the number of moves per broadcasting studio location at 170 to 220 per year - "sometimes whole departments are moved to a different location." Transfers like that can be simulated first with the help of FM software: Do all workplaces fit into the rooms they are planned to be moved to? Is the existing infrastructure sufficient? Are there any alternatives which should be preferred if the location is supposed to be as close as possible to the production technology department? In the past, numerous errands and on-site meetings were necessary to organize the coordination between the individual departments.

In view of the numerous productions being limited in time and thus requiring permanent restructurings, the speedikon move management system is a helpful costcutting instrument for a broadcasting company like the SWR. The committee for allocation of spaces as well is going to use the area management module. During decision-making conferences the individual variants can be made visible on the wall - via Intranet and by the use of beamers -, objects can be dragged from one floor plan to the other across the entire site with the help of the mouse. Operations which used to be very time-consuming and increased the costs dramatically as they required a lot of copying and mailing are now virtually available and communicable.

"The FM system can even provide the labels for the boxes and the new doorplates," Vollmer adds happily. Even minor details like that can make the organization of moves still more efficient. Although you cannot quantify precisely all of the positive effects, the cost reduction is enormous: If during the more than 650 internal moves per year an average of three hours of work done during each of the moves by qualified employees can be set free for other activities, this will quickly add up to EURO 100 000,- which can be saved here. Numerous restructurings and the plan to do without rented office rooms in future will lead to further extensive move activities within the SWR. The real estate comprehensive control instruments provided by the speedikon FM module will reduce the expenses for these move projects considerably.

### **27 000 keys and a high user fluctuation**

Cutting costs and at the same time raising the security standard are also important issues when it comes to the key management. According to the responsible experts Rolf Zeller in Stuttgart and Rainer Vogel in Baden-Baden more than 27 000 keys are in circulation within the company. The SWR in Stuttgart alone has got a locking system with more than 4 000 cylinders. As soon as a key is reported missing or stolen, a quick glance at the computer programme will tell you which security-relevant rooms would be accessible, if the specific cylinders were not replaced. Also the police and the insurance companies can be shown at just a few mouse clicks which risks and dangers would have to be faced, if a key got into the wrong hands.

In view of the enormous number of keys in circulation together with the extremely high fluctuation rate of the personnel and the fact that numerous freelancers are working for various departments it used to be considered almost impossible and extremely time-consuming to keep control of the situation only few years ago. At that time there used to be a closing plan on paper and a number of software solutions which

had proved insufficient due to the complexity of the locking system. Apart from the freelancers working in the editorial offices and the production technology departments there are also workmen and not least the cleaning staff whose access to certain rooms - some of them being located in different buildings of the company - has to be clearly regulated. All keys can be allocated to buildings, rooms and doors. Thanks to the various evaluation functions of the system the key manager can find out quickly who has access to certain rooms or who has not returned the keys by the given deadline.

### **Circulation lists for locksmiths and key performance indicators (KPI) for managers**

The building management system used by the SWR which has been optimized through state-of-the-art information technology is supposed to be enhanced in the years to follow. The target is clearly set: Increasing the efficiency and the security of the company and its technical equipment while at the same time reducing the costs – e.g. by scheduling cleaning intervals according to need and by optimizing the maintenance control of facilities such as lifts or doors relevant for effective fire protection. Here, the regular checks have to be clearly documented. This is done with the help of the respective maintenance module of the FM software which at the same time helps reducing costs by saving time and energy. The locksmith, for example, is given a circulation list which allows him to systemize the control of the doors in an efficient way.

The immediate availability of the room and area information allows a quick reaction to queries thus saving precious time day by day. Apart from that, it creates a transparency of costs and is thus a strategic investment in the future. If some day the ARD broadcasting companies benchmark and validate their real estate portfolio in terms of costs and efficiency on the basis of the KPIs, recommend an internal cost allocation and settlement or an allocation of the building operational costs to the individual departments according to actual consumption, the SWR will be very well prepared according to benchmarking expert Rahel Kömpf of the staff department General Services and Procurement: "It has become possible by now to verify the capacity and performance of a real estate at a mouse click. The well-planned introduction of the building management system has amortized already within only a few years."

While other broadcasting companies are closing down offices and are centralizing regional studios, the SWR is able to cut costs thanks to its professional real estate management and can profit from its "suburban function": The supply of regional reports to the programmes on radio and TV is being increased further. Despite rising costs the SWR is playing a more significant role in the regions than ever before and offers the audience what the TV and radio makers call a "programme home".

Already by 2005 the SWR had not only reached the cost cutting targets but even exceeded them: In the new licence period the SWR is going to realize a cuts programme amounting to 150 million EURO. (ae)

