rydoo

Using AI and data to optimise expense management: ARAG's success story

ARAG	HQ Düsseldorf, Germany	Founded 1935	Industry Insurance	Employees + 5,000

The ARAG Group is the largest family-owned company in the German insurance industry and the world's leading legal insurer. In addition, ARAG also offers high-quality products and services in private health insurance as well as in the casualty and property segment.

Today, the insurance group is active in 19 countries — in Europe, the US, Canada, and Australia. With over 5,000 employees, the Group generates revenue and premium income totalling about €2.4 billion.

How can a remote setting impact expense management?

The ARAG Group's solid national and international growth in recent years is reflected not only in the continued increase in premium income but also in the number of employees. This, along with the coronavirus pandemic, increased the **need to digitise processes and streamline expense management**.

The 2020 pandemic significantly impacted the working environment and highlighted the limitations of manual processes in a remote setting. Without the ability to physically hand-deliver receipts to the office, processes were delayed, and the risk of losing important documents increased. Overall, it wasn't easy to track and monitor expenses across geographically dispersed teams.

Inevitably, there was a **high volume of e-mail correspondence and phone calls to collect information, sort and submit paper receipts, taking up valuable employee time and leading to reimbursement delays**, which was not ideal, especially for larger expenses.

Additionally, and when considering a post-pandemic period, ARAG anticipated a rise in travel expenses and recognised the need to implement a system that could efficiently handle the increase in expense claims.

To address these challenges, **ARAG sought a simple, intelligent, and entirely digital expense management solution** to streamline processes and seamlessly scale to accommodate its growing teams.

The need for an all-digital expense management system

When making its decision, ARAG prioritised a fully digital expense management system, where every step from claim submission and approval to payment and archiving would be 100% digital, eliminating all paper-based steps.

Rydoo's software stood out for ARAG because it allowed employees to simply scan and upload receipts, making the process effortless for both employees and approvers.

The ability for employees to submit error-free expenses within moments via their computers or even on the go with their smartphones was a perfect fit for ARAG's vision of a smart solution.

*The OCR recognition rates are extremely good, so employees don't have to fill in fields, which **saves them lot of time**."*

Wolfgang Pille
Cost Accounting/Audit Department
at ARAG

Integrations were another important consideration. ARAG needed seamless connections between Rydoo and its existing SAP accounting system and its HR system to automatically import employee master data such as employee names, supervisors, email addresses, cost centres, etc. Data protection also played a key role in selecting a new solution.

After thoroughly evaluating different systems, ARAG chose Rydoo for its comprehensive, fully digital and user-friendly software, making it convenient for all users, not just the finance team.

A software that fits all teams

While the finance team was the primary user of the software, ARAG recognised the importance of ensuring that all employees, including frequent travellers and power users, were also happy with it. Their involvement in the project was essential for a smooth implementation.

During the implementation and technical setup, **Rydoo provided training for the finance and accounting teams**, and ARAG created additional digital work instructions and support videos for employees. **The intuitive design of the Rydoo app ensured that ARAG's employees adapted quickly and required minimal training.**

*Rydoo is exactly the smart solution we were looking for: the employee can **simply take a photo of the receipt and upload it**, and the supervisor can easily approve it via the app.*

Wolfgang Pille
Cost Accounting/Audit Department at ARAG

Following implementation, ARAG emphasises Rydoo's excellent customer support, which includes a responsive chat function and a helpful support team. This highlights the importance of a comprehensive solution that goes beyond automation to provide human support when needed.

> *The customer service, which I occasionally use via the chat function, responds within minutes and is always very quick and helpful. If there is something we need to discuss with the technical team, it can take a little longer, but **there has never been an issue that hasn't been resolved.***

Joost de Jong
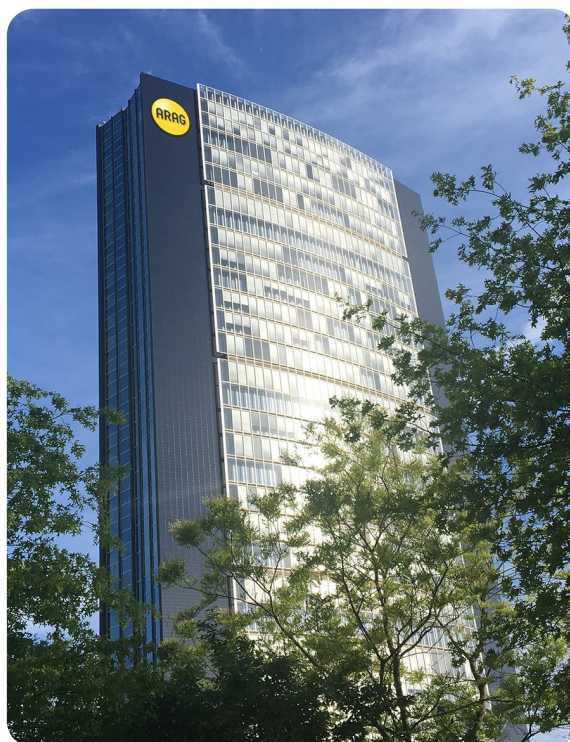Head of SAP Coordination/Accounting and Invoice Verification Team Leader at ARAG

The power of using data and digital tools to optimise expense management

ARAG had a significant efficiency increase using Rydoo's autofill and underlined automated expense approvals.

Rydoo's **AI-powered autofill enabled the team to submit expenses faster and error-free.** After scanning the receipt, the system automatically populates information such as the merchant, amount, date, currency, country, and tax rate from as many pages as needed with over 95% accuracy, allowing employees to save working hours.

This, combined with rules for automated approval workflows implemented based on data collected since 1 April 2022, **has resulted in significant cost savings for ARAG.**

The new process frees up valuable time for the finance team, which now only has to carry out manual checks for more complex cases.

For example, restaurant and catering expenses are being closely monitored due to tax implications. Similarly, expenses above a certain threshold also need to be manually reviewed to ensure compliance with the Group's travel policy and potential cost savings. **This intelligent two-tiered approach effectively allocates resources by prioritising manual review for areas requiring human expertise**, while streamlining the process for routine expenses.

The automation implemented by ARAG illustrates the power of using AI and data to optimise expense management. By automating repetitive tasks and strategically leveraging human expertise, **ARAG achieved a balance between efficiency and control, ultimately saving time and money.**

Because it is a fully integrated and a completely digital solution, our processes have certainly been accelerated. We now have an almost 100% digital workflow, and ***approving and checking expenses can be done with just a few clicks.***

Wolfgang Pille
Cost Accounting/Audit Department at ARAG

Higher efficiency, more transparency and happier employees

ARAG's experience with Rydoo is a good example for other organisations looking to modernise their travel and expense management processes. The adoption of Rydoo was a success not just within the company; it also left a lasting impression on colleagues from other organisations.

ARAG's experience with Rydoo is a practical example of the system's reliability and user satisfaction.
The results speak for themselves, with increased efficiency, improved transparency, and, most importantly, satisfied employees.

Many colleagues said, ***"Wow, you have a great, easy-to-use application, always available."*** *The employees in our team were also very enthusiastic about the application and emphasised its user-friendliness when checking travel expenses.*

Wolfgang Pille
Cost Accounting/Audit Department at ARAG