

## NHS Wales processes over 30 million pages a year on ibml scanners

### Case Study

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NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership is using three ibml ImageTrac-Lite scanners to process in excess of 30 million pages a year, including prescriptions and various other health related documentation.

Millions of prescription forms are dispensed in Wales every year. Primary Care Services (PCS), part of the NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (NWSSP), is the organization responsible for capturing data from every prescription form.

Prescription data is used to calculate the reimbursement due to community pharmacies, appliance contractors, dispensing doctors and GPs who personally administer medication for medicines and medical devices they dispense against National Health Service (NHS) prescriptions. The data is also used to provide management information to budget, plan for and manage the use of medicines in NHS Wales.

#### A compelling business case

The Cardiff-based Primary Care Services scanning centre is using ImageTrac® high-volume intelligent scanners and SoftTrac® DocNetics software to capture 20,000 Welsh prescriptions per hour. The business case for transitioning to automated prescription processing was compelling. The sheer throughput capability of high-volume scanning has enabled PCS to process significantly more prescriptions in a shorter timescale at lower cost.

Sophisticated workflows have facilitated business processes as well as improving the audit trail, and prescription images can be shared with external medicine management services in an instant. The requirement to store paper-based prescriptions has also reduced from thirteen to five months. In summary, high-volume scanning has yielded vast cost and time savings, quality improvements and process efficiencies.

Neil Jenkins, Head of Modernization & Technical Services for PCS, looked to increase the intelligence and depth of data capture by reading 2D barcodes. The ImageTrac has enabled this, reading the barcodes on the fly during scanning and providing significant additional operational efficiency.

Originally, Primary Care Services considered whether to run a desktop solution, but very quickly decided that the increase in operator and maintenance overhead would be counter-productive. On average, prescription volumes in Wales increase by 5% per annum, so the organization had seen a significant increase in processing volumes over recent years. High-volume scanning platforms are well equipped to handle this rate of throughput increase with little or no increase in overheads. PCS decided there were benefits to investing in this high-volume scanning architecture.

Jenkins team had reviewed the offerings of several leading providers of high-volume scanning solutions. After completing its pre-qualification process the team invited just three suppliers to tender, followed by benchmark testing and scoring exercises. The results of these tests were combined with evaluations relating to other criteria, including the requirement for successful candidates to demonstrate financial stability and a proven track record in high volume scanning environments.

Primary Care Services awarded the system refresh contract to Kodak Alaris, which sells and maintains ibml's high volume intelligent scanning solutions throughout Europe, Africa and the Middle East. According to Jenkins: "In our benchmarking tests the ibml ImageTrac was more accurate in providing key recognition results than the solutions

proposed by other short-listed candidates. We were happy with the price-performance quoted by Kodak Alaris/ibml and their solution also provided an easy transition that was more rapid and safe than any option presented by alternative suppliers."

#### **A smooth and successful transition**

"Installation couldn't have been simpler. We deployed the new ibml units one at a time over a two week period to ensure a smooth transition. The units were up and running immediately, requiring only a few small configuration tweaks to meet our specific requirements," said Jenkins.

"We found Kodak Alaris and ibml to be responsive and easy to deal with every step of the way, although we have had little need to call upon their support services since installation and set-up phase."

#### **Leveraging the investment**

Since, NHS Wales have leveraged their investment by automating and increasing the efficiency of other mission critical functions. Spare capacity has been utilized to scan other documents, including the scanning of Invoices and Staff Records handling. Jenkins commented "I believe we have leveraged our investment in ImageTrac to bring wide-ranging benefits to NHS Wales as a whole at minimal additional expense."

"Kodak Alaris and ibml have enabled Primary Care Services to hit all of its processing targets more efficiently and cost effectively than before," said Jenkins.

For more information visit [www.nwssp.wales.nhs.uk](http://www.nwssp.wales.nhs.uk)



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