

# Helvetia Patria turns to HP and SOA to build and manage eBusiness Center for supporting insurance business across Europe



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– Didier Beck, CEO, ecenter solutions

#### **Executive summary:**

Helvetia Patria Versicherungen (HPV) is a multi-line insurance company based in Switzerland and doing business across six European countries (Switzerland, Germany, Italy, Spain, Austria, and France). Since 2000, the company has worked with HP to re-architect its applications infrastructure for e-business applications. Helvetia Patria needed to expand its business in the face of increased competition in a deregulated European insurance market. The company also needed to control costs and increase data accessibility by streamlining and simplifying its sales processes. The challenge was to do this while accommodating the needs of multiple national organizations – each operating autonomously, and each with its own IT infrastructure and data, different business cultures and practices, and different languages.

HPV’s vision was the eBusiness Center, an online e-commerce capability that would provide a competitive advantage – and the foundation for accommodating future technologies, growth, and change. HPV turned to HP to help build and manage the center using a highly collaborative, modular, Service Oriented Architecture (SOA) approach. HP worked with HPV to design and build the eBusiness Center with state of the art technology. In addition, HP Managed Services operated the eBusiness



Center – providing high availability, support, performance, and stability until mid-2006, when a planned handover to the customer took place.

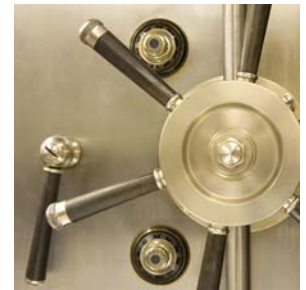
In January 2006, HPV spun off a new business, ecenter solutions, from the eBusiness Center. The new company serves e-business products and services to both external customers and the subsidiaries of the Helvetia Patria Group. A Teaming Agreement between HP and ecenter solutions formalizes the companies’ cooperative relationship in commercializing the HPV eBusiness platform.

#### **Old IT policy in need of rewrite**

Prior to investing in the eBusiness platform, HPV was spending a significant amount of money and time to maintain multiple regional systems and connection points to communicate with its partners. Each regional system had different characteristics, processes, data, availability, and timeliness. The architecture and processes lacked standards, which prevented collaboration between groups and countries. HPV partially accomplished the work manually through telephone, fax, and post mail. The old architecture and system limitations required the sales force and support staff to spend an inordinate amount of time on non-sales and back-office activities. This impacted HPV’s overall performance and constrained its ability to scale.

HPV needed to enhance its ability to share knowledge across subsidiaries – while maintaining local autonomy in product design and sales. The company required a system that would allow it to standardize business processes; eliminate costly customizations; facilitate fast rollout of applications; and strengthen relationships with brokers, agents, and other distribution channels.





### HPV insures success by choosing HP

In April 2000 – after an extensive evaluation, encompassing technology, architecture, industry know-how and consulting approach – HPV chose HP to develop and manage the eBusiness Center. HP proposed an innovative, modular approach leveraging its successful Nimius e-banking platform, adapting it to the insurance industry, and backing it with a team of industry veterans from the Swiss and European markets. Two of HPV's key banking partners had previously implemented the Nimius platform and recommended it to HPV.

In addition, HP was the only short-list candidate that offered the collaborative approach HPV sought. HPV wanted a cooperative, team approach in order to reduce risk by proceeding in a step-by-step approach, proving each step before moving on to the next. While other candidates proposed structured, comprehensive solutions, HP's flexible, adaptive approach gave HPV confidence that a collaborative solution would be found for any unplanned challenges. HP's approach also gave HPV the option to proceed to the next phase of the project or not, with no financial implications. Asserts Didier Beck, CEO of ecenter solutions, "We liked the fact that HP offered a step-by-step approach and proven expertise in application architectures. We established the eBusiness Center with HP's help."

The HP Services consulting and integration team of insurance and banking industry veterans brought a wealth of best practices they developed working with the Swiss and pan-European banking and insurance industries. Says Beck, "The use of HP's consulting and integration services and technology decreased the implementation time of the eBusiness platform by at least six months."

### HP solution is the agent of change for HPV

HP Services implemented a centralized Internet-based platform to link information among HPV's employees, partners, and customers across Europe. HP helped to:

- consolidate the company's e-business IT infrastructure onto a single platform
- eliminate technology and regional operating silos
- reduce overhead costs while capturing new and greater revenue streams

HP Nimius is a proven set of software components, methodologies, and best practices used to build sophisticated Web applications. The Nimius-based eBusiness Center is built on an open architecture platform that includes J2EE, XML, XSL, and SOAP. HP used its Nimius software and BEA WebLogic Server to build the SOA platform on an industry-standard, open architecture with integrated user management and multi-linguistic capabilities. Collaborating with HP Services experts, HPV integrated with 15 different types of services and platforms – from Linux to IBM CICS OS/390 to .NET programs – and designed front-end web services, technical infrastructure, processes, and governance components.

HP Managed Services proposed an appropriate infrastructure solution on which to implement the e-business models and applications. HP managed operations of the infrastructure until mid-2006, when the internal IT department of Helvetia Patria's Swiss subsidiary took over. HP also supported the definition and implementation of group-wide development guidelines including development and test cycles as well as deployment and release management.

### **Service Oriented Architecture pays out large benefits**

Using the SOA approach in the eBusiness Center helped HPV substantially reduce time to market for new products and expand distribution channels. Reducing time to market for new products creates significant opportunities for partner and customer linkage by enabling innovative business ideas to quickly "go live." Explains Beck, "With the use of the eBusiness Center, the technical implementation time for new products decreased by three to four times."

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– Didier Beck, CEO, ecenter solutions

In addition, HPV has expanded the scope of the eBusiness Center implementations – from upgrading HPV legacy applications only, to developing newer, more flexible and innovative applications. Adds Nick Stefania, ecenter solutions' Director, Business Development and Project Management, "SOA has enabled more seamless communication using sales channel, better access to real-time information, and better customer service. SOA has definitely played a key role in the eBusiness Center's success."

By providing a platform that is easily accessible to all market participants, the eBusiness Center opened new opportunities to expand partnerships with brokers and agents, and enter different segments of the insurance market. The eBusiness platform has also enhanced the development of customer and partner relationships by providing consistent data on clients, policies, claims, benefits, and accounting. At the same time, the eBusiness Center lowered transaction costs through improved efficiency and reduced expenses as the result of migrating communications from telephone and fax to electronic channels.

### **New policy pays off**

An analysis by Thoughtware Worldwide, LLC<sup>1</sup> showed that the eBusiness Center's annual offering volume jumped 133 percent in 2004 as a direct result of the increased capacity of their volume throughput, enabled by the efficiency of the eBusiness platform. The study also determined that HPV:

- realized a return on investment (ROI) of 201 percent over a six-year period
- reduced e-business IT operating cost by 59 percent
- achieved an internal rate of return (IRR) of 26 percent

The same analysis also showed that the number of users electronically visiting the eBusiness Center has increased steadily since 2003. In 2005 alone, the center registered an estimated 20 million hits and saw log-ins rise to 170,000 – a 142 percent increase since 2003.

### **About Helvetia Patria**

Helvetia Patria Versicherungen is an international all-branch insurance group, with subsidiaries, branches, and business interests in central and southern Europe. The company employs 4,700 staff and is present in six European countries. Helvetia Patria specializes in life, property, and casualty insurance; reinsurance; along with private and occupational pension plans.



### **About ecenter solutions**

ecenter solutions is the spin-off company of the Helvetia Patria Group founded on January 1, 2006. It was formed from the former internal eBusiness Center unit, and it provides products and services to both the Helvetia Patria Group and external customers. A Teaming Agreement between HP and ecenter solutions establishes a collaborative relationship between the two companies when working together with potential customers. Under the agreement, ecenter solutions is an independent software vendor and HP is an implementation partner.

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## At a glance

### HP Services

- Supported the customer in design and implementation of the eBusiness Center
- HP Managed Services implemented the needed infrastructure and operated the eBusiness Center in the HP Data Center in Basel and Frankfurt until mid-2006, when a planned handover to the customer took place

### Software

- HP Nimius E-3 platform (includes J2EE, XML, XSL, and SOAP)
- Microsoft Windows NT
- HP-UX 11i operating system
- BEA WebLogic
- Oracle

### Hardware

- 2 HP rp5400 servers running HP-UX (Data Bank Server) with MC-Service Guard Cluster
- 2 HP rp5400 servers (Virtual Vault Server) with MC-Service Guard Cluster
- 2 HP rp5400 servers for the NT applications
- HP Surestore E DLT Library 2/20 (for the production environment)
- HP StorageWorks DLT8000 Tape Drives (for the development environment)
- Sun storage
- IBM legacy systems

## Business need

### Helvetia Patria addressed three main goals:

- Enable multi-channel distribution of products and services
- Optimize sales and distribution processes
- Deconstruct value chain and facilitate partner integration

### Additional objectives:

- Re-use as many as possible of the existing business functions (on the legacy system side and from already existing front-end applications) to protect the already made investments
- Innovate an online e-business capability for competitive advantage, enabling new partnerships and the addressing of new market segments
- Accommodate multinational organizations with different IT interfaces and data, and varied business cultures
- Facilitate the sharing of knowledge and enabling collaboration across groups and countries
- Streamline communications technology and processes to save staff time, improve productivity, and enable growth

## HP solution

- Collaboration between HPV and HP – using a modular, SOA-based solution – allowing a step-by-step approach
- Design/build the eBusiness Center with state of the art technology and open architecture: HP Nimius, J2EE, XML, XSL, SOAP, and more
- Operate through HP Managed Services, for maximum availability, support, performance, and stability.

## Customer results

- SOA approach enables easy application development
- Existing local systems easily integrated with new solution
- Consistent data on clients, policies and claims enables collaboration among groups
- Distribution channels expand easily via accessible multi-channel platform
- SOA approach facilitates fast rollout of new applications and reduces time to market for new products
- Initial small investment and pay-as-you-go terms
- Decreased time spent on non-sales and back office activities
- Measured results:
  - 201% ROI
  - 26% IRR
  - Payback within 36 months

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