

DATAMARK

Case Study

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The competition is fierce in the business process outsourcing (BPO) space.

That's why the benefits that DATAMARK is achieving for a major client with an ibml image and data capture solution are so impressive. The solution has helped DATAMARK reduce its labor requirements by more than 50 percent, accelerate delivery of information downstream, and decrease its overhead.

Founded in 1989, DATAMARK, Inc. is a leading BPO organization headquartered in El Paso, Texas. DATAMARK serves Fortune 500 companies, large enterprises and government agencies from its delivery centers located in the United States, Mexico, and India.

Since 2010, DATAMARK has managed the mailroom in the corporate headquarters of a very large provider of insurance and financial services. DATAMARK is responsible for receiving, opening, sorting and scanning the 3 million to 4 million paper documents the financial services company receives each month from customers, suppliers, and federal and state government agencies. Images and data are routed to the financial services company's back-end systems for indexing and archival.

DATAMARK initially relied on five legacy scanners in the financial services company's mailroom. "The scanners were designed for a completely different environment," recalls DATAMARK Director of Operations David Johnson. The matter came to head when DATAMARK began experiencing technical issues with the aging scanners. Moreover, a major financial restructuring by the scanner manufacturer raised concerns about future long-term support for the scanner and its software.

In 2014, DATAMARK began an extensive evaluation for a new image and data capture solution. In order to meet its client's business requirements, DATAMARK knew the image and data capture solution had to support batch-based processing, create bi-tonal and color images, deliver image quality of up to 300 dots per inch (dpi), and provide the horsepower to effectively manage significant fluctuations in volumes (the client can receive 10 times as much volume on a Monday as on a Wednesday, Johnson explains).

Importantly, DATAMARK also wanted to find a solution that would pay for itself.

After reviewing the technical specifications for a wide range of technologies, DATAMARK decided to field test the ibml ImageTrac 6400 image and data capture solution, as well as a device that combined mail opening, extraction and imaging on a single workstation. During a test in one of DATAMARK's facilities, it became apparent that the multi-function workstation was not a fit. "It was designed for an operation that would open, extract and scan a particular type of work on the fly. We didn't have that luxury," Johnson explains, noting that DATAMARK's client has five major lines of business with several hundred sorting categories. "We just don't know what is in the bulk of the mail."

Johnson said DATAMARK was impressed with the ibml image and data capture solution's throughput, flexible bi-tonal and color imaging, exceptions image quality, in-line decisioning for ink jet printing, and ability to out-sort documents. DATAMARK also was swayed by the ability of ibml's Capture Suite (CS) software to adapt to the company's requirements, rather than insisting that DATAMARK adapt its business process to fit the system. "The flexibility of the CS platform supported our need to change job requirements 'on the fly.' We can easily change the scan-job, dpi, resolution, print line, and pocketing." Additionally, DATAMARK was impressed with the proven track record of ibml's implementation and support teams.



"It really wasn't a hard decision," Johnson says.

DATAMARK implemented the ibml image and data capture solution in July 2015 and migrated all of its work over to the solution by early September of that year. Johnson says the implementation went smoothly.

The Benefits

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- **More than a 50 percent reduction in labor:** Since deploying the ibml image and data capture solution, DATAMARK reduced the headcount in its scanning operation from 18 full-time equivalents (FTEs) to eight FTEs. For starters, DATAMARK was able to reassign three FTEs as a result of replacing its five legacy scanners (each of which required a dedicated operator) with a single ibml ImageTrac 6400 scanning solution. "We now have one person feeding the scanner and performing input functions, and another person boxing the material for storage," Johnson says. Additionally, the ibml solution reduced by up to one-half the amount of time staff spends on document rescans. And the exceptional paper handling and open-track design of the ImageTrac 6400 has resulted in DATAMARK's staff spending a lot less time resolving paper jams. "With our legacy scanners, operators had to open the side door, find where the jam occurred, hope the document wasn't shredded, and refeed the document," Johnson says.
- **Reuse of patch codes:** The ibml image and data capture solution enables DATAMARK to automatically out-sort the patch codes it inserts between batches. As a result, DATAMARK is reusing between 50,000 and 100,000 patch codes each month. Orders of new patch code sheets have dropped from 250,000 per month to a 50,000 sheet replacement order every 3-4 months. The replacement order simply replaces patch code sheets that have been worn out through repeated use. "Strictly from an amortization standpoint, the savings from reusing the patch codes is nearly enough to pay for the scanner," he notes.
- **Faster throughput:** "Within a few days of us ramping up the ibml solution, the people responsible for the downstream processes on our client's side asked whether we could slow down the system a little bit," Johnson recalls. What's more, by performing image cleanup and barcode recognition in-line during scanning, the ibml solution enabled DATAMARK's client to turn off those functions in its downstream systems, further accelerating throughput.
- **Better image quality:** DATAMARK's financial services client requires that some of its documents be scanned at 300 dpi. Since 300 dpi scanning was not native on DATAMARK's legacy scanners, the process was extremely slow. After discovering that the ImageTrac 6400 scans documents at 300 dpi with little impact on throughput or the file size, DATAMARK convinced its client to allow DATAMARK to scan all of its documents at 300 dpi. "ibml helped us deliver a qualitative improvement, without sacrificing speed," Johnson says.



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- **Easier document retrieval:** The ibml image and data capture solution electronically imprints a control number on each document image to make it easier for DATAMARK to locate documents when they need to be physically retrieved from storage. DATAMARK's legacy image and data capture solution used an ink jet printer to spray a control number on each document before scanning. In some cases, the spray was unreadable, making it difficult to locate the paper documents.
- **100 percent improvement in barcode recognition:** Compared to DATAMARK's legacy scanners, the ibml image and data capture solution captures twice as much data from the barcodes on customer supplied documents. The barcode data may include the document type and the intended recipient. Capturing this data automatically accelerates downstream processes.

One of the reasons that DATAMARK has achieved these impressive benefits is the exceptional support ibml has provided, Johnson says. "Few vendors back their solutions as well as ibml."

As a result of these benefits, DATAMARK expects to achieve payback on its ibml image and data capture solution within 18 months of implementation – 6 months sooner than the company originally projected.

Conclusion

Johnson notes that ibml has enabled DATAMARK to achieve all of its objectives for the project.

DATAMARK is so impressed with ibml's ImageTrac 6400 image and data capture solution that it plans to purchase another one to provide back-up for its mailroom processing and to replace aging and less reliable scanning equipment in the financial services company's cash application department.

"I would choose ibml again in a heartbeat," Johnson concludes.