Financial Success: Financial Institution in the Southeast Praises RSA Solution

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If there is a simple way to describe how to achieve superior performance in print/mail finishing, it might well be 'Attack the Status Quo.' For proof of how that philosophy yields tangible benefits, there may be no better example than the remarkable performance improvements achieved by a fast-growing multi-billion-dollar financial services firm in the southeast U.S.

A common challenge

How could the firm upgrade printing resources to keep pace with the growing demand generated by their multiple banks. But the solution was hardly ordinary.

"We were severely hampered by our aging laser printers," recalls the operations supervisor in the bank's data center. "Our print volumes were increasing steadily at about 10 percent per year due to our growth in new accounts and new applications." The added volume resulted from the firm's successful efforts to enter new markets via acquisition and grow in existing ones.

Slow and inefficient

Slow printing speeds were one aspect of the problem. "We were producing at less that 100 pages per minute and needed to increase that speed dramatically to keep pace," she continues. "But we were also hindered by too much downtime due to paper jams." The time and expense of reprinting damaged pages was also far too great.

But perhaps the biggest impediment to improved performance was an inflexible workflow and especially the unit's limited ability to deal efficiently with multiple data streams.

"We are a central processing site for the bank's network of nearly 200 branches," she explains. "These serve both individuals and small and mid-sized businesses in three states. We must be able to handle a range of applications, such as DDA, savings and loan statements that come to us in various data streams. We need to accommodate data streams that any newly-acquired bank may utilize, without any added cost or delay due to reprogramming."

A flexible solution

Eliminate the need for a costly separate server – and potentially multiple types of diverse printing equipment – streamline the internal workflows, and increase overall print production.

The solution was a custom-tailored blend of hardware, software and expertise that yielded what the firm calls a 'flexible printing system.' It addressed all of the key issues, enabling the bank to efficiently handle virtually any printing need.

First, were two new laser printers to replace the obsolete equipment. These featured a higher, 150-page-per-minute speed, a simplified paper path, and a larger capacity for both forms and finished output, so they immediately yielded the higher productivity that was urgently needed.

Just as significant was the included IPDSPrint software from Rochester Software Associates, Inc., which helped increase productivity even more. IPDSPrint automatically transforms legacy mainframe data streams – without any reprogramming effort – so users can easily choose the best print option for virtually any application. The result? Better utilization of the speed and capabilities of the new production printers.

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"Before," explains the end user, "changing applications was a manual task that cost us valuable productivity. Our operators had to stop statement processing to reboot the controller, set the paper trays, and issue commands on the controller. It caused at least 20 minutes of lost production for every application change over. And shifting an existing application to another printer due to an equipment malfunction was hardly any easier."

"We are now able to produce our workload faster, so the bank's customers can receive their account statements faster."

Better productivity

With the RSA solution, procedures are streamlined and automated. "There is no need for a separate server or any additional programming effort," notes the customer. "Our operators just input a few simple commands and the new printers automatically respond. Even though we utilize several different form types, the operators don't have to change modes or do anything to the Sun controller to achieve the desired changes in the forms or the paper drawer settings."

Thorough operator training helped smooth the transition to the new equipment, software and procedures for printing from either the IPDS or network mode. "Our vendor provided the initial or overview training, which we supplemented by developing our own guide to key aspects of the operation." These included troubleshooting tips such as how to clear jams quickly, how to reboot the printer when necessary, and how to transfer jobs from one printer to the other.

Fortunately, the new setup works as advertised and per RSA's 100% Satisfaction Guarantee. RSA's comprehensive training has been extremely beneficial. And the unit now has a detailed operations manual that aids cross training. This helps maintain productivity during vacations or when operators are ill, and speeds orientation for new hires.

A better bottom line

This financial institution is definitely getting its money's worth. The faster printers mean throughput is at least 50 percent higher than before. But they estimate the actual increase in productivity is at least 10 to 20 percent higher than that. Why? Because of the near elimination of downtime and the ability to reprint the statements.

The print center is benefiting from the near-instant ability to change over between applications, and shift work among the printers, which helps assure full utilization of the high-speed printer and increased productivity.

All of which benefits the unit's external and internal customers. "We are now able to produce our work load faster, so the bank's customers can receive their account statements faster," says the client. "We can also respond to specialized or prototype print requests from our internal departments virtually on demand. And we have the capacity to absorb new work as well."

These are savings anyone would love to take to the bank.