

40 Years of Serie M/ at Basler Versicherungen

A success story of continuous progress



The beginning of a long IT story

In 1982, Klaus-Jürgen Kühn, the founder of kühn & weyh (kwsoft®), visited Basler Versicherungen in Bad Homburg, Germany, to personally install the first version of his standard software M/TEXT on the company's mainframe. Today, in the year 2022, M/TEXT TONIC, the latest product line of this software, is considered a product of strategic importance for Basler's future customer communication. How was it possible for this standard software not only to keep pace with the rapid development of the IT sector, but also to keep proving itself as the first choice on the CCM market for new tenders? And what is the secret of this long-standing and successful cooperation between Basler and kwsoft®?

Technological milestones

As central host systems were increasingly replaced by distributed PC workstations, the following saying made the rounds: "The advantage of M/TEXT is that it is robust and stable. The disadvantage of M/TEXT is that it is robust and stable." This was referring to both users and manufacturers being tempted by the stable mainframe operation to just lean back and not worry about updates or future-proofing the software. However, the notoriously high speed at which the IT sector progresses usually serves as a reality check to such wishful thinking. In addition to the mainframe, Basler also established platforms such as OS/2, Windows NT, and distributed Windows applications based on middleware systems. A suitable M/TEXT solution was available on each platform thanks to kwsoft®'s consistent commitment to the development of its products using modern, future-proof technologies and architectures.

Product generation 6

In 2009, Basler began to fundamentally restructure and consolidate its IT infrastructure. The M/TEXT system, too, was being reconsidered. Almost at the same time, kwsoft® launched the completely revised and 100% Java-based product generation 6. Thanks to the integration of the Output Management System M/OMS, the WYSIWYG editor and many other innovations, the software's technology and functionality were both market-leading and future-proof. The evaluation of Basler's tender came to the same conclusion—and it proved correct. Today, Release 6.10 ensures stable, high-performance production operation in both online and batch processing.

The TONIC product line

Continuing in the IT story: In 2017 another major project—the introduction of a new management system for property insurance—required innovations in Customer Communication Management CCM. This provided the (rare) opportunity to completely redesign all processes—both on the users' and the developers' end—from scratch, without having to take a precursor system into account. In 2019, the decision was made to introduce

The Company

Basler Versicherungen is more than a traditional insurance company. The focus of its business activities are changing security and service needs of both private and corporate customers. Its approx. 1,500 employees are thus focused on the desires of their customers and sales partners. Customer-oriented services and innovative products make Basler the first choice for all those who simply want to feel secure. The company has its headquarters and Non-Life Competence Center in Bad Homburg, Germany, while its Life Competence Center is based in Hamburg, Germany. Basler operates as a service-oriented private customer insurer and is focused on quality in the corporate customer business. The company has a high expertise in underwriting.

The Basler insurance companies are part of the Swiss Baloise Group. In 2021, they had a business volume of € 1.3 billion.

M/TEXT TONIC as the new CCM system. The innovative and forward-thinking product line in the Serie M/ offered a HTML5 WYSIWYG client, a largely “declarative” resource design process with a graphical editor and much more. Having just been released to the market, the full range of functionality planned for TONIC was not yet available at the time. However, thanks to many years of excellent collaboration, Basler’s executives were confident that krosoft® would soon deliver the necessary updates—and they were not disappointed.

Today, both product lines—M/TEXT Classic and TONIC—are running side by side without any issues. They are both supplied with data via the integration adapter and deliver to the same output management system M/OMS. This way, Basler has taken the first steps of its technological transformation and can plan all future steps individually. Since TONIC can also be operated via container technology, nothing would stand in the way of implementing, for example, cloud applications in the future.

Farewell to the “old world”

Basler made the decision not to leave the old world of hosts with a big bang (in the form of a complete migration), but to phase it out gradually. This means that the various old text applications will be replaced by M/TEXT one at a time. Nevertheless, this will require a number of migration projects that must be completed by the end of 2022.

- An outdated M/TEXT PC version is no longer compatible with modern Windows infrastructure. The templates used there will be migrated, and the old systems will be shut down.
- The document format ASF, which is still used by Basler Leben, will be replaced by the proprietary M/TEXT format.
- Communication with sales partners will be fully digitized using the BiPro interface. For this purpose, the interfaces for all text applications must be upgraded.

These steps will help pave the way to the “new world” – with a consolidated, central multichannel output solution provided by the Serie M/.

Multichannel output with the Serie M/

The document creation process is based on a neutral, proprietary format that is defined by a company-specific design framework with binding layout specifications. These specifications come into play, also during interactive document creation.

The Serie M/ manages and controls the entire document creation process, during which it collects all the necessary content, data, and meta data. These data are available in full at the time of output, so that the system can generate any analog (paper) or digital document in any amount, layout or format. To give a case example, the system automatically generates invoices for motor vehicle insurance premiums based on the available data and then dispatches them by mail or through digital channels—depending on the desired medium stored with the customer’s or sales partner’s data. This process ensures a smooth transition to the digital world. Expanding the system to an omni-channel solution is already being considered by Basler.

Looking ahead

One system for one function – this is the strategic goal of Basler. In practice, this means that any new application that requires customer communication or CCM functions will be connected to the Serie M/. Next in line to be connected are the CRM tool and the new broker management and partner systems.

Basler isn’t the only company looking for a smooth transition into the digital age. But thanks to the Serie M/, which is at home in both worlds, Basler is ideally equipped for this endeavor. The company has known and trusted its potential for many years. That’s why the Serie M/ is of strategic importance for Basler’s future customer communication. And thus, the success story of continuous cooperation and progress continues ...



Strategic Alignment

“With M/TEXT TONIC we have chosen a well-known, proven and future-proof CCM system. It will enable us to efficiently implement Basler’s strategic orientation of ‘one system for one function’ for the future.”

Michael Ohlert, Team Leader
Document Management and
Text Systems, Basler Versicherungen

Contact

We have even more information for you. Would you like to talk directly to our reference customers? We will gladly arrange an appointment for you.

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