



## INDUSTRY

Financial Services

## CHALLENGE

Eliminate the cost and complexity of storing and accessing 80,000 files-worth of insurance paperwork

## SOLUTION

Outsourcing of document storage to safe, secure Iron Mountain archive centres, together with scanning and file transfer services

## VALUE

- Strong positive effects on customer service, compliance, and cash flow
- Business processes are more efficient
- Full investment payback within three years

## CASE STUDY

### SWISS LIFE

## ASSURING BETTER CUSTOMER SERVICE

### COSTLY AND COMPLEX TO RUN

Swiss Life is one of Europe's leading providers of life insurance and pensions for private and business customers. In Germany it manages well over one million life insurance policies, while some 100,000 companies have Swiss Life corporate pension solutions.

Insurance companies in general have huge holdings of paper-based records, with retention periods of up to ten years. A large number still manage the archiving process themselves. To find individual documents they require expensive management systems, while the space used for storage could be used more profitably.

### ENSURING STRICT COMPLIANCE

Swiss Life decided to outsource the storage of its vast quantities of paperwork to Iron Mountain®. "Firstly, as with other insurance companies, keeping files is not one of our core skills or processes," says Thomas Hübner, Head of Applications Management at Swiss Life. "However, for us it goes without saying that the documents should be stored in accordance with the requirements of the German data protection act."

To ensure compliance the Swiss Life files are stored safely and securely in Iron Mountain archive centres in Markt Schwaben and Fürstenfeldbruck. Climate control ensures optimum temperature and humidity levels. Smoke detectors, fireproof walls, and

steel doors guard against fires. Zone access controls and video surveillance keep unauthorised persons out. Regular independent inspections ensure the archives comply with current regulations.

### NATURAL CHOICE

This approach provides a backup archive for the entire correspondence of Swiss Life Germany and its German subsidiaries. Even the documents that Swiss Life scans itself are archived by Iron Mountain in paper form.

While new insurance documents were already available to Swiss Life people as digital images, they still had to consult paper files. The next logical step was for the company to digitise its archives, and Swiss Life issued an invitation to tender.

Thomas Hübner explains the choice of Iron Mountain: "We had already had very good past experience with Iron Mountain in the area of paper archiving. In addition, we were convinced that the company could supply all the services associated with archiving, scanning, transporting files, and data exchange from one source. Last but not least, the good price performance ratio and the confidence inspiring meetings in advance of the contract were crucial."



“WE’VE BEEN ABLE TO REDUCE OUR DELIVERY AND ACCESS COSTS TO PRACTICALLY ZERO.”

**Thomas Hübner**  
Head of Applications Management  
Swiss Life

## HIGHLY SECURE, EFFICIENT SERVICE

Over a period of four months Iron Mountain scanned around 80,000 files full of paper in 18 batches at an average of 4,500 per week. The scans were electronically transferred into the Swiss Life digital archive daily. Authorised Swiss Life employees can now easily access them direct from their desktops.

Iron Mountain continues to manage around 20,000 archive boxes for Swiss Life, and some 2,700 new documents are added every day. If the insurer still needs the original paper files, Iron Mountain offers a 24\*7 online service to find and order them. To facilitate that process, the documents have been indexed with individual bar codes.

Original documents are delivered to Swiss Life within 24 hours. To ensure they do not fall into the wrong hands while in transit, Iron Mountain uses its own secure vehicle fleet with additional safety devices such as GPS tracking.

## INVESTMENT PAYBACK

Prior to signing the outsourcing contract with Iron Mountain, Swiss Life conducted a return on investment analysis. Those calculations showed a payback period in just over three years. The analysis also showed that significant benefits would result from the digitisation exercise.

Now around 33,000 digital files are accessed every month, for example for the purpose of paying life assurance policies. The time spent accessing documents has been slashed and several persons can consult an electronic file at the same time. That’s made business processes more efficient, reduced costs, and improved customer service.

“We’ve been able to reduce our delivery and access costs to practically zero,” concludes Thomas Hübner. “We are satisfied with Iron Mountain’s services, as the team has really identified with our project and attaches great importance to quality assurance.”

“WE WERE CONVINCED THAT THE COMPANY COULD SUPPLY ALL THE SERVICES ASSOCIATED WITH ARCHIVING, SCANNING, TRANSPORTING FILES, AND DATA EXCHANGE FROM ONE SOURCE.”

**Thomas Hübner**  
Head of Applications Management  
Swiss Life

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### ABOUT IRON MOUNTAIN

Iron Mountain operates in major markets worldwide, serving thousands of customers throughout the UK, Europe, US, Canada, Asia Pacific and Latin America. For more information, visit our website at [www.ironmountain.co.uk](http://www.ironmountain.co.uk) or at [www.ironmountain.ie](http://www.ironmountain.ie)

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