

Using **ABBYY FormReader™**  
in education



### Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation

The Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation is a federal executive body responsible for the federal education policy and oversight of research activities conducted by institutions of vocational training and higher education and by research institutes and other organizations which are part of the education system. The Ministry oversees the training and certification of teachers and professors and coordinates the related activities of other federal executive bodies.

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# Russian Ministry of Education Uses **ABBYY TestReader** to Process Results of Nation-Wide Examinations

*"The Russian nation-wide examinations are unprecedented. Just a short time ago, a project of such scale and technical sophistication seemed impossible, especially if one takes into account that no other country in the world has ever done anything like this. A project of such magnitude requires excellent organization and advanced technology – the exam papers must be clear and straightforward and the processing software flawless and reliable".*

**Viktor Bolotov,**  
**First Deputy Minister of Education**

From May 27 to June 20, 2003 more than 650,000 Russian students took the standardized nation-wide examinations. Students from 47 regions of Russia sat exams in 12 subjects, filling in examination forms by hand. The Ministry of Education set up 800 examination centres from which exam papers were passed on to 240 preliminary processing sites. Next, the exam data were sent to the regional processing centres, which, in turn, sent the data to the Education Ministry's Testing Centre in Moscow, where the papers were marked. Once the marking was completed, the results were sent back to the regions and each student could learn his/her marks at the local examination centre. Thus, the examinations were a closed cycle, with processed information returning to where it originally started.

The Education Ministry needed a forms processing solution that would operate within very rigid time frames – examination results in each subject were to be processed within five days (mathematics was an exception and had to be processed within seven days, because it was an obligatory subject for all the students in all of the 47 regions). Compare this with the situation in the UK where the number of students taking GCSEs is much smaller and the examination papers must be processed within several weeks. The Russian Education Ministry had to process about 3,000,000 paper forms filled in by hand, maintaining the accuracy and minimizing the chance of potential errors. The task was complicated by the immense spaces of the Russian Federation (Russia is 70 larger than the UK), which meant that the processing centres were far apart and far from the Testing Centre. However, this task, whose scale is without precedent in world education, was successfully completed.

The Education Ministry organized a tender which, for the third year running, was won by ABBYY with its TestReader solution. This forms processing solution met all the project requirements, including the two most important conditions – accuracy and speed of processing. At the preliminary processing sites, ABBYY TestReader Desktop was installed, which is a single-user application, very easy to learn and operate. TestReader Desktop enabled the operators to process incoming exam papers at the required speed and level of accuracy. In the regional processing centres, TestReader Network was installed, a distributed client-server application capable of processing several projects at a time. Together with the specialist from the Testing Centre, ABBYY trained more than 100 regional system administrators whose job was to administer ABBYY's software on the ground.

All the examination papers were processed on time. In total it took ABBYY TestReader 18 days to process 3.3 million examination forms. This was truly a unique undertaking: nowhere in the world had anyone ever organized nation-wide examinations on such a massive scale and under such rigid deadlines.

#### More information about ABBYY at [www.abbyy.com](http://www.abbyy.com)

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