

Mastering Legacy Data

Compart DocBridge Mill and Delta Solve Challenges at World Marketing



WorldMarketing



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World Marketing Inc, the US Direct marketing company, has renewed its document processing system. The key technology foundation is made up from the software solutions DocBridge Mill and DocBridge Delta, responsible respectively for efficient conversion and automated document comparison.

The new customer came to World Marketing burdened with old technology and a significant challenge. Massive amounts of legacy data needed to be converted to modern print streams so new documents could be produced as efficiently and cost-effectively as possible.

“We needed a way to convert these old files so they could run on our modern laser printers,” relates Joyce Berra, Director of Information Services at World Marketing’s St. Louis offices.

Management of such legacy data is an ongoing challenge for many companies. It is hard to justify re-writing old programs to meet the requirements of modern data streams. Converting the data is the best solution, but can be fraught with errors and operational issues. And not all data transformation tools provide “any-to-any” capabilities.

“In this case the client had a great many high-volume, data-intensive jobs that were set up to run on cut-sheet printers,” explains Berra. “We wanted to convert those jobs to run on our continuous-feed AFP systems because it would be faster, more efficient and far less expensive. We started by writing our own code to manage and convert the documents but it was taking

far too long. And there were some documents we couldn’t really handle at all.”

Berra’s team assessed a variety of options and chose Compart DocBridge® Mill because it provided the widest range of conversion capabilities with the speed needed to handle the sheer volume of jobs.

“With DocBridge automating the process, the time required for conversion literally shrank from hours to minutes,” says Berra. “Now we could use the best printers for each job. But there was still more to the puzzle.”

Critical Comparisons

The conversion process transformed the legacy data and enabled World Marketing to run the legacy data on the most appropriate cut-sheet or continuous-feed printer. But were all the documents correct? The communications included hundreds of different versions of customer-facing letters that once composed, had to be compared to the original to ensure the data was both accurate and being used correctly. Performing such comparisons is often a manual, time-consuming, and costly process, especially when legacy data is involved and documents are based on multiple variables.

Executive Summary

World Marketing, Inc., a subsidiary of the Omaha World-Herald, a Berkshire-Hathaway company, is a premier end-to-end provider of quality direct mail, fulfillment, and critical document solutions for Fortune 1000 companies in retail, non-profit, government, and pharmaceutical sectors. Specializing in developing integrated programs that deliver measurable results for its clients, World Marketing offers order processing and fulfillment, lettershop, address hygiene, merge-purge, list management, and data-append services. Headquartered in Nebraska, World Marketing maintains offices in Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, Omaha, and St. Louis.

Solving Challenges

“To meet some stringent SLAs (Service Level Agreements) we needed to automate the comparison process, maintain the order of the mailpieces, control and limit spoilage, and manage the re-run process,” says Berra. “It was a lot to take on.”

The solution was DocBridge Delta, a document comparison tool that compares two versions of a document to identify differences on a word-to-word basis and even at the pixel-to-pixel level. Such detailed evaluations help ensure that all the critical data on a new version of a document



matches an older version, even when the page layout is different. This ensures that recipients receive accurate communications even when substantial changes have been made to the legacy data that actually drives the document.

Today, the production group at World Marketing receives legacy files that have been converted, passed through an automated quality assurance program, and are ready to print. In addition, when a job that might normally be run on a cut-sheet printer can be produced more efficiently on a continuous-feed system, it can be quickly switched to an available machine without any reprocessing.

Customizable capabilities

Berra was initially concerned that integrating conversion and comparison software for conversion into the workflow would be difficult. “We haven’t encountered any major hurdles in operability or ease of use,” says Berra. “Our staff likes

being able to customize what we need to do during conversion and Delta is very easy to use for document comparisons. In fact, we are phasing out other products as we continue to use more of the capabilities of Compart DocBridge software.”

Looking forward, Berra plans to continue taking in more types of files and using Compart software to manage the workflow of files to the printer. One customer’s jobs for example, come in as more than 65 different PDF files, all without page or sequence numbers, or production marks. DocBridge Mill lets them add these items, and does the quality assurance allowing them to validate that the documents are produced correctly.

“The software meets our needs and it’s scalable so it can grow as we do,” affirms Berra. “Compart has a helpful and supportive approach to doing business. Unlike many products today, DocBridge does exactly what the company says it will do.”

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