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Document Re-engineering Software

Can You Survive Without It?

Ten Ways Print Providers Are Benefitting from Document Re-engineering Software

Most print/mail service companies have almost no control over the format of the documents customers expect them to accurately print, insert, and mail. Productivity or cost-saving improvement opportunities are extremely limited when service providers receive print-ready documents generated by their customers. Post-composition tools known as document re-engineering software help print service providers overcome these restrictions.

Standardizing document formats through document re-engineering functions built into products such as Operations Express and Transpromo Express from Crawford Technologies has tremendous benefits for print service providers. Print and mail operations can expect improvement in the areas of productivity, operating expenses, material costs, and quality control after deploying post-composition re-engineering software.

Here are ten ways print service providers are using document re-engineering tools to improve their service offerings and add value to customer documents.

1 Combine Jobs

Reformatting documents so the mailing address prints in a constant location on the page in every application allows document operations to use a standard outbound window envelope. Whether the service provider standardizes on a single-window or double-window design, mailing multiple applications in the same envelopes allows operations to combine several small jobs. Moving page data to new locations is a prime use for document re-engineering software.

This tactic eliminates much of the idle time spent on paperwork, material staging, and machine set-up. With fewer interruptions, automated insertion machine operators are able to produce more mail pieces per hour. Service providers can also reduce material costs by ordering a single envelope in large quantities instead of small batches of custom envelopes. Warehouse and inventory expenses associated with transporting, storing, and accounting for a large variety of envelopes also decline.

Operations migrating from cutsheet printing to roll-fed inkjet devices use software like Operations Express to combine jobs. This is especially beneficial for them. Bigger jobs are more efficient in roll-fed printing and inserting environments. Service providers can even combine jobs from multiple customers into larger, more efficient blocks of work.

2 Postage savings

Combining jobs can also allow an organization to increase postal presort density, resulting in lower postage expenses. Print service providers may choose to pass along some or all the postage savings to their customers. Offering lower postage rates than customers can achieve individually can be a convincing sales strategy for service providers seeking to transfer work from customer in-plant operations to their own facilities. Other providers charge for postage at a set rate, such as the three digit qualification level in the US. Then they combine jobs to achieve more attractive postage rates, keeping the difference.

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Besides creating higher density mailings by combining jobs, products such as Operations Express can also handle the tricky tasks of extracting address block data for processing by postal software to improve address accuracy and therefore qualify for lower postage rates. This simplifies operations such as address standardization, presorting, and most importantly, inserting the standardized data back into the correct document.

3 Distributed Processing

Document re-engineering software can split large jobs into manageable batches. This feature enables print service providers to match print and mail volumes with their production capacity. It also allows them to print portions of jobs at geographic locations closer to the mail destination. Or they may wish to distribute the jobs across several pieces of equipment installed at a single site. Meeting or missing an SLA may sometimes depend on the ability to work on several parts of a single job simultaneously. Products like Operations Express make it easy to adjust operating procedures to match sometimes changing conditions. For example, if a piece of production equipment is temporarily down, work can be re-routed, ensuring that the workload is still appropriately balanced and minimizing delays.

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4 Select and separate production exceptions

Post-composition re-engineering tools allow document operations to flag and separate high-value checks that require a manual process, or to segment high page-count statements to be mailed as flats or parcels. The software can also generate extra cover pages containing the sending address – an ideal solution for mailing high page-count documents in windowed flat envelopes. Another application of print file segmentation might allow print service providers to process premium accounts on color printers or with upgraded paper stock. Service providers can use data already present in the print file to segment the job. It isn't necessary to have the data split in advance.

5 Add mailpiece tracking/quality control measures

Document re-engineering software allows mailers to enhance the documents before printing. Many features can be added to document print streams enabling more comprehensive quality control. Print service providers may add barcoded or OCR sequence numbers, batch control balance pages, or even create an electronic file used to drive an automated document factory system or file-based inserting.

6 Create indexes

Large document archives are made much more useful through indexing. Document re-engineering software can use data extracted from documents or associated external files to build indexes that facilitate filtering and retrieval of relevant pages from document archives.

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Besides the substantial opportunities to improve productivity, lower costs, or raise quality, document re-engineering software can enhance the effectiveness of documents print service providers create for their customers. These added elements can allow service providers to distinguish themselves from the competition and charge more for their services.

7 Invoke selective inserting

Many applications can be enriched by selectively inserting items into envelopes based on data already present on printed pages. A classic example is remittance envelopes. If text on a bill indicates customers pay online or via direct debit, they don't need a return envelope. Selective inserting is typically driven by inserting machine barcodes. Document re-engineering software such as Operations Express can replace existing barcodes with new versions that include selective insert controls.

8 Add marketing or informational messages

Transactional documents are the most-read consumer mail pieces. People open them more often and spend more time with bills and statements than with anything else that comes in the mail. Embedding targeted offers or relevant informational messages right in the documents is an attractive idea. For many companies though, it is too expensive to change or re-write the programs that produce those documents. With document re-engineering software, service providers can add those targeted messages right to the print file without ever touching the source programs. Crawford Technologies' Transpromo Express allows print service providers to add value to the documents they produce.

Transpromo Express can detect available white space; that area on a document following a variable number of detail lines on a bill or statement that is otherwise wasted. The software will insert ads, marketing messages, relevant educational messages or informational content where it will fit without adding an extra page. This inserted content can be variable, depending on other information showing on the document. Examples might include an upsell offer for newer customers but a loyalty offer for long-term customers.

9 Personalized messaging

Unlike pre-printed inserts which are constrained by the number of insert stations available on mailing equipment, transpromo inserts, also known as onserts, are unlimited. Machine limitations will no longer force print service providers to split jobs according to the inserts to be added to the envelopes. Each transactional document can include advertisements relevant to the account owner. These onserts can contain personalized information such as the last order date, account level benefits, etc. It is even possible to include personal URL's (PURL's) or QR codes, connecting the transactional document to multi-channel marketing campaigns.

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Document re-engineering software like Transpromo Express can access external files or systems, enabling further personalization based on data from a CRM system, for example. Print service providers can print this new information as part of the message or use it as the criteria to select the most appropriate message to print on individual documents.

10 Colorized content

Many print operations migrate to full color inkjet devices, but their legacy documents are still monochrome. To take advantage of their new color capabilities document producers are using document re-engineering software to bring new life to those old documents. Post-composition software can colorize text, form elements, or marketing messages. Color calls attention to important parts of the documents, aiding in customer understanding and lessening the volume of customer service calls.

Marketing people love to use color in their campaigns. Color photographs, charts, logos, or other elements catch the eye of the consumer and generate more conversions than identical content printed in black and white.

Document re-engineering products are valuable tools for print service providers. With such tools they can accept files of ready-to-print documents from customers doing their own document composition. Post-composition software allows service providers to add processing enhancements such as inserting machine barcodes, allowing them to price work competitively and run jobs within a standard workflow. Without it, service providers are faced with doing the page composition themselves or dealing with a collection of documents that require custom set-ups.

In a time of high competition, vendor consolidation, and overcapacity the last thing a print service provider wants is to be considered the supplier of a commodity. Distinguishing themselves from competitors, adding value, and achieving deeper integration with customer operations are keys for continued success in the printing and mailing business. Document re-engineering software helps to achieve all those goals.

Offering to colorize, reformat, selectively insert, or add onserts can allow print service providers to increase the value and functionality of transactional documents. The customers can extend their investments in legacy documents without the time and expense of re-programming. This is a great selling point for print service providers, taking the conversation beyond a cost-per-page level and instead focusing on business benefits. Talking about improving a customer's documents to improve their customers experience involves customer representatives from marketing, customer service, sales, and executive management.

The benefits of document re-engineering software found in products like Operations Express and Transpromo Express are extensive. The tools are versatile and flexible enough to meet requirements of print service providers of all kinds. Regardless of a service provider's interest in production workflow improvements, cost savings, or document effectiveness, document reengineering software can meet specific business and market needs. In fact, one of the most significant benefits that comes from implementing document reengineering is improved customer "stickiness". When print and mailing service providers implement a solution that gives their customers more, improves turnaround time, and saves money, it makes it much more difficult for the customer take the work back in house or switch to another provider. Post-composition re-engineering is a competency that customers will eventually demand of nearly all print service providers.

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.

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