

MONITORING LETTER MAIL AND ABSOLUTE TRANSPARENCY

HELSANA HAS RETURNS MANAGEMENT COMPLETELY UNDER CONTROL

Helsana

Helsana sends approximately 20.6 million letters every year with a wide range of content. Between 7% and 8% are returned because they are undeliverable. This amounts to a return volume of 1.5 million items on average. Until the introduction of Letter ID, each individual mail item was opened and physically forwarded, which proved an unsustainable situation. The right solution was found in connecting Letter ID to the Sirius internal business system. It cleared the way for the creation of a highly efficient, flexible processing concept.

The Helsana Group

Helsana is the leading health and accident insurer in Switzerland. Providing a variety of insurance solutions and services for private individuals and companies, Helsana is committed to health and prevention, as well as providing financial support in the case of illness or accidents. The company employs over 3,000 people across Switzerland and manages a volume of premiums amounting to approximately six billion Swiss francs in basic insurance and additional insurance.

The challenge

Given the large volume of returns and the variety of document types to be processed, Helsana would have ideally switched over to Letter ID at a much earlier date. However, introduction was impeded due to the lack of compatibility with the industry software of the time. Until it could be replaced by the Sirius business system, automating returns processing remained out of reach. A whole army of employees was required to process the returns manually, costing a great deal of time.

The long turnaround times meant that address correction often came too late. Other documents were sent to incorrect addresses due to the fact that administrative assistants were not informed of the changes.



Postage was charged repeatedly due to the sending back and forth of the mail items, and returns from the same recipient continued to pile up. In general, there was a lack of transparency and control. The current number of returns was not recorded in any system because monitoring did not exist. Incorrect addresses were not shown by the CRM system, meaning that customers were not asked about changes during telephone contact.

SWISS POST 

The solution: getting the entire mail processing system under control

The requirements for a Letter ID-based solution for shipping and returns management were clearly defined. Helsana's aim was to improve address quality, reduce the quantity of returns and make the entire process as efficient as possible. There was also a need for more transparency on returns as well as flexibility at various levels: locally for one, as both centralized and decentralized address enquiries needed to be possible. And secondly at a procedural level, allowing the process organization to adapt to new requirements at any given time. Flexibility was an absolute must, especially regarding the further processing of returns. Content such as insurance cards or registered mail require additional physical processing. Helsana's connection to the Sirius business system also plays an important role.

Helsana "feeds" the freely available points of the data matrix code with information that provides targeted control of the specific post-processing procedures. The basic information includes, for example, document type, partner data or instructions for the HLS high-performance scanner.

The so-called closed-loop ID (an internal reference number in Sirius that also draws conclusions about the customer number) makes assigning mail straightforward. One special feature is controlling information that is reused when returning customer responses. Sirius collects this data, enriches it with additional technical data and triggers the corresponding processes (closed-loop ID).

Helsana uses the previous instructions in the data matrix code for processing returns. These depend on the document types. Categorization is performed by the HLS. The scanning system separates the returns requiring physical processing to a dedicated output bin before they can be physically distributed. Electronically processed returns are scanned in the HLS, photographed and the data is then transmitted with the image to Sirius the business system. This in turn initiates the follow-up processes required.

The benefits for Helsana

Helsana's central concern was gaining comprehensive control over all of its processes. The Letter ID solution and its integration into the internal systems fully meets this requirement and offers a whole range of additional advantages:

- Monitoring ensures that the processing status of the returns is available on a daily basis. Incorrect addresses are displayed in the CRM.
- Thanks to the flexibility of the concept, returns processing tasks can be redistributed at any time depending on the capacity utilisation of the responsible departments.
- Sending additional documents to an incorrect address is prevented where possible, depending on the respective legal situation.
- The parallel activities involved in physical and electronic returns processing work seamlessly thanks to reliable process control.
- Largely automated processes and integration with the Sirius business software guarantee efficiency and process reliability.

What happens next?

Mail processing and returns management is a proven solution. Helsana has identified the need for address management: possible cooperation with Swiss Post for address validation and the use of address matching for address enquiries is under discussion. The aim is also to further increase the degree of automation, for example automatic document stop after a return is received or automated orders for address enquiries, ideally bundled according to municipality.

There is currently no process for accepting re-fused mail items. This matter still requires attention.

For more information on Letter ID, visit [swisspost.ch/letterid](https://www.swisspost.ch/letterid)

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