

THE CHALLENGE

"We needed greater speed, efficiency and functionality in the retrieval, viewing and distribution of accounts receivable documents."

THE BACKGROUND

ASF-Keystone, Inc., an operating division of the Amsted Rail Group of Amsted Industries, Inc. is an industrial manufacturer of between-car equipment such as couplings for locomotives and rail cars. The company is a long-time user of ACOM's EZeDocs document output management system, including the optional EZArchive/400 module and the EZDesigner/400 document template design tool. The Camp Hill facility **uses an IBM iSeries i/5 computer running SSA Global's BPCS ERP software.**

They were seeking a process that would dramatically simplify the procedure for locating pertinent information. One of their major requirements was to have the ability to scan shipping documents into the repository and link them directly to the corresponding invoices. The solution needed to file everything electronically so if someone needed a document, they could quickly and easily retrieve it.

THE SOLUTION

ASF-Keystone recently purchased the EZContentManager solution from ACOM Solutions, Inc., and they not only achieved its initial objective but almost immediately identified additional applications for the solution in other departments, according to Business Systems Analyst Donna Hagreen.

EZContentManager is a web-based solution that accepts text and image documents from any source and stores them in a central repository. Documents from applications such as ACOM's EZeDocs document output management and EZPayManager corporate payment management solutions are indexed and stored automatically as they are generated. **Content obtained from external sources, such as photos and diagrams, can be scanned into the repository and are automatically indexed and archived.**

Besides its **advanced categorization capabilities**, the solution also **automates version control** for more effective collaboration and its integrated fax and eMail allows documents to be transmitted electronically, directly from the EZContentManager platform.

"ACOM's EZArchive/400 module had replaced a purely manual system of file management and it functioned very well," Hagreen said. "However, we needed to scan and add related documents to the Archive Module. The accounts receivable department wanted the visibility of the additional scanned documents as well as the ability to link related documents. We

learned recently that EZContentManager would make this possible while also making it easier to store, find, and send copies of invoices electronically."

"Since EZContentManager is browser-based, it is independent of the network and therefore, anyone that can access the company intranet will be able to access, view and distribute any files that he or she is authorized for."

IMPLEMENTATION

According to Hagreen, **EZContentManager showed obvious potential to affect many other operations within the company**, including EDI operations and the sales order process. New procedures are now being developed to take advantage of its capabilities.

"In one instance, correcting EDI invoices involved paperwork," she said. "Now, we are able to link the related paperwork directly to the respective documents in EZContentManager, and never have to leave the electronic environment. And similarly, **we now have the ability to scan shipping documents into the repository and link them directly to the invoices that they pertain to.** Everything is electronically filed and if someone needs a document, they can simply retrieve it and do what they need to do. This process dramatically simplifies the procedure for locating pertinent information."

Another feature with promise, Hagreen said, is the EZContentManager Bulletin Board.

"It can be very valuable in meeting preparation and other types of collaboration," she said. "For example, if several people have to participate in a meeting, they would be able to post their contribution outlines electronically on the bulletin board, eliminating the need to prepare individual whiteboards."

SUCCESS!

With only a few short weeks of experience using EZContentManager, **ASF-Keystone personnel have already experienced a payoff in dramatically reduced paperwork, fewer misfiles, much greater search and retrieval convenience and less time wasted in locating documents**, since all of the information is organized and cataloged in a single place.

"EZContentManager offers great potential for optimizing office operations," Hagreen said. "Our company is dedicated to **continually improving customer service, both internally and externally.** Using technology to accomplish improvement is one answer and EZContentManager is helping us to continue that goal. **Once people are exposed to EZContentManager, they are sure to want to do more with it. When you see what it does, you keep finding more ways to use it."**

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