Non-Books: Jigsaw Falling into Place

Integrate managing non-book articles into your ERP system in a way previously impossible
Reader? Fan? Communicator? Want-it-all customer?
Cater for the multi-faceted end-user

In order to attract end-users, who can now in their free time choose between a huge and constantly growing variety of products, formats, and channels, modern publishing has to cross previously rigid boundaries.

As Lance Fensterman, Senior Vice President at Reed Exhibitions with global leadership responsibilities for ReedPOP, explained at the Publishers’ Forum 2015 in Berlin, an annual conference on the future of the industry, “the E2E – end-to-end – movement continues unabated touching new sectors, products, and thus customers every day. Publishing, authors, retailers and readers will not be spared from this change in how readers connect with books. The E2E movement, for example driven by the cultivation of passionate fan communities, will affect the world of publishing.”

A key element in best serving the needs of passionate fans, who are no longer just readers, and to foster their loyalty is the ability to offer articles ‘beyond the content’ (be it analog or digital), for example non-book articles which help to build an attractive, long-lasting world of a special feeling around a book / magazine or digital content.

Different horses, different courses:
get non-book products integration on track

“Connect with books”: merchandising and selling content- or book-related products, such as games, toys, and stuffed animals featuring or representing the characters of a book, requires software support for a different set of processes in comparison to, for example, academic publishers.

Promoting seasonal articles, including holding these products back until a defined date and only shipping them as a bundle in accordance with the respective season, is a key element of a non-book articles workflow support. Other elements are, of course, stock allocation and reservation, setting up quotas, assembling sets, and integrating (international) contractors and suppliers from other industries – including paying customs duties and complying with laws in other countries.

Until now, it has been impossible to integrate handling non-book articles into the modern workflow support of a central, single system for publishing operating on one database. Now you can do it with version 10.11 of the Klopotek rich client publishing solution. Some examples of key business processes, which are now supported, have been selected below.
Integrate contractors and suppliers

New product forms require a greater number of suppliers – Making partial payments becomes necessary – Quotations to multiple suppliers speeds up decision-making

Including contractors

An important element in offering ‘non-publishing’ articles as a publisher is the need to support sales and logistics processes in which different, legally independent companies sell their own products and products from other companies to different groups of customers without needing to purchase the necessary stock beforehand. In Klopotek, you can define an organizational unit ‘Contractor’ for order processing. The contractor is the customer’s immediate contact and accepts orders for its own and / or third-party products and processes them in its own name.

Partial payments in supplier orders

For orders (production, marketing, and material orders) to, for example, suppliers in Asia, it can be necessary to make partial payments (e.g. pro forma invoices, advances, final payments). Partial payments are not reviewed financially in the Klopotek system; this task is the responsibility of the financial accounting department. However, information on number and size of the partial payments as well as fulfillment must be exchanged between the Klopotek system and the respective finance system. This allows the accounting department to assess when certain sums of money will be required and allows the production department to check whether partial payments have been made on time in the Klopotek system.

An interface is available for exporting partial payments to your finance system. It contains all the necessary data for the export: payment reason, due date, amount (in order currency), reference number, and document date.

And a Message-Based Service – ‘Partial Payments adaptor (IN)’ – processes incoming XML messages with data on completed partial payments for supplier orders from your finance system.

Supplier orders as quotation requests

To support your decision-making process, requests for quotations can be sent to multiple suppliers for supplier orders (production, marketing, and material orders). The quotations received from the suppliers are recorded. After you have compared the quotations, you decide which supplier receives the order and convert the request for quotation into an order. For quotation requests, a MS Word® mail merge template which you can configure individually is provided, along with a style sheet for creating XML documents.

Completing value and quantity of the order in a single step: If the completion of quantities and values for order lines coincides in terms of time and organization in your company, you can complete quantities and value in a single step in the ‘Incoming Invoices’ module. The quantity does not need to be completed separately before the value, allowing you to work more efficiently.
Manage orders

Check pending orders prior to automatically processing these orders – Improve utilizing distribution capacities – Quick & easy: confirmations & offers via e-mail

Hold or release: orders received overview

As a large company with a large number of orders, it makes sense to get an overview of the orders which are pending invoicing before they are automatically processed by the system. Klopotek provides a means of monitoring orders and credit notes and of controlling their release for further processing. The ‘Orders Received Overview’ displays all the newly created, generated or imported orders and credits which have not yet been processed by the invoicing procedure or which are on hold. You can hold or release orders for further processing in the overview itself, and open specific orders for editing.

Make most of your distribution capacities: overview of open orders

You can select particular orders from an ‘Open Orders’ overview in the Klopotek system, define the scope of an invoicing run and start invoicing for the selected scope. This helps you to get a better overview of open orders, ensures that order processing is fast and precise, and enables you to improve the utilization of distribution capacities as a result of optimized control over the volume of orders to be shipped. ‘Open Orders’ makes it easy to find the reason why a particular order has not been invoiced and to see the reason for the errors. Invoicing particular orders is also easier, e.g. to prioritize particular orders (fast sellers) or to handle the seasonal business the best possible way.

Order confirmations and offers via e-mail

When entering an order in Klopotek, you can generate an order confirmation or an offer and send it via e-mail to the customer you were just talking to. The order confirmation or the offer contains information on the availability and prices of the desired products, as determined by the calculation function in the system. A PDF document is generated, which is automatically attached to the e-mail and saved in the file system.

Handle stock

Stock allocation, setting up quotas, availability check, expired offers & pro formas, checking stock disposability – lots of ‘lot’ information – creating interest: pre-deliveries

Make a reservation: stock allocation

Using the stock allocation feature you can reserve goods for customers or customer groups independently of orders on hand, make reservations before goods are received in the warehouse (i.e. independent of the available stock), include future stock (e.g. from planned production runs), allocate stock independently of the priority of an order, allocate future production at delivery level, and hold deliveries until they are approved.
Get a quot-a: quotas

Quotas can be set up to allow for the reservation of stock and/or planned production independent of orders on hand. A quota can be set up per edition / print / delivery and quota group for all managed inventory, where you specify the quantity which should be reserved for the quota. Quota groups collect quotas for groups of customers: one quota group can be specified for every customer. The quotas in this group then take precedence when fulfilling orders for this customer.

Check your ability to make reservations

The stock required for an order line can be reserved when the remainder of the customer's quota (product quota in the quota group assigned to the customer) less the already reserved quantity is greater than the quantity to be reserved. If not, but the remainder in the ‘Standard’ quota (less stock already reserved in this quota) is sufficient for the fraction of the quantity to be reserved which cannot be reserved in the primary quota, the stock is reserved. In this case, the corresponding fractions are reserved in the respective quotas. If the ‘Standard’ quota no longer contains sufficient stock to fulfill the remaining order quantity, stock cannot be reserved for the line. In the order line, the product is regarded as available when the quantity required is less than or equal to the available stock in the customer quota plus the available stock in the ‘Standard’ quota.

Out of date? Expired offers and pro formas

Order lines from offers and pro formas are allocated stock like normal orders, as long as they have not been terminated. A related batch procedure checks for all open offers and pro formas whether the term of the offer (plus a defined number of grace days) has expired. If so, it cancels the corresponding orders. These orders are no longer allocated stock and the stock which was previously allocated is available again.

Can you move it? Checking procedure when moving stock

When processing transfers from the stock type ‘Disposable Stock’ to other stock types, the system checks that the quantity being transferred is not greater than the disposable quantity which is not reserved in the ‘Standard’ quota. If the condition is not met, the system displays a warning.

Lot tracking at the warehouse

In the Klopotek system, a ‘lot’ represents the combination of a product's edition, reprint and delivery numbers created during goods-in. The lot and goods-in date are linked to the quantities and locations used for the lot’s storage. This lot information remains linked even if product quantities are transferred to a new storage location, provided the information is unique there. The lot information can be used for many storage locations to determine the lot of the products stored there. If erroneous products are already stocked, it is possible to determine the partial quantities and their locations for a large part of the total quantity.

Pre-deliveries of small quantities

So that pre-deliveries of small quantities (e.g. deliveries of samples for sales reps) which are not recorded as planned partial deliveries do not cause the first delivery to be confirmed when the corresponding goods-in posting is made and thus cause the print run to become the current print run, your system administrator can configure special goods-in postings for this kind of pre-delivery.
Assemble sets

The Matryoshka doll of distribution systems: set in set in set ... – Can’t get it all: partial delivery of set components – Want some more? Packing units with or without sets

Putting it together: internal and external set assembly

Assembling sets is an important element of handling non-book articles, as particular products are delivered in pieces (product parts) by suppliers. The product parts are assembled into the finished product in the warehouse, which can then be ordered. Klopotek supports internal (own warehouse) and external set assembly.

For internal assembly, the individual product parts for the orderable product are created in the ‘Stock Items’ module. When saved, the product parts themselves are created as stock items which can be managed in the warehouse. The product parts can be entered into or removed from stock or transferred to another location in the warehouse. The product parts are excluded from stock valuation; instead the stock valuation takes the assembled product into account.

If, in your company, sets are assembled by external service providers, the Klopotek system supports both possible variants: external set assembly takes place with set components which are in the warehouse, or external set assembly takes place with set components which are not yet in the warehouse.

If a set contains a component which is not stocked, the system does not check the quantity when the set is assembled. In this case, the system does not post any changes in quantity.

Compose freely: sets in sets

Using Klopotek, it is possible to assign a set not only products but also other sets as components. There is no limit to the nesting depth for sets in sets. Assigning sets as components of other sets makes it easier for you to create and maintain complex product structures.

Multi-level sets enable you to operate flexibly, as the price determination, discount determination, warehousing, and presentation on documents are controlled at the level of the individual set. The system interprets the individual parameters recursively.

Processing multi-level sets

When processing an order line which contains a set, the system generates recursive sub-lines for the set components. The quantities are the product of the quantity from the next highest level and the number of components in the set.

When a set Y is a component of another set X and some copies of set components from set Y in set X should not be invoiced, these copies are also free of charge in set X. In addition, uncharged copies defined at set level, i.e. the entire set is free of charge, lead to additional uncharged copies of components.
Partial delivery of set components for prepacked sets

You can set the system to handle sets marked as ‘pre-packed’ as non-prepacked sets – depending on their combination of location, delivery status and notes key – if there is not enough stock. This leads to partial deliveries of individual set components.

In addition, you can mark set components as optional if it is not mandatory for them to be part of a set (e.g. bookmarks). If there is not enough stock for the optional set components, the system invoices and delivers the set without these optional components. The set sub-lines for the optional components which cannot be shipped are set to ‘Final, Not Released for Invoicing’ and the customer receives appropriate notification.

Sorting the set structure by ISBN / order number

As a default setting in the Klopotek system, the sort number determines the order in which a set is disassembled into its components. However, your system administrator can also specify that the ISBN (or the order number if no ISBN exists) is used to sort the set components on documents instead of the sort number.

Display the PUs quantity in the set structure

When editing the structure of a set, you can specify the number of packing units (PUs) for a set component: in the assembly order for the set, the system displays both the number of packing units for the set components and the total quantity of packing units which are required in order to assemble the set. (This information is printed on the assembly order.) The system also displays the number of planned PUs for the respective print run.
Manage the warehouse

Inventories made easy ... – ... and the auditing process, too

Product-related inventory

In addition to the optional restriction to sub-areas of the warehouse, inventories can also be restricted to a product or list of products. Inventories can be carried out for one or more products covering all the storage locations where these products are stored.

When you open an inventory, you can restrict it to a sub-area of the warehouse, one or more products, and a sub-area of the warehouse and one or more products. The system determines the relevant storage locations and records them in the count list. No movements to or from these storage locations are permitted until the inventory is completed.

In more detail ... – inventory for shelf sections: in order to provide optimal support for a continuous inventory process, you can specify in more detail for which areas inventory should be taken. You can take a partial inventory of just a section of a shelf (compartment and level).

When the auditor is assessing: ‘Warehouse Update’ report

The ‘Warehouse Update’ report of the Klopotek system serves as evidence of inventories carried out and the inventory balance as at the closing date for your auditor. It can also be used for internal auditing purposes. The report can be run for a single warehouse and effective date (last day of the month) and can be restricted to the products from a specific company group. The effective date defaults to the date of the last monthly evaluation.
Plan intensive periods

Springtime arrivals – Shipping as a bundle in accordance with the season – and then it’s SALES time

Merry X-Mas: seasonal articles

Seasonal sales with fixed appointments are phases of especially intensive sales activity and especially high turnovers. They take place on specific occasions, such as Easter, Christmas, or Mothers’ Day. You can plan specific promotions and special offers for these dates with your business.

You can flag products as seasonal articles for seasonal sales. In addition, you can create lists of seasonal products using a selection criterion and use stylesheets to process them for various purposes.

It’s not X-Mas yet: ordering seasonal products

Products which you have flagged as ‘seasonal’ in the Klopotek system can be ordered by your customers at any time. However, these products are held back until a defined date and only shipped as a bundle in accordance with the respective season (even if the products are in stock at the time of order). In addition, the customer receives a notification with information on the actual planned shipping date.

Orders defined for ‘advance shipping’ are also invoiced if they contain seasonal products. This means that the system delivers orders prior to the first release if stock is available, irrespective of whether the orders are outside the time frame defined for the respective season.

Latest offers: promotion discount as minimum discount

In the Klopotek system, you can define a minimum discount for products in the form of a promotion discount. This discount rate is then applied for customers who are approved for the promotion discount and for whom a lower discount rate would normally be used (processed by batch procedures).
Handle duties / ensure customs clearance

Crossing borders: customs duties and communication – Controlling special cases – Storing the customs declaration number

Crossing borders: commodity code duty and duty rate

If you produce your products abroad, obviously customs duties must be paid. These duties are classified by the so-called ‘customs tariff number’ and receive a duty rate depending on the country of origin. To enable you to quickly check the import duties, the Klopotek system provides you with the customs tariff number (commodity code duty) and the duty rate relevant for the import of your products to be sold. For supplier orders, a Message-Based Service adaptor (XML schema) exports the customs tariff number (commodity code duty import) for importing the relevant product and the duty rate (import tax rate) as part of the supplier order data.

Customs duties: handling special cases

There are two special cases with regard to customs duties: the classification of the customs tariff has been officially confirmed (Binding Tariff Information – BTI) or the product is being imported from a country with preferential origin status. Both attributes qualify the customs tariff number further and can be controlled in the system.

Anything to declare? Ensuring transparent customs clearance

In order to ensure transparent customs clearance for goods produced overseas, you enter the customs declaration number at delivery level in the Klopotek system. In case of a customs audit, the correct customs declaration number must be stored for every customs-relevant invoice.

The customs declaration number is part of the product export, the ‘Product adaptor (OUT)’ Message-Based Service, and the import / export interface for incoming invoices.

Create and add relevant information

Automatically generate GTIN, ISBN, ISMN, EAN – Adding relevant consumer information – Multilingual information (printed on inventory labels)

Automatic ISBN and GTIN generation

In order to simplify and support your processes, the Klopotek system provides options for automatically generating product numbers, such as an ISBN and a GTIN (Global Trade Item Number). The GTIN has the same role for the non-book area as the ISBN has for books.

If the order number is identical to the ISBN title number in publishing houses which are part of your company, the system can be set up so that an order number is automatically created from the title number when you generate the ISBN. The system ensures that this order number is not already in use. In the same way, when you generate the GTIN, the system automatically creates an order number which matches the GTIN item number.
Attestations, safety and maintenance instructions

For non-book products, it may be necessary to have additional information on product characteristics available, such as quality seals (e.g. the ‘CE’ marking for products sold in the European Union), and safety or maintenance instructions. This information is addressed to the consumer or is necessary for production or catalog creation. You can store information of this type as product notices in the Klopotek system. It is possible to create text modules in different languages for the product notices and to use them in different products. You can also store graphics such as quality seals for the product notices using Klopotek’s integrated DAM (Digital Asset Management) tool.

If more details are required: flexible specification parameters

If your production department often employs new materials and manufacturing techniques, it can occur that specification parameters which are relevant for procurement in particular require more detailed descriptions than those possible with the standard system. The specification ‘spiral binding’, for example, can be inadequate because additional information on the size, material or characteristics of the spiral is required. In order to operate flexibly, your Klopotek system can be set up so that the user can manually enter text for particular specification parameters (‘Binding Method’, ‘Paper Quality’, ‘Finishing’, and ‘Font’) in production projects and in the technical calculation. For illustrations, you can store information on format and whether they are available digitally in the product pool and production project. In the 'Binding' and 'Specifications' boxes, you can enter bibliographical information in order to highlight special features of the product in the catalog. A 'section colors' drop-down menu is also available and the packaging type which you have specified can be exported.

No limitations to multilingual title information

In Klopotek, you can enter data for an unlimited number of multilingual titles. This title data often provides a rough understanding of a product's content, which can be very helpful. For example, if you wish to report on your title production and your non-book products to groups who speak another language, it may make sense to maintain the title data in additional languages in the system. This information consists of a title, a subtitle, and a short title as well as the respective title language. All the data is available for the product search, irrespective of the title language.

Create inventory labels

Many booksellers use inventory management systems and often attach inventory labels to their products. Inventory labels provide the customer with important information on the product, such as the ISBN, prices, price reductions, or the size, weight and quantity of a product. In addition, they contain customer-related information (e.g. invoice or delivery note numbers, the customer’s product number etc.) – in plain text and / or a machine-readable format.

Inventory labels do not have a uniform design, i.e. booksellers use individual layouts. Some publishers or distributors offer to create inventory labels for their customers and enclose these with the shipment or even attach the labels to the products. In Klopotek, you have the option to print and deliver inventory labels for the goods your customers have ordered and to charge your customers for this service. Define for each customer whether they wish to receive inventory labels, how many labels should be generated per order line and if these labels are invoiced. The creation and invoicing of inventory labels is automatically performed via the functions in the Klopotek system.
Optimize processes across the entire supply chain

Learn more: get in touch with us

Klopotek is the leading supplier of software and consulting services for print and online publishers. More than 4,100 publishers, with over 14,000 users, on 350+ installations, in 140+ locations, and in 7 languages rely on Klopotek to help them manage their business and achieve their goals.

Our rich client solution supports the entire publishing value chain for print and digital products and is based on publishing industry best practices.

Check out our website at www.klopotek.com ... or email us at info@klopotek.com.