TNT Scans 600 Million Pages Per Year with ibml ImageTrac

Case History

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Alex Morris, General Manager Operations, TNT Business Solutions

TNT is one of the world's leading providers of express delivery services, with 83,000 staff globally. TNT also offers a wide range of outsourced services spanning information management, facilities management, records management and logistics.

TNT Business Solutions is one of Europe's largest Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) operations, providing highly secure on-site and off-site document scanning, electronic data capture, indexing, document archive and mailroom management services. From three scanning centres in Glasgow, Basildon and Coventry, TNT Business Solutions delivers centralised high-volume scanning and value-added services for many clients in a wide range of sectors, including Financial, Legal, Medical, Central and Local Government. TNT Business Solutions utilises its wholly owned offshore facility in Mauritius for all data capture and data perfection work. There are over 450 full-time staff based in Mauritius that also carry out such functions as back office processing.

Driving down costs, improving service

TNT is committed to achieving operational efficiencies through the use of advanced technologies and process improvements, in pursuit of cost reduction and enhanced service levels. In the past, TNT has relied on Kodak i800 Series scanners to service document capture projects.

Alex Morris, General Manager Operations at TNT Business Solutions, drove the initiative to improve efficiency, increase throughput rates and reduce costs. "As well as looking to reduce labour, maintenance and consumable costs, we also had a goal to grow the business by providing a wider range of value-added services to existing and new clients. To do this we needed to have a high-volume, intelligent scanning platform," says Mr Morris.

In February 2011, a project team comprising technical, production and implementation staff began evaluating high-volume scanning solutions. They found that there were just two proven high speed scanners worthy of consideration—ImageTrac® from ibml plus one other contender. The two-month evaluation compared alternatives based on functionality, integration, support, maintenance and training. ImageTrac scored highest in all categories, and the project team recommended moving forward with ibml.

A winning combination

Kodak sells and supports ibml's ImageTrac throughout the EMEA region. TNT purchased two ImageTrac units from Kodak, one each for the scanning centres in Basildon and Glasgow, with ibml's SoftTrac®, DocNetics® and DynamicTIFF™ software suite. The ImageTrac delivers exceptionally fast processing speed and superior capture intelligence. One Kodak i840 remains at each site for disaster recovery. Maintenance of all units is provided by Kodak.

Two technicians and four production operators from each site attended training and are fully equipped to manage the ImageTrac solution, which TNT has implemented in phases using a detailed project plan. Jobs were transferred one at a time from the Kodak production environment to ImageTrac to ensure no interruption of service.

Since TNT took delivery in June 2011, ImageTrac has met all expectations. "ImageTrac's throughput and efficiency is far superior to our previous scanning solution, allowing for faster production, lower operating costs and capacity for growth," says Mr Morris.

The two ImageTracs provide throughput rates that far outweigh the capability of the numerous i800 Series Kodak scanners. They also require fewer operators and pre-preparation staff, particularly for small documents. The potential for reductions in labour costs is vast and the units have given TNT additional spare capacity. This allows TNT Business Solutions to approach the market with more competitive, lower price-per-sheet rates and enhanced service levels.

In turn, TNT has been able to improve profit margins and grow the business. Furthermore, ImageTrac's ability to apply high levels of intelligence to the data capture process has enabled TNT to diversify into new value-added markets, such as Virtual Mailrooms.

Measuring success

In the UK and Ireland, TNT can now process 600 million pages per year using a mix of the new ibml scanners and existing Kodak scanners. The range of document types and sizes that can be processed is extensive—from business cards to A0 building plans and photographs to books. ImageTrac can also scan multiple streams of image formats concurrently (monochrome, colour, grayscale and sub-images).

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ImageTrac can run a mix of structured and unstructured applications on the same unit. When processing multiple batches, instead of printing new separator sheets for each job, ImageTrac out-sorts and re-uses the same sheets, which effectively reduces ongoing costs to zero.

Applications can be switched very quickly using fully-templated job profiles, thereby avoiding operator set-up error, and sensors can be changed on-the-fly to cope with different documents, which minimises paper jams. Documents can be scanned at up to 15,840 pph without compromising reliability or image quality.

As well as reducing labour costs, there have been significant savings in maintenance and consumables. ImageTrac is not susceptible to paper jams, so time spent problem-solving and re-scanning has been significantly reduced and the requirement for maintenance and engineer call-outs is minimal. TNT's ImageTrac units use just one consumable, a low-cost item that requires infrequent replacement and costs less than £1,000 annually. Substantial savings have also been achieved; recognition software click charges have been reduced as ImageTrac can perform recognition on-the-fly.

Setting the standard

Moving forward, TNT Business Solutions plans to extend ImageTrac into other TNT locations, providing customers with dedicated on-site and off-site scanning facilities. Over time, TNT will continue to evaluate hardware and software enhancements to improve service levels and costs, and ultimately assure maximum value for clients.

"ImageTrac has proven its worth in terms of cost reduction and improved service delivery to customers and has become the default scanning platform within TNT Business Solutions," concludes Mr Morris.

For more information on TNT Information Solutions visit www.tntbusinesssolutions.co.uk/information-solutions