

# Physical Archives' Digitization

Successful transition to a paperless company



# About HS Timber Group



**HS Timber Group** is a long-established wood processing company of Austrian origin, with very strong roots in Central and Eastern Europe, especially Romania.

With around 3,200 employees in Austria, Germany and Romania, we produce high-quality wood products for industrial customers all over the world.

The group owns six production units, five of which are located in Romania: Sebeș, Rădăuți, Siret, Comănești and Reci.

HS Timber Group's products, manufactured in the six units in Romania and Germany (Kodersdorf), are exported to more than 70 countries worldwide.

# The challenges encountered by HS Timber Group



Active in the highly regulated field of wood processing, HS Timber Group has understood the importance of a strong and transparent relationship with suppliers and tax authorities.

At the same time, it was necessary for the teams to centralise the operations from their five locations in Romania, to create a more organised working environment, where the team would work more efficiently and much easier.

A first need was correlated with the **large number of documents associated with a single invoice** (sometimes even hundreds). This emphasised the need for a digital archive to facilitate the internal control of documents.

Moreover, teams **were not able to present the documents requested by suppliers or tax authorities** in a timely manner, because they did not

have instant access to them. In fact, the teams needed time to search for documents in the physical archive and then hand them over to those who had requested the papers.

Another challenge encountered by the team was **the cumbersome invoices and supporting documents verification process**.

If initially, the Romanian HS Timber Group team felt the need to digitize their physical archive, over time the DocuWare platform has been extended up to the payment approval process.





**//** *It all started with a control from the fiscal authorities which required a long period of time. Different teams were in charge of controlling the large volume of documents that we had physically stored in each location. At that time, we realised that we needed a digital archive and, while we started from the original idea of digitizing the archive, in the end we reached a complex process of digitizing entire departments' processes and document flows.*

Diarna Melinte,  
Coordinator of the Accounting Department  
HS Timber Productions Romania



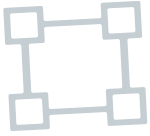
## Challenges

The difficult connection between the large volume of documents and the invoice which they referred to

Cumbersome accessibility of documents

Burdensome communication between departments in different locations

# Digital transformation alongside Beck et al. Services



The discussions about the collaboration between HS Timber Group and Beck et al. Services started in April 2016, and the actual collaboration started a month later. If the initial purpose was quite simple - physical archives digitization - a complex process was achieved eventually, where entire departments and document flows were digitized.



HS Timber Group was familiar with **DocuWare**. The platform started to be used after its implementation by Beck et al. Services, the only authorised DocuWare distributor in Romania.

The company based in Cluj-Napoca was chosen to implement this solution in Romania **due to cultural similarities, price-quality ratio, and its proven experience in developing projects working remotely.**

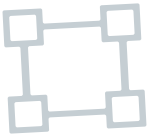
Initially, the concerned departments expressed their requirements, but shortly they decided to involve an external project manager that would

manage the entire process. He came after six months and was responsible for the process management at HS Timber Group. With an overview of the entire digitization process, he facilitated the communication between Beck et al. Services and representatives of different organisational entities.

The two companies' commitment to implement DocuWare for electronic archives has been extended to the payments' approval process.

Thus, from the initially agreed automation solutions, a complex process of new requirements was developed within the company.





DocuWare is a platform that facilitates document management and helps in the automation process of a company's internal flows. It offers **three important benefits: document management and automation, archiving and indexing, storing and protection.**

Document management and automation help a company comply with all the processes that rely on document handling, while archiving and indexing facilitates a rigorous control of document access.

Besides, DocuWare helps teams stay organised. Document retention and protection is an advantage that all companies need, especially those working with a high volume of documents.



The first step in the digital transformation was to implement the **payment approval flow** in the **Logistics Department**. This department possesses the majority of necessary documents in the company, in case of tax authorities' control.

The **Logistics Department** works with invoices and supporting documents for wood transportation and wood products (C.M.R<sup>1</sup>), which is the second most significant cost, after the cost of raw materials. C.M.R. documents are very important for the company, because they are proof that the goods have been transported to their destination.

Until the solution was implemented, a physical transportation folder contained all the supporting documents for a specific transport.

In case of external transports, the folder was often incomplete: while the first document could reach the office in just one day, the second one could take up to two months to reach the consignee and be added to the file.

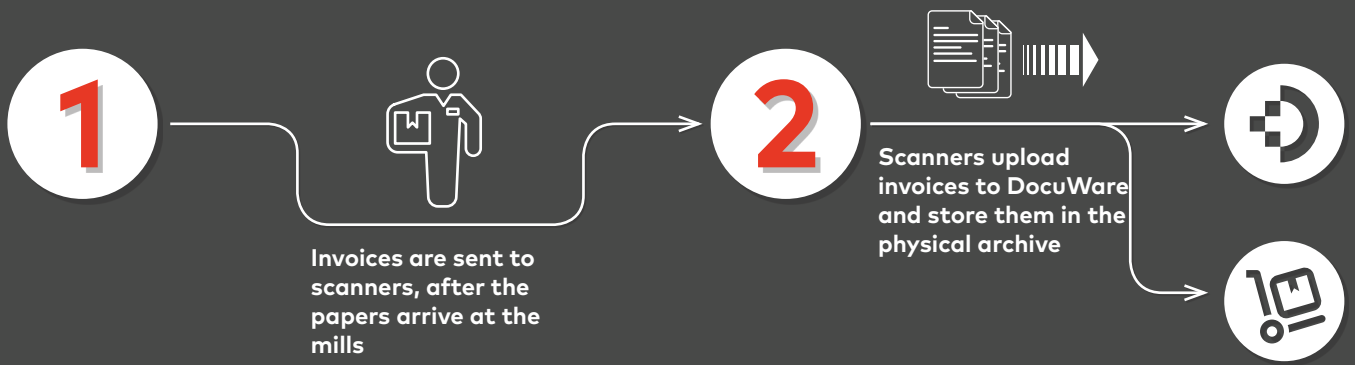
Thus, the order of the documents needed to be added to the transport file was lost, and, at times, the documentation was not complete.

This was the moment when HS Timber Group's Romanian teams really understood the need for an electronic archive and the need to adopt the concept of a **paperless company** - they wanted to electronically centralise the necessary documents, especially for the Logistics Department.

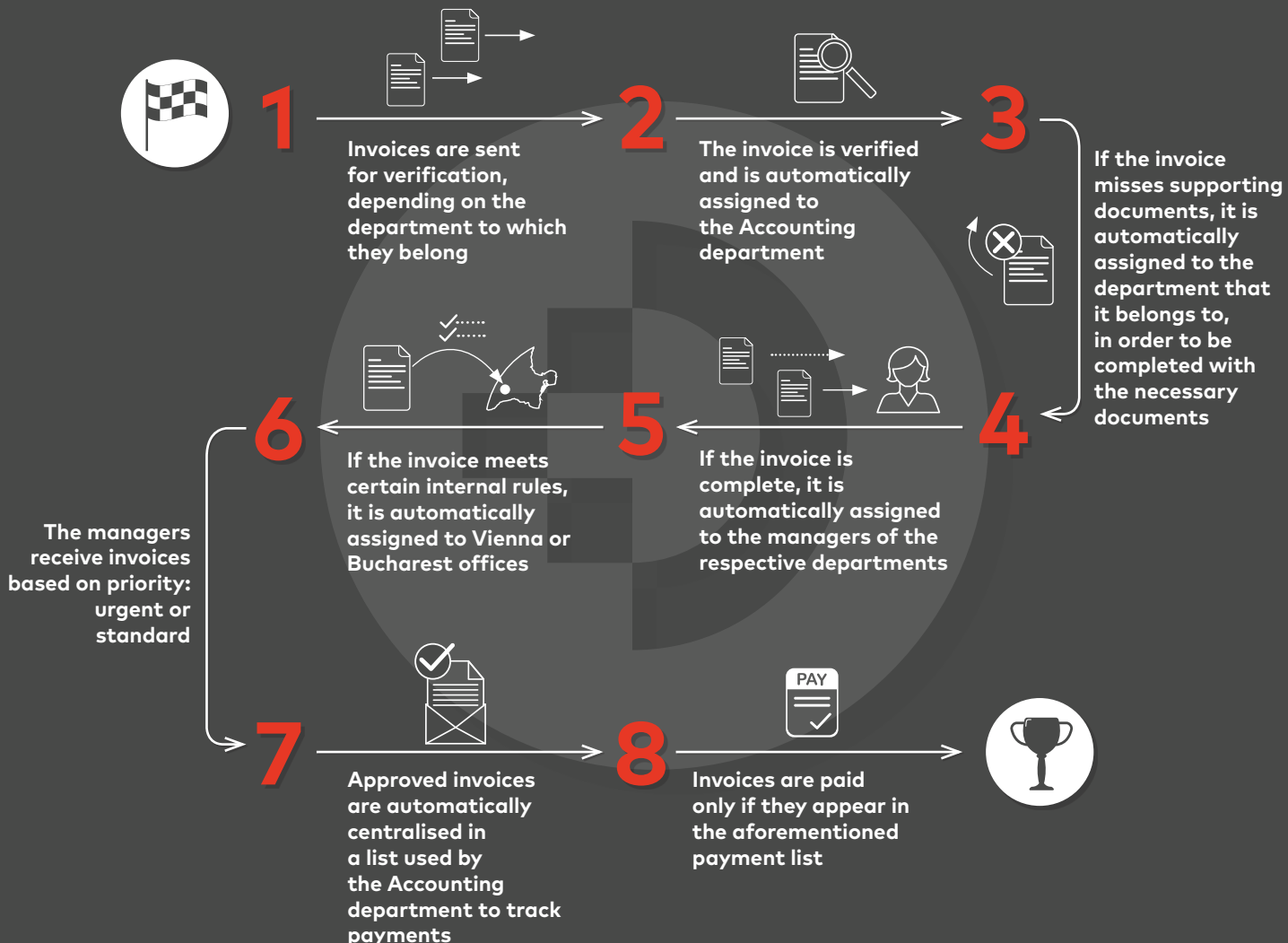
Now, the payments approval flow runs this way:

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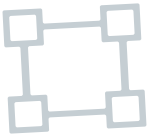
<sup>1</sup> International Agreement on Transportation Documents, also referred to as an Accompanying Document, which governs the transportation of goods through lorry. Used when the place of loading and the place of unloading are in different countries. The term comes from French: "Convention relative au contrat de transport international de marchandises par route".



The physical flow stops here, when storing the documents in the physical archive. Subsequently, the digitized flow provided by DocuWare starts.



Afterwards, the approval flow was implemented in other departments as well, for instance, PR, Sales, HR, and Administration.



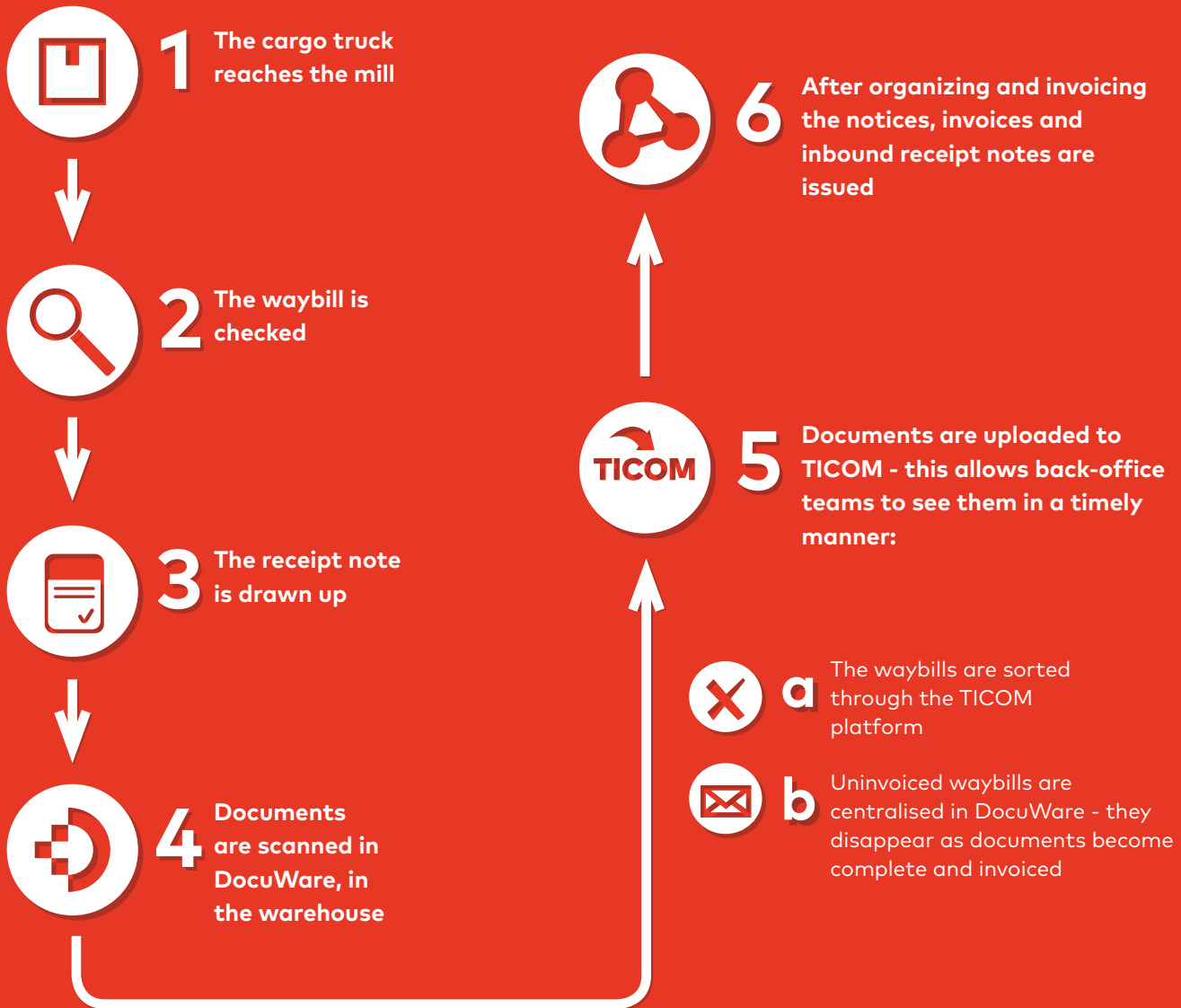
The second important step in the company's digital transformation was the automation of the **Purchasing Department**. This was the first department fully digitalized on all its four branches: Contracts, Waybills, Receipt Notes, and Invoices or Logistics.



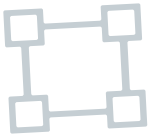
Before DocuWare, the Purchasing teams had to approve the contracts

manually. Therefore, they had to face "mountains" of paper every day, and to physically move them from one place to another.

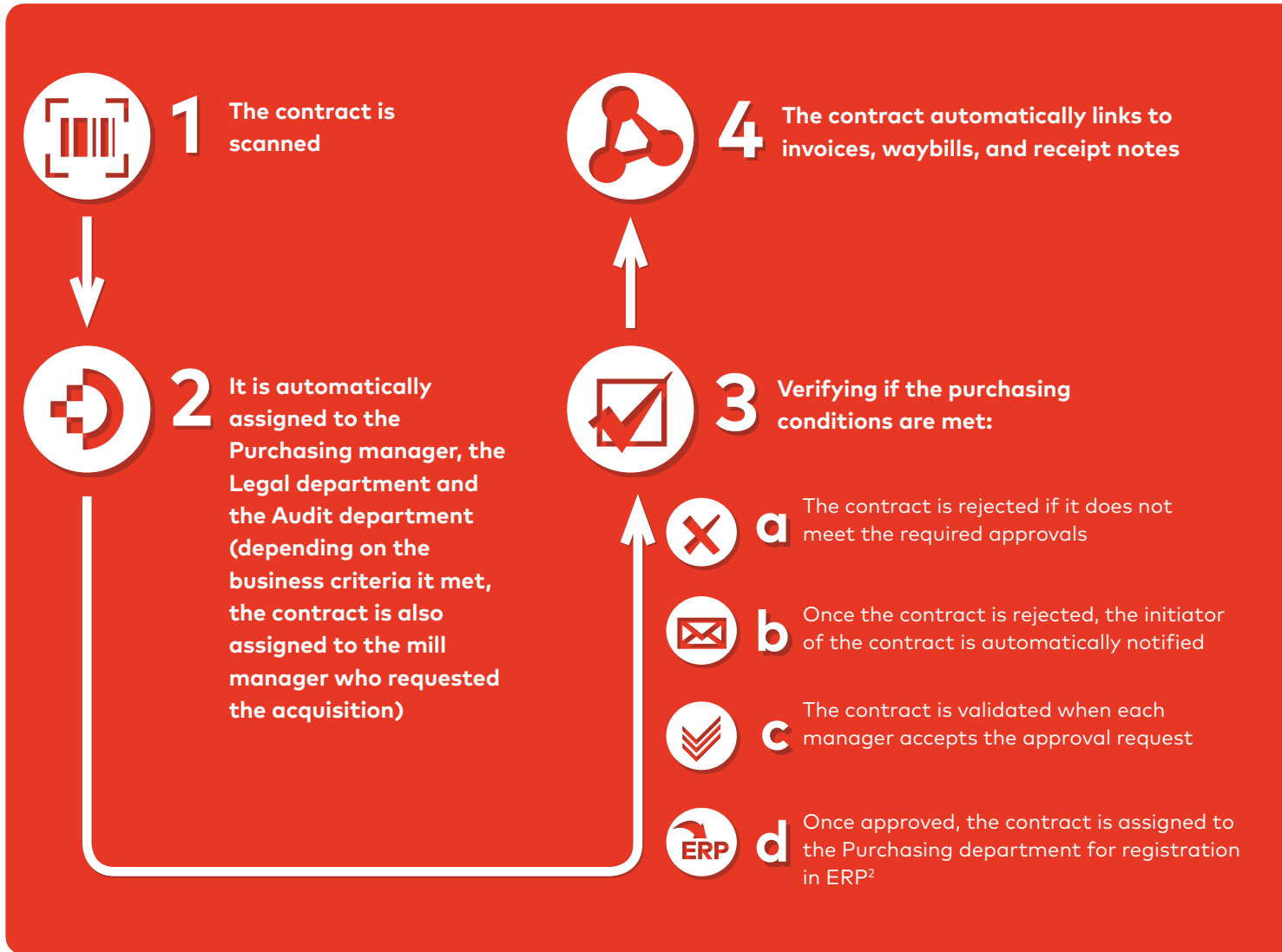
After the flow automation, the Purchasing Department runs as it follows:





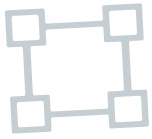


Now, the process of approving contracts to purchase raw materials runs as follows:



Thus, the retrieval of information about documents and their distribution to teams can be easily carried out, due to the automatic retrieval of information directly from the platform.

<sup>2</sup> A unique platform that is used for monitoring, controlling and integrated management of all activities, processes and operations run by a company.



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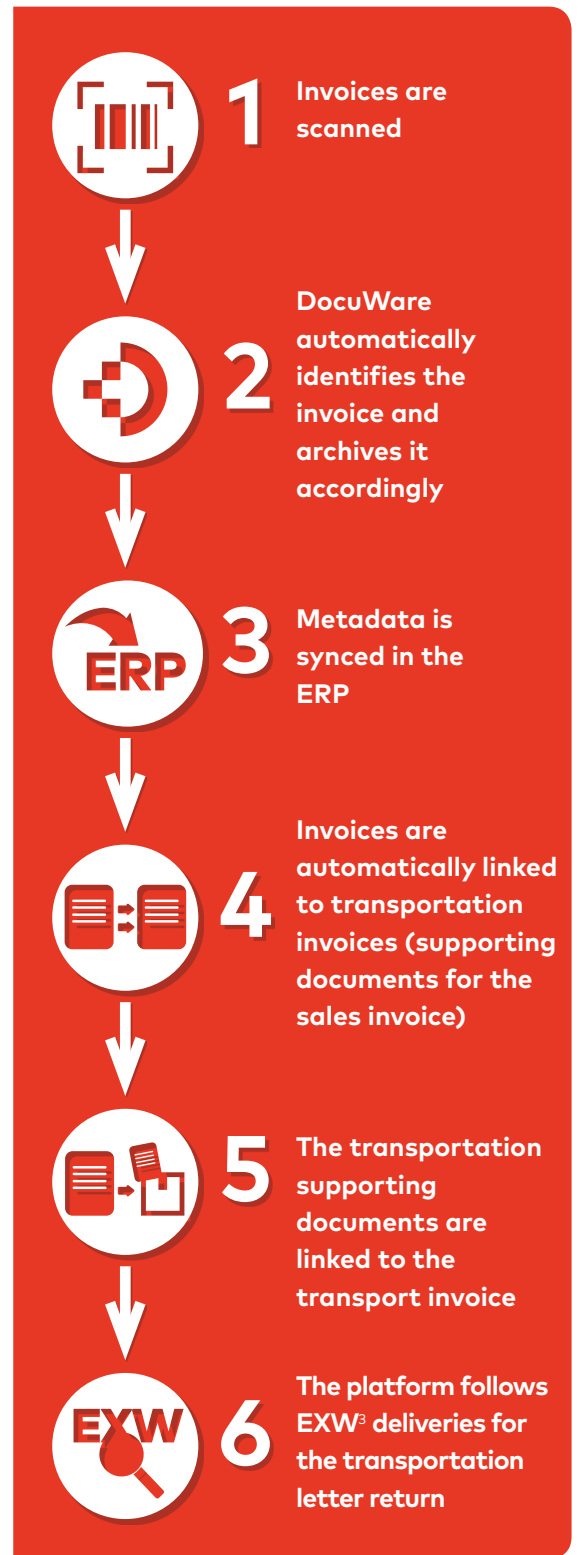
The third important step in the digitization process was automating the entire **Logistics Department**. The company was determined to make this change for the Logistics Department as well, to allow for invoices to be automatically linked to the supporting documents (transportation invoices) for the sales invoice.

Now, the sales invoices archiving flow works like this:

*“The physical documents and DocuWare interact through metadata, or control data. This plays a role in sorting information and, implicitly, in identifying the information which DocuWare will generate for a user.*

Mihai Mihăilescu,  
Project Manager  
HS Timber Group

Digitization alongside Beck et al. Services started with electronic archiving, but HS Timber Group's teams noticed that the platform is versatile and offers new opportunities. Therefore, they asked for the



digitization of the following flows: Payments Approval and Documents Archiving for CSR (Certification and Auditing Partners, through which the company makes sure it works with trustworthy suppliers.).

<sup>3</sup> EX WORKS: In case of a delivery, the product and risks are transferred to the buyer, including the payment of the transport and the cost of insurance from the mill gate of the seller.

# Change management



The opinions of colleagues in all locations in Romania have been gathered for the implementation of the digital archive with the help of DocuWare. The field teams were involved in the entire process of digitization and validation of the solution, the entire project was described as a great teamwork.

At first, teams were reluctant to the idea of switching from physical to digital archiving, believing that a platform such as DocuWare would make their work more difficult, because they were accustomed to the already existing platform, TICOM.



*A connection between DocuWare and TICOM has been established, which is why everything that is processed by TICOM is indexed automatically by DocuWare. This is fantastic.*

Răzvan Pascal,  
Head of Department, Log  
Purchasing Administration - Sebeş

Beck et al. Services consultants were persistent, and they visited HS Timber Group teams' offices several times to see how processes work so they can approach the most effective communication strategy.

They wanted the transition to be as smooth as possible, so they organised training sessions based on logical

explanations and concrete situations. Thus, the teams understood the platform's benefits and learned how to handle any situation in DocuWare.



*The change process was strenuous, and the visits of the Beck et al. Services teams helped us understand that we can rely on them throughout this change, which has meant a great deal to us.*

Răzvan Pascal,  
Head of Department, Log  
Purchasing Administration - Sebeş

If at first teams saw metadata importing and electronic archiving as an extra job, now they know that DocuWare is the platform that has all the documents needed for a seamless business flow.

# Results impacting the entire organization



Thanks to the archive digitization, the working time has been reduced very much. At present, the documents flow related to an invoice can be found in a single platform, just a few clicks away. This way, the Logistics and Purchasing Departments do not have to physically search for the documents required by suppliers or tax authorities.

If beforehand an invoice took up to three months to be approved, this is now done in only a few days.

Another major result was the contracts' approval in a timely manner: if before it took up to ten days, now it is taking just one day.

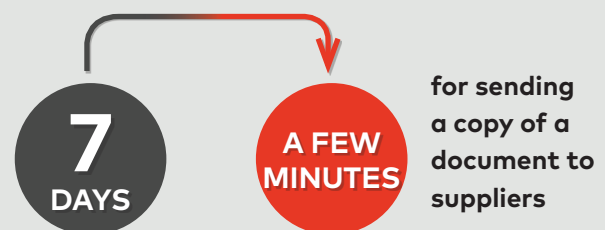
Before DocuWare, teams had to copy the document and physically archive it in three different locations. Now, a document is physically archived in one

place and its electronic copy can be easily accessed, while it is connected with many other documents.

**//** *Before DocuWare, we had to manually process about 350.000 documents each year. It was a lot. Also, if a supplier asked for a copy of a document, the teams needed up to seven days to go to the archive and find the document. Now, all this process happens in a few minutes, almost instantly.*

Răzvan Pascal,  
Head of Department, Log  
Purchasing Administration - Sebeș

## Concrete Results:



# Benefits of the digital transformation



DocuWare facilitates the centralisation of documents and invoices in a single electronic archive.

Once this solution has been implemented, HS Timber Group teams no longer depend on physical or email stored documents. **Everything is better organised and finding an invoice is attained in a timely manner.**

Documents' centralization leads to another big advantage: communicating them internally can now be done through links generated by DocuWare. In addition, dedicated email addresses have been introduced for each mill, to quickly send invoices from one location to another.

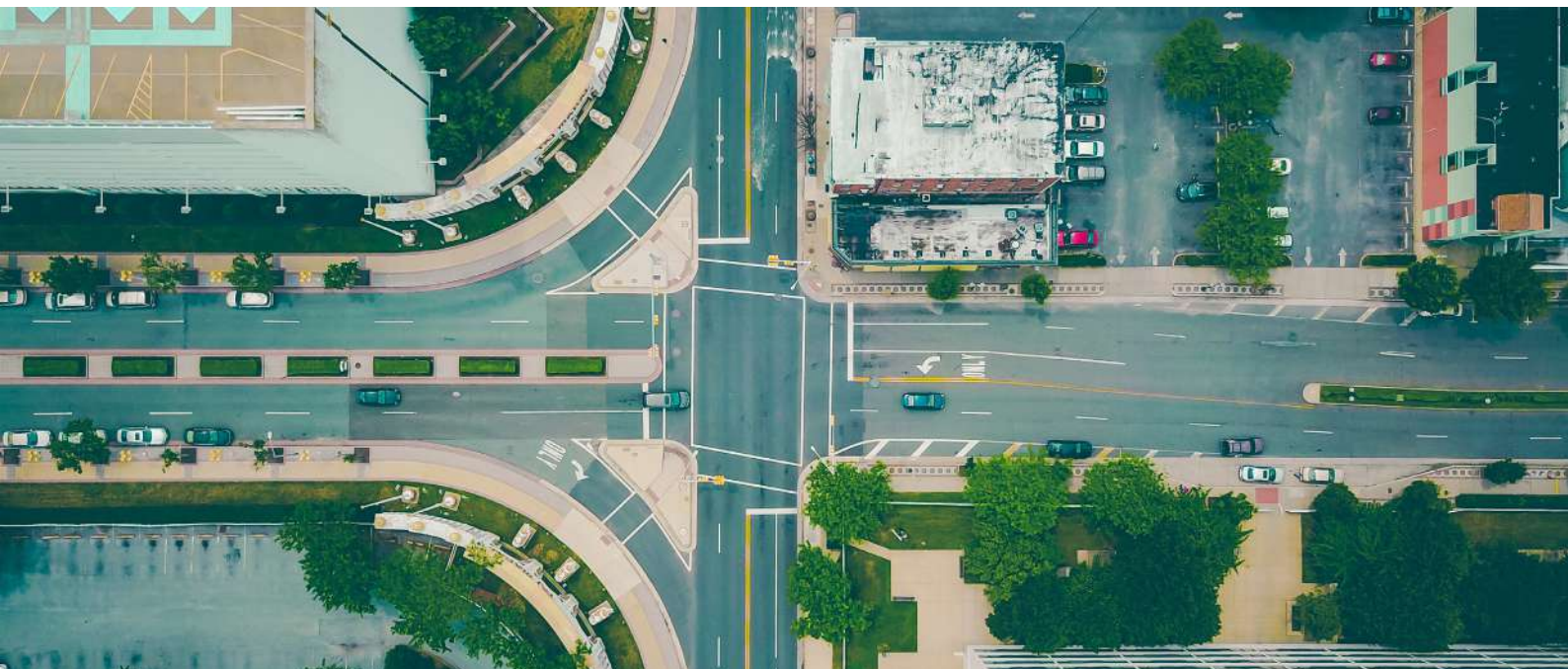
Thanks to the connection between DocuWare and TICOM, the company no longer risks the storing of redundant

information. Searching for an invoice or a document takes less time now.



*Now, all the documentation is stored in one place. One is no longer dependant on external sources, on storing the information several times in different locations, while identifying a document is now much quicker.*

Diarna Melinte,  
Coordinator of the Accounting  
Department  
HS Timber Productions Romania





The biggest benefit, felt by the entire company, is the quick access to documents that they can submit to tax authorities. In case of a rigorous control, the company no longer faces human error or delays when it comes to submitting invoices and documents.

In the past, a tax control process could last even for three years. In these three years, the state's representatives were analysing all physically stored documents, representing a ten-year period. Now, the control process is run electronically, directly in the Cloud and,

with the help of DocuWare, one can very easily access a contract, starting from an invoice.

Another benefit of the entire digitization process has been felt by suppliers as well. Before DocuWare, it took a lot of time to search for the documents requested by the suppliers, The documents can now be found easy and the suppliers are much happier with their collaboration with the company.



## Concrete Benefits:



Documents' centralisation



Internal communication via browser-type links



Storage of redundant information has been eliminated



Efficient way of working with control bodies by providing the necessary documents directly in the Cloud

# Future prospects



An important future perspective for both companies is to adapt DocuWare to the fast pace of the HS Timber Group's teams.

At the same time, there is a prospect of implementing the Barcode & Forms module, as it facilitates prestoring, indexing and storing processes, with the use of a barcode.

In addition, the company aspires to the integration of a mobile application, DocuWare Mobile, through which it can approve payments from anywhere, without depending on the presence of the responsible person in the office.

Subsequently, HS Timber Group wants to undergo a comprehensive digitization process, to optimise the

current automated flows, in a move to further save time. This way, the company wants to encourage existing teams to focus on less repetitive tasks, to increase work efficiency for each department and to limit human error as much as possible.



*Things work well and the collaboration will be a long-term one, because new proposals and new changes appear all the time and this project is in a continuous development state.*

Răzvan Pascal,  
Head of Department, Log  
Purchasing Administration - Sebeş





**Beck et al. Services** represents the company that provides consulting, implementation and support to accelerate the digitization of documents and processes through the IT consultants of the team.

Beck et al. develops and supports the digital way of working so that their clients' companies to grow intelligently.

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