

Case Study

Aircrete Manufacturer Eliminates Paper Jam with Advanced Business Solutions' Document Management

Client: H+H UK Ltd

Sector: Manufacturing and Construction

Project: DbForm, DbArchive

H+H UK Ltd., Britain's largest manufacturer of aircrete building products with six sites across the UK was being over-run with paper documents. Paper was monopolising the day-to-day operations of the business and when the company's microfiche machine broke down, it was realised that immediate action was needed.

The organisation implemented Advanced Business Solutions' (ABS) document management and imaging technology to solve its paper predicament. Since going live with the technology in March 2006, H+H UK Ltd. has eliminated many thousands of paper documents, freeing-up storage space and cutting costs whilst dramatically improving efficiency.

Drowning in Paper!

H+H UK Ltd. was drowning in paper. 50,000 business documents each year were being produced, delivered and handled manually. All documents were printed on preprinted stationery and were constantly being photocopied, faxed and posted both internally and externally. Copy documents were stored in folders, cupboards and boxes all over the organisation, including in an off-site storage facility. On top of this, historic documents were archived by microfiche, which was a time-consuming, costly and archaic process.

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Advanced Business Solutions' systems have totally transformed H+H UK Ltd's business processes. Paper is no longer dominating everything we do and as a result, we have significantly improved efficiency, freed up storage space and cut costs.

- Brian Collins
IT Manager
H+H UK Ltd.

Brian Collins, IT Manager from H+H UK Ltd. says, "Paper was beginning to take over our working lives. We were spending far too much time locating, posting and chasing paper documents around the company and when our microfiche viewing machine started to fall apart, we recognised that our business processes needed a drastic overhaul!"

The Paper-Free Solution

ABS' electronic form design software (DbForm) and document storage software (DbArchive) were recommended by H+H UK Ltd's accounting system provider.

"It quickly became clear that ABS' document management and imaging software could solve our paper predicament", says Collins.

With ABS' technology in place, purchase invoices, proof of deliveries (PODs), order confirmations, pricing letters and various credit documents are barcoded and then imaged using one of the Kodak i160 scanners located at five H+H UK sites across the UK. Once imaged, the documents are automatically stored in the electronic archive and are linked to the appropriate records in the accounting system. Once the imaged documents have been checked and the electronic archive backed-up, the paper documents are shredded.

H+H UK Ltd. also electronically creates and stores a range of outbound documents including sales invoices, statements and delivery notes. Once in the archive, authorised staff at the company's six sites across the UK can instantly access the imaged documents by drilling down through the accounts system or by searching on key words using ABS' DbWebQuery Internet browser. In addition, H+H UK Ltd. has recently integrated the electronic archive into its in-house sales and transport software systems, enabling authorised staff to retrieve documents via these bespoke systems.

On the Road to a Paperless Office

Since going live with the ABS systems in March 2006, H+H UK Ltd. has considerably reduced the amount of paper being printed, stored and passed around the organisation.

"While we may never achieve a truly paperless office, we're looking to totally eliminate the printing, delivery and storage of paper wherever possible and have already made significant progress" says Collins.

Pre-printed invoice, statement and delivery note stationery has been totally eliminated. These documents are now electronically produced and along with inbound documents, are automatically stored in DbArchive. When a document needs to be sent, apart from a few exceptions which still need to be printed and posted, this is done electronically using Electronic Data Interchange (EDI), significantly reducing time spent retrieving, printing, photocopying, collating, decollating, enveloping and posting. With these routine administration tasks almost eradicated, staff can now spend more time on value adding activities.

As paper file copies are no-longer required and inbound paper documents are shredded once imaged, office space that used to be taken-up with filing cabinets, storage boxes and folders has been freed-up, providing additional working space. The expensive and troublesome microficheing of documents has also been made redundant, cutting costs whilst saving time.

Collins says, "ABS' systems have totally transformed H+H UK Ltd's business processes. Paper is no longer dominating everything we do and as a result, we have significantly improved efficiency, freed-up storage space and cut costs."

Collins continues, "Printing invoices, statements and despatch notes used to take many hours every week. It now takes less than ten minutes! As well as this, being able to instantly access a document together with all supporting documentation directly from the desktop and from anywhere in the UK, has more than halved the time spent resolving customer and supplier queries."

From a business continuity point of view, as all key documents are now stored electronically, they will remain safe in the event of a disaster such as a fire or flood. *"It's reassuring to know that, should the worst happen, our business documents can be recovered quickly and painlessly, enabling continued operation of the business. Without ABS' document storage system, a disaster could prove devastating"* adds Collins.

Continuing the Attack on Paper!

Within just fifteen months, H+H UK Ltd. has managed to eliminate hundreds of thousands of paper documents that used to dominate the organisation's day-to-day operations.

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Collins says, "The ABS project has taken on a life of its own. We started modestly by electronically archiving just invoices. However, once we saw the benefits of paperless invoices, there was no stopping us! The ABS technology was soon integrated into our sales and transport systems and before long it became our mission to get rid of as much paper as possible."

To aid the company's attack on paper, H+H UK Ltd. is considering other ABS products, namely the electronic authorisation system, DbAuthorise, for the paperless approval of documents. To streamline and speed-up the capture of invoice information, H+H UK Ltd. is also considering ABS' automated invoice processing system, DbCapture. This system uses optical character recognition (OCR) technology to automatically capture, verify and upload purchase invoice data.

Collins concludes, "We're no longer being over-run with paper. We now have much greater control over our operational processes and have a far more streamlined and efficient business. Although we've achieved a lot over the past fifteen months, there's still a lot to do. We're attacking paper across the entire organisation and constantly coming up with new uses for the DbArchive system."

About Business Solutions

Advanced Business Solutions, an Advanced Computer Software plc company, provides leading integrated business applications and services that enable public, private and third sector organisations to retain control, improve visibility and gain efficiencies whilst continually improving corporate performance. It's award-winning software systems comprise core financial management, procurement, human resource and payroll systems, integrated with a range of collaborative, document management and business intelligence solutions. It also provides managed and bureau service options.

Advanced Computer Software plc is the UK's leading supplier of software and IT services to the health, care and commercial sectors. It comprises 3 main divisions and has 7000 customers and 800 staff worldwide.

For more information

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