



A Division of UNICOM®Global

PERI GmbH

Generating Business Documents in a
Multinational Company

Putting  IT All Together.™

Challenge

The demands for their documents

- could not be fully met on the basis of ASCII output,
- required considerable customization effort as changes to layouts required changes to software programmes,
- were limited by the poor capabilities of line printers.

Solution with DoXite

- Production of graphically designed customer documents with flexible layouts on the basis of XML raw data from the ERP system
- Multilingual output for communication
- Use of an integrated dictionary in DoXite for the translation of text at runtime
- Automatic text replacement of static text in forms with local language translations via a Python mechanism
- Unicode replaced local codepages
- Adaption of around 400 different customer documents (worldwide) to local language, laws and financial requirements
- flexible creation of the layouts using table functionality

Benefits

- Uniformly formatted business documents – worldwide, multilingual, economically
- Easy realization of the print and layout demands

Applying DoXite at Peri

Peri, market leader for formwork and scaffolding systems, achieves 90 % of its yearly turnover of around 1.2 billion euros outside of Germany. The international concern has been working with DETEC since 2006 to fulfil the diverse document layouting requirements of their subsidiary organizations and rental logistics centres. The integration of the new DETEC product, DoXite, into the existing Peri IT landscape was achieved thanks to its multilingual graphical interface and output capabilities, providing the production of suitable graphically designed customer documents – flexible layouts that adapt to approx. 400 various customer documents worldwide based on local standards, including legal and financial requirements.

Centralized Production at the Weissenhorn Headquarters

At Peri headquarters in Weissenhorn, the complete palette of products are developed, produced and stored. “This is all backed by a highly efficient logistics network and robust IT system infrastructure,” explains Silvio Laguzzi, one of the software development team and responsible for ERP programming at Peri. Together with his colleague Gert Molle, he maintains the ERP systems (PSD) and ensures the communication with subsidiaries functions smoothly. “95% of all our systems are located centrally at Weissenhorn. The necessary application and database servers are all located here and are reached via VPN connections by our subsidiary offices and sites. That is, the complete business processes of our subsidiaries operate via VPN connection using our own custom developed ERP systems here in Weissenhorn.”

Peri System Infrastructure: Central and Multilingual

“A multilingual user interface for our systems and multilingual output are indispensable for us,” adds Gert Molle, Team Leader of the ERP support group. The user interface of the ERP system in use worldwide, is translated to the individual country’s local language. As Peri uses an ERP

system that they developed themselves, the custom built software has been adjusted to suit the requirements of the company and each of the subsidiaries. At Peri, there are around 400 different customer documents worldwide, that must be adjusted to local language, laws and financial requirements.

“Of course, the worldwide use of our ERP systems also demands that customer documents from these systems are output in many languages. In Germany alone, alongside a German invoice, we also produce invoices in English and French. And the demands on the layouting of documents have increased. We have to plan how we are going to meet these demands,” says Gert Molle.

The Starting Point: Using Local Code Pages and Limited Layout Facilities

“The original basis of customer documents used to be ASCII output to line printers, that needed to be customized in the ERP system with considerable related effort. We positioned specific information based on line printing and we could modify the output in a rudimentary way using bold and italic font attributes. What was demanded, was to provide layouting using various font families and the flexible positioning of individual data and text. However, this couldn’t be realized with the devices available and using ASCII based output data,” explains Gert Molle.

Working Together with DETEC Software Products GmbH

“The first DETEC product we applied was the LaserSoft* application LS/Mail,” says Gert Molle. “Based on ASCII data, we created PDF documents using LS/Mail and forwarded these as attachments to the individual users. The PDF documents were an image of the printed customer document. The next step was the use of LaserSoft for our Russian project, to create customer documents in Russian based on XML raw data, produced by the ERP system. These days we use the new product generation, DoXite with its extended capabilities for document layouting in our company.”



“The use of our ERP system worldwide demands multilingual customer documents, such as invoices and delivery notes. The demands on the layouting of documents from our ERP system have also increased dramatically. With DoXite, we are able to meet these demands in full.”

left: Gert Molle, Team leader, ERP support group, Peri GmbH

right: Silvio Laguzzi, member of the software development team, ERP programming, Peri GmbH

The Company

PERI GmbH is the world’s largest producer and provider of formwork and scaffolding systems. The headquarters is in Weissenhorn.

Founded:

1969 by Artur Schwörer

Employees:

5,200 worldwide

International:

48 subsidiaries with over 100 logistic locations worldwide

Business Management:

family run business

* also known as LibertySoft in non-German-speaking territories and named hereafter LaserSoft

DoXite in a Multinational Organisation

Embedded in to the existing system infrastructure, DoXite replaces the old print output and produces newly formatted customer documents based on XML raw data produced by the ERP system. In this way, the layouting of the documents is decoupled from the ERP system itself. “DoXite provides us with a flexible formatting of document layouts. Whereby the process of producing output documents remains unchanged,” explains Gert Molle. “The XML documents produced by our ERP system are output to the spooling system and there they are forwarded to DoXite.”

Customer Documents in Several Languages

“A further application is hidden behind DoXite, which we require for our special application,” continues Gert Molle. “With DoXite, we need to produce each document in several languages. To translate the text elements in a layout, we apply a dictionary. We therefore have to provide a translation for each text element in that dictionary and these translations are then available for all our customer documents, worldwide. The basis for this dictionary is an Informix IDS database containing a Unicode character coding of all the text elements.”

Tables as Positioning and Transparent Layouting Mechanism

“Our document layouts in DoXite are compiled virtually exclusively using text building blocks. For the positioning and layouting, we use tables,” explains Gert Molle. “In addition, using the Python scripting language in DoXite, we have implemented the automatic text replacement of fixed text – static text elements in the document forms – transparently at runtime. DoXite offers a Python framework, which provides the ability to programmatically influence the content of a document and its layout during processing. That means that our staff, who is responsible for the design and layouting of the business documents, simply binds a Python script to their layout projects and at runtime the fixed text (labels) are automatically replaced

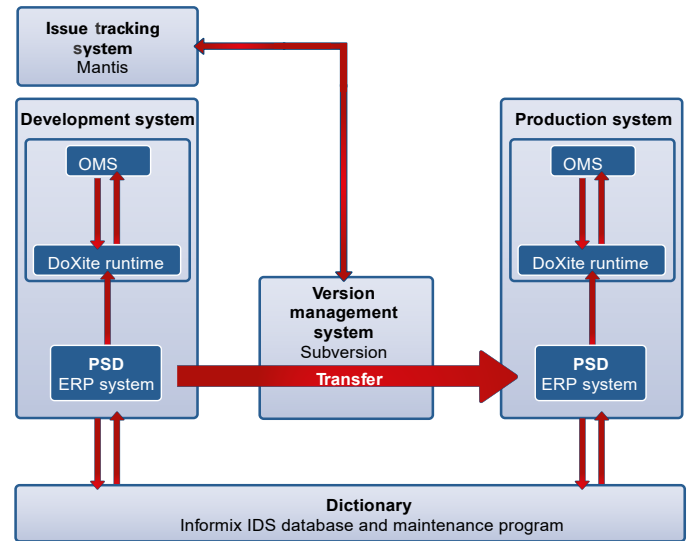


Fig. 1: Architecture - DoXite in the system infrastructure

by country specific text. To avoid repetitive database access, we use a multi-dimensional dictionary as a cache for all the translations for a specific document. DoXite has become an integral part of our system infrastructure and provides us in the IT department – above all in the ERP support region – a rational way to work.”

The next Steps: Archiving with DoXite

For the future, Peri is planning to build on the integration possibilities of the DETEC software. “We want to transfer the documents in PDF to an archive system, thus making them available to other parts of the organization, who don’t necessarily have direct access to the ERP system – the accounts department, for example. The XML raw data that we require for the production of business documents with DoXite, will be the basis for the provision of electronic business documents. We plan to use the Universal Business Language (UBL) from OASIS as an international standard XML description language for business documents,” concludes Gert Molle.

“With DoXite, we have been able to standardize our processes for creation and output of documents internationally. DoXite, along with other software components, has become part of our overall system. This interaction simplifies the production of attractively designed customer documents, and at the same time enables efficient and cost-effective processes.”



Silvio Laguzzi, member of the software development team, ERP programming, Peri GmbH

DETEC Software GmbH, Im Neugrund 16, 64521 Groß-Gerau, Germany

Phone: +49 6152 71230 **Fax:** +49 6152 7123199 **Email:** info@detec.com **Web:** www.detc.com

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