



SSB WIND SYSTEMS END-TO-END SERVICE MITIGATES INFORMATION RISKS

SSB Wind Systems improves compliance by entrusting Iron Mountain with off-site data protection and online records management

CHALLENGE:

Acquisition by US-based Emerson Electric triggered need to transform records management and data protection processes

SOLUTION:

Off-site data protection and records management services, introducing process consistency and enhanced security

VALUE:

Reduced business risk and helped assure compliance with internal audit, Sarbanes-Oxley, and German commercial regulation

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Holger Gemassmer
IT Director
SSB Wind Systems

CLIENT

Established in 1970, SSB Wind Systems GmbH & Co. KG (formerly: SSB Antriebstechnik GmbH & Co. KG) is a German specialist designer and manufacturer of rotor blade control systems as well as switch and control cabinets for wind turbines. The company was acquired by US manufacturing and technology company Emerson Electric (NYSE: EMR) in 2009, and now forms part of the group's *Industrial Automation* business division.

CHALLENGE

SSB Wind Systems had always managed its own company records, each department maintaining its archives in-house in accordance with the required German standards. However, its acquisition by Emerson Electric introduced a whole new perspective.

Holger Gemassmer, IT Director at SSB Wind Systems, explains: “Being part of a massive US corporation meant that we needed to meet new group policies on records management and data protection. So, as well as meeting *Handelsgesetzbuch* - the German commercial code - we now

needed, for example, to demonstrate compliance with internal audit requirements as well as Sarbanes-Oxley regulations.”

SOLUTION

The company had to reorganise its data and records management. One of the first areas of focus was the introduction of off-site secure storage of data back-up tapes. Containing essential company electronic data, these tapes are vital to aid business continuity in the event of a catastrophic failure of company IT systems or a natural disaster such as flood or fire.

After considering a number of options SSB Wind Systems chose the Iron Mountain off-site data protection service. Holger Gemassmer says: “Iron Mountain was a perfect match for us. It could offer us the type of service we needed and it was a known quantity because it also supports Emerson Electric extensively in the US, in the UK, and elsewhere around the globe. Internally, within the corporation, when we said that we intended to work with Iron Mountain, there was immediate confidence in its capabilities.”

CASE STUDY MANUFACTURING AND ENGINEERING

SSB WIND SYSTEMS

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SSB Wind Systems conducts daily, weekly, monthly, and annual back-up procedures, with tapes rotating every five weeks. Tapes are always transported in a secure metal suitcase to which only the company and Iron Mountain have the key.

The next task was to review paper-based records and move document archives off-site for better internal compliance. SSB Wind Systems needed a partner organisation and after internal discussions within Emerson Electric it again chose Iron Mountain.

“Iron Mountain has an impressive bespoke storage facility nearby, giving easy access to files should we need it,” confirms Holger Gemassmer. “It also made perfect sense for us to have a single supplier for both tape and document storage.”

Another attraction was the functionality of IM Connect™, the Iron Mountain online portal, as this would help SSB Wind Systems with indexing and management of documents and help streamline the process.

SSB Wind Systems used its own people to review company archives and create a catalogue of stored documents. Now, after packing documents into boxes, the details including retention dates are entered into IM Connect before the boxes are handed over to Iron Mountain for safe keeping. Initially, around 150 boxes of documents containing 280,000 pages of files were lodged with Iron Mountain, but this is forecast to grow to around 2,000 boxes as company archives continue to be reviewed and consolidated for long-term archiving.

VALUE

By moving its tape and paper-based archives off-site, SSB Wind Systems has enhanced business resilience and compliance. Holger Gemassmer comments: “We have a nuclear power plant close by, flooding from sprinkler systems is a possibility, and fire and theft are other potential dangers. By outsourcing to Iron Mountain all these potential business risks to our business are reduced. And I think, there are other benefits too. Our records are more secure, we have a consolidated view of our archives, our costs are far more transparent, and we can make better business use of the storage space we have freed up.”

Should documents be required there are a number of retrieval options. Iron Mountain offers a standard next-day or two-day service or, in an emergency, it can retrieve a specific file from a box, scan it and send it to SSB Wind Systems electronically. Holger Gemassmer adds: “The IM Connect portal is a key resource. It’s a web-based service so we haven’t needed to buy or install anything to manage our files. It’s well laid out, very user friendly, and it maintains a comprehensive record of where every one of our files is stored.”

With paper-based files now formally catalogued and assigned a retention date company records are being more proactively managed. When disposal is appropriate Iron Mountain can arrange secure destruction for complete peace-of-mind. “Iron Mountain has proved to be a very professional company and we have complete trust in its capabilities,” concludes Holger Gemassmer. “We now have consistent company-wide processes with improved compliance, better security, and fast flexible access to files whenever we need it.”



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