

Compliance – mailpiece integrity in Customer Communications

Crawford Technologies, Inc provides recommended solutions which, when implemented, enables organizations to achieve their desired outcomes of operational improvements and efficiencies in customer communications operations. These solutions ensure that customers and members receive all the documents intended for them and only those documents.

Additionally, benefits also include

- 1) updating aging customer communications applications and processes.
- 2) **automating manual workflows** to eliminate human error
- 3) adding operational and document integrity capabilities including the creation of **end-to-end audit trails**.
- 4) mitigating the long-term risk inherent in a shrinking pool of employees who have “tribal knowledge” of legacy and manual processes and those reliant upon programming and scripting.
- 5) eliminating and replacing legacy processes that constrain the ability to better serve more customers, maintain regulatory and audit compliance, and limit business growth and profitability.
- 6) implement modern customer communications applications that leverage web-based user interfaces, enable end-to-end integration, incorporate process automation and orchestration, **facilitate piece-level tracking**, and provide visibility into operational processes through easy-to-use dashboards.

Explicitly, maintaining compliance with HIPAA and protecting Personally Identifiable Information (PII) by deploying

1. Operations Express “Post Composition” document reengineering solution

- Adds production marks and necessary changes to all production print files to enable enterprise **mail piece-level tracking and audit trails**, including enabling **file-based insertion capabilities** on current insertion hardware
- Integrates seamlessly with current production and fulfillment to leverage and extend current investment and infrastructure
- Provides print and mail efficiencies without requiring re-programming “upstream” of customer communication composition tools. Capabilities include importing, manipulating, concatenating, barcoding, splitting, sorting and combining all specified file types from any input format to the desired output format.

2. PRO Conductor -- enterprise integration, workflow automation, and enterprise dashboard

- End-to-end production management platform configured to **integrate, automate, orchestrate, and monitor** every system and step of the customer communications production environment.
- Provides customized user dashboards based on role, location, business unit and/or permissions to enable stakeholders to view and track production status and manage or control all production steps.
- Automates the entire customer communication processes, from print file receipt through reengineering, printing, inserting, postal optimization, archive/retrieval, and reprints.
- Provides robust data collection and reporting, including **detailed performance metrics**, automatic business unit/departmental chargebacks, standard and custom reports, SLA tracking, and **complete audit trails** across the entire production environment.

How does it Work

In today’s high-volume mail and messaging environment, document factory supervisors need to maximize flexibility to handle new and demanding applications or changes on short notice, as well as optimize integrity to ensure quality and reduce costs associated with customer service due to incorrect mail.

The best way to optimize both process flexibility and integrity is to implement a feedback mechanism that provides the ability to monitor the mail stream process as early as possible and throughout its cycle, along with integrated control schemes that enable the user to direct and manage process steps.

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File-based processing provides this as a monitoring and control scheme, providing productivity and integrity improvements with minimal impact to existing operations. Once a mailing application grows to the point where every mail piece is not constructed exactly the same way, some form of “intelligent” control mechanism is required so that each mail piece can be uniquely processed throughout the entire production process. There are a large variety of control coding formats and control techniques that can be used to implement intelligent inserter control, each with its own advantages and disadvantages.

To sort through all of the details, it is essential to recognize that there are two key and separate ingredients to an intelligent inserter control system:

1. Information is applied to the document as a bar code.

In the recommended ‘Mail Run Data File’ (MRDF) method, a sequence number is applied to the document that references information in a related database. This information can be a variety of information used to specifically identify a document, it’s number of pages and other items.

The most obvious advantage to this file-based processing is that it provides a large amount of data for control of the mailing process using only a small code on the page. The larger amount of data allows applications to be implemented that would otherwise be impossible, such as in-line printing. It is easy to include both delivery and return addresses along with customized advertising or 1:1 marketing messages in the data file so that they can be printed on the envelope.



Creating the Data File Basic file-based processing is fairly straightforward to implement. The primary requirement is to obtain a file containing information about the mail pieces being processed. The file is generated by the Operations Express solution previously mentioned by extracting mail piece information from the print file and the corresponding barcode is added to the document print file.

2. Information is cross-referenced with the bar code read by the inserter

The inserter control system uses the file itself, along with the sequence information inherent in the file and read from the document to guarantee system reliability and integrity and provide shop floor process monitoring and control. Because the records in the MRDF are in the same order as the documents, the control system always knows what page is coming next. It can “look ahead” in the data file to the next mail piece and predict what will feed. This allows correction for missing scan data and an improvement of system productivity. Since MRDF is essentially a list of every mail piece that is expected to be completed, the control system checks off each piece from the list as it is processed, closing the loop between application and physical mail. This allows a regeneration list to be automatically created that includes both damaged pieces and those pieces that never made it to the inserter, even if they were never printed!