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First Digital and The National Bargaining Council for the
Road Freight and Logistics Industry (NBCRFLI)
Case Study K2 process automation and
Microsoft SharePoint

The National Bargaining Council for the Road Freight and Logistics Industry (NBCRFLI)

Location:	Across South Africa, including head office in Johannesburg, Gauteng
Industry:	Transport and logistics
Software:	K2 process automation software, Microsoft SharePoint
Users:	NBCRFLI management, supervising agents, and regional managers at its 17 branches across South Africa
Benefits:	Digitisation of the organisation's previously manual, paper-based agreement administration, disputes resolution, conciliation and arbitration, compliance, enforcement and exemption process.

Overview

Governed by the Labour Relations Act of 1995, the National Bargaining Council for the Road Freight and Logistics Industry (NBCRFLI) allows for related employer and employee organisations to establish a bargaining council. Through collective bargaining, trade unions and member employer organisations are able to negotiate matters that are of mutual interest to the sector. This approach allows for better regulation of matters which affect the industry as a whole, thereby enforcing minimum standards and conditions of employment, which ultimately contributes to labour stability. The Council also supports its members through managing annual and sick leave, holiday bonus funds, and by providing health and wellness as well as dispute resolution management services.

Challenge

The NBCRFLI's activities include agreement administration, disputes resolution, conciliation and arbitration, and enforcement for both employees and employers within the South African road freight and logistics sector.

The process, which could encompass an average of 90 grievance cases in progress on any given month across its 17 South African sites, the assignment of both senior and local agents per case for investigation purposes, and the scheduling of NBCRFLI hearings, arbitration and litigation, was previously paper-based.

This meant that it was difficult to find the files pertaining to specific cases, and provide status updates to querents. Much of the case detail was based on faxed documents and fax receipts, which were often easily lost and also faded over time. And because all queries had to be channelled via NBCRFLI's Gauteng-based head office, it could take several days for local agents to be able to provide a response or update.

Added to this, NBCRFLI's management had no centralised view of the number of active cases, which cases had been concluded, or regional and seasonal demands increases (for instance the increase in leave-related pay-out grievances towards year-end).

Solution

Based on a long-term relationship with NBCRFLI CIO, Tommie van Schalkwyk, First Technology Digital was tasked with applying its technical expertise to the digitisation of this process using K2 business process management (BPM) software. The digital transformation company built a modular K2-based system that could be implemented in a phased approach, using SQL for data storage. First Digital also built NBCRFLI's website using Microsoft SharePoint.

Benefits

NBCRFLI's cases are now centrally managed and stored, meaning that the searchability of cases has been significantly improved. Status update requests can now be dealt with within minutes, as opposed to days. Agents are able to search online for case information using ID numbers, employee or employer details, and case numbers, greatly improving productivity and end user satisfaction. They can also quickly and easily access a detailed view of the case status, which was one of the organisation's biggest challenges previously.

In addition, the digitisation of paper-based information has also enhanced the auditability of all data captured.

Further, it is now possible for the NBCRFLI to assign and track agent key performance indicators (KPIs), as management can now see at-a-glance how long each agent takes on average to close cases. Management is also able to identify demand patterns within the various regions, adding capacity at different times for different regions as needed.