



ABBYY FlexiCapture® Helps Prolepsis to Run a Program on Food Aid and Healthy Nutrition

Customer Overview



Name

Prolepsis Institute

Location

Athens, Greece

Industry

Healthcare, Education, Not for Profit

Web

www.prolepsis.gr

Challenge

Process multipage questionnaires filled in by the participants of the program.

Solution

ABBYY FlexiCapture

Results

- Creating a digital archive of questionnaires;
- Making the document input process 10-15 times faster;
- Reducing the number of full-time employees involved in digitizing from 10 to 2.

The Institute of Preventive Medicine, Environmental and Occupational Health Prolepsis is a Greek nongovernmental organization, active in the fields of medical research, health promotion, environmental and occupational health since 1990. In 2012, when Greece's persistent economic crisis led to austerity measures, wage cuts and increased household food insecurity, Prolepsis Institute implemented the Program on Food Aid and Promotion of Healthy Nutrition DIATROFI (meaning "nutrition" in Greek). The Stavros Niarchos Foundation, one of the leading international philanthropic organizations, acted as a founding donor. The program was designed with a vision to fill a twofold objective: to provide all students in the participating schools with a free and healthy meal on a daily basis and to encourage the adoption of healthy eating habits for both the students and their families.

Challenge

The project saw rapid growth and whereas in 2012 there were 6,000 students participating, in 2013 the number turned into 62,000 students from 406 schools.

Students' parents participating in the program were asked to fill in a questionnaire in the beginning and at the completion of the school year, so as to record the need and evaluate the effectiveness of the program.

When DIATROFI was still in its pilot stage, data entry from multipage questionnaires into an excel sheet was done manually by staff and volunteers. Though the documents' volume in the first year was significantly smaller, approximately 10 out of 25 staff members would need to work full-time to enter the data into an excel sheet, and it still took up a lot of time. As the project developed, it became evident that processing the required volume of documents manually was impossible, and the procedure had to be changed.

Solution

The volume of the project and the available resources demanded a solution based on a Data Capture technology supporting the Greek language. After some market research,

ABBYY Partner



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Prolepsis made a decision in favor of I.I.D. SA, the ABBYY Partner in Greece, who suggested integrating the project with ABBYY FlexiCapture software.

In September 2013, this technology was adopted by Prolepsis Institute, and since then all the multipage questionnaires have been scanned and processed by the Data Capture system. ABBYY FlexiCapture recognizes and extracts valuable information from scanned questionnaires, and then the exported data are sent for further statistical analysis. The results are used to make necessary adjustments in the DIATROFI program.

The 10 full-time employees previously involved in document processing have been substituted by 10–12 persons who work periodically (equivalent to 2 full-time employees) for scanning and verification. In addition, 1 staff member is also responsible for configuring the projects at the beginning of each school year.

According to I.I.D. SA employee Nikos Vliissidis, MSc, Data Capture & OCR Systems Architect and ABBYY Software Certified Specialist, “Without the existence of ABBYY FlexiCapture the project could not have been completed in time, while in this way significant data entry errors are avoided”.

“ABBYY enables us to enter the questionnaire data into a user friendly database in the foreseen time, so as to have the results as quickly as possible, with minimum human effort,” — Mr. Vliissidis sums up.

Apart from speed and data accuracy, an important advantage of using ABBYY FlexiCapture for Prolepsis is the electronic archive of the questionnaires' images. And as there is no further need to keep hard copies of the documents, a lot of usable space at the headquarters was released.

“The results are satisfactory. The automated process is approximately 10–15 times faster than entering the data by hand, and it is more accurate. We aim to use the software in future projects that involve large number of questionnaires.”

Athanassios Petralias, PhD, former General Director of Research at the Prolepsis Institute.

Results

Until the present time the DIATROFI Program has offered over 12,000,000 meals to more than 90,000 students of public schools across Greece. An essential part of this rapidly developing program is the evaluation of its effectiveness and impact through analyzing the participants' questionnaires.

In the first 3 years since integrating ABBYY FlexiCapture more than 102,000 questionnaires with the total volume of 930,500 pages have been scanned and processed by the Data Capture system. The DIATROFI Program is ongoing, and in rough figures from 4,200 to 8,700 questionnaire pages are scanned daily.

In spite of the tenfold growth of participants, the Institute has been able to significantly cut down the time spent on document processing and eliminate human errors thanks to automation. This, in turn, enables the DIATROFI team of 25 people to run the huge countrywide project without involving any extra resources.

About ABBYY

ABBYY is a leading global provider of technologies and solutions that help businesses effectively action information.

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