

A COMMUNICATIONS PROVIDER STREAMLINES THEIR WORKFLOW

Leveraging Re-engineering to Reduce Errors and Maximize
Equipment Utilization



BACKGROUND

This U.S. based services provider specializes in providing mission-critical customer communications for industries such as healthcare, healthcare, financial, utility, telecom and collection where security, accuracy and compliance are essential. They print well over 1 billion pages per year, and mail almost half a billion packages, so try to make their production process as efficient as possible.

The Challenge

The company receives files from multiple customers in different formats and with a range of production different requirements. Since they had a mixture of cut sheet and continuous feed presses, they needed to output both PDF and AFP, and when feasible, combine and standardize jobs that were too small to output on their roll-fed devices.

A vital component of their requirements was that the solution be flexible and scalable to support future software releases, changes in equipment, and growth and evolution of their business.

The Solution

CrawfordTech implemented a selection of products to convert incoming print streams to PDF or AFP, and to re-engineer files for improved automation and efficiency. The workflow process is automatically initiated upon arrival of a .zip file containing any number of individual PDF files as well as an MRDF file used to extract job information.

Once the files are unzipped, an automated process verifies that the MRDF record count and PDF document count matches, placing any mismatched files into an error folder and generating a notification email. The process then calls the REST API to retrieve the instructions required to process the jobs.

Values and parameters from the REST API include:

- The original Individual file name for each document
- The customer name and ID
- The package type based on mailing/shipping requirements

At a Glance

CrawfordTech Products:

PRO Transforms, Operations Express,
PRO Concatenator

Objective:

- Automate and add intelligence to the production process
- Ensure that document integrity and accountability is maintained
- Maximize equipment utilization

Approach:

A selection of CrawfordTech solutions for print stream transformation, concatenation and re-engineering was implemented with a REST API to pull in required job information, selectively make changes, and reformat jobs for output and tracking.

Results:

With a highly automated workflow, the service provider has reduced errors and improved throughput.

- The customer billing code
- A determination of how many pages are in each document
- Printer type (roll-fed or sheet fed)
- Whether the job is to be printed simplex or duplex, including adding a blank page to ensure that all documents have an even number of sides
- Adding 2D barcodes in the correct location for inserters
- Adding full color and/or converting color to grayscale
- Creating display headers and banner pages
- Resizing non-standard pages
- Extraction of the mailing address from the document. The mailing address is stored for later use.
- Other parameters to facilitate and track output

If any individual PDF fails in this process it will be placed in the failed folder and an email notification will be sent out.

Jobs ready for output are placed into working folders for different envelope sizes (standard, 6" x 9" or flat) based on the page count. At this point the process will concatenate the output into single files, create a new MRDF file and summary text for billing, and begin processing the jobs.

Results

This customer has automated their workflow and improved turn-around time while reducing errors. The modified workflow is completely transparent to their customers, and didn't require significant changes to their infrastructure or standard processes.

CrawfordTech Solutions

Crawford Technologies develops software and solutions to help enterprises optimize and improve the secure and accessible delivery, storage and presentment of their customer communications.

With over 1,800 customers on six continents, Crawfordtech solutions and know-how enable the largest banks, insurers, healthcare providers, utilities and print services companies to use their existing technologies, documents and data in new ways. We help them navigate the challenges in leveraging legacy applications in the platforms and applications of the future.

CrawfordTech's products, services and domain expertise reside at the nexus of content, data, and output management and are essential components of our customers' digital transformation, output management and document accessibility strategies.