FormFlex Case Study: Marinette County

Government

Forward-thinking county uses FormFlex to reduce tax bill printing time from three weeks to just one day.

Overview: Printing county tax bills was a three-week headache

The Information Services Department of Marinette County was tired of workarounds. Their existing document management software was incompatible with many of their industry-standard printers, so the I.S. Department had devised ways to work around the problem. Yet despite their best efforts, 50% of print jobs never printed. It took days – sometimes weeks – to track down problems. This issue was particularly difficult when it came time to print the county's yearly tax bills – 56,000 of them that took three weeks to print.

FormFlex™ by DRV Technologies (www.drvtech.com) brought instant relief for printing forms with AS/400® spooled data, such as W-2s, 1099s, and payroll check stubs. Since the I.S. Department already used SpoolFlex™ report management software by DRV Technologies, distributing the completed forms to the right people is a cinch.

Customer Profile: Marinette County, Wisconsin

Marinette County is a nature lover's paradise. It's graced with plenty of water – on the right by Green Bay, to the north by the Menominee River, and throughout with 14 picturesque waterfalls. Plus, it's a rural county – population 40,000 – with plenty of room for four-wheeling, hunting, cross-country skiing, and snowmobiling.

County residents are also lucky in that they live in a forward-thinking county. They can access the Marinette County Web site (www.marinettecounty.com) for city and county government information, while tourists can view the county's recreation and entertainment options.

The six-person Information Services Department manages the Web site – and more. They're also responsible for all of the computers, software, and networking for 32 county departments.

Problem: Print jobs that don't materialize = stress

Besides causing problems printing the county tax bills, the printer issue also stressed out the administrative staff when they printed time-sensitive forms like bills or payroll checks. Pam Hruska, a programmer and analyst in the I.S. Department, says, "Our Human Services Department sends out approximately 1,500 client statements every month. It used to take a full day because it never failed that halfway through the print, the job would fail."

Every time a print job didn't materialize, administrative staff called the Information Services Department. When this happened, Hruska says, "I.S. tried to get it to print, tried to force it to the printer, or tried a different printer. Then you had two people that you're paying an hourly wage just sitting there waiting for it." *Continued …*

Customer Profile

Information Services Department, Marinette County, Wisconsin

Existing Technology

County employees use PCs running Microsoft Windows® to access in-house accounting software running on an IBM AS/400® platform.

Objective

Reduce time and eliminate aggravation of printing 56,000 county tax bills on four small laser printers.

Solution

FormFlex™ by DRV Technologies

Benefits

- Create and store electronic form and check overlays natively on the iSeries. Integrates with any iSeries application spooled files.
- Eliminate storage, handling, and cost of pre-printed forms.
- Use with SpoolFlex™ and Audit Trail™ for emailing, electronic filing, searching, and retrieving.
- Print forms and checks with logos, lines, boxes, MICR, and data in a single pass on any HP-compatible laser printer.
- No programming required.
- Very affordable (often pays for itself in paper savings alone).

Cost

Less than $7,200

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Hruska was particularly interested in reducing the three-week labor involved in printing the county's 56,000 tax bills. In addition to eliminating the frustration factor, she knew that if they didn't have to purchase pre-printed tax bill forms, the county would reap big savings.

Solution: Marinette County I.S. becomes a repeat client

Hruska was discussing their form-printing problems with the DRV Technologies staff. "They told me that DRV could help with that."

Hruska had never heard of form management software. But even though she'd been extremely pleased with SpoolFlex, Hruska still wanted to know what else was out there. So she checked out the competition.

"But the other competitors didn't have anything that DRV didn't have. In fact, some of them had less. And when you'd call their 800 customer support number – you'd get touch tone." Hruska loves that when she calls DRV Technologies' in-house technical support, she can immediately talk to a real person. "Those competitors weren't there for me to ask, 'How do I get into this printer?'"

Now, printing the 56,000 county tax bills no longer takes three weeks of frustration and labor. Instead, the electronic tax bill form – created in FormFlex – is merged with tax data stored on the IBM AS/400®. The result is one PDF tax bill for each tax payer. The PDFs are emailed to the county's print shop (using SpoolFlex, of course), where they are printed on an industrial printer. The printing process takes just one business day.

Just from this project alone, Hruska has calculated a cost savings of $6,000 for paper, printer repair kits, and toner cartridges. That figure doesn't include labor cost savings.

More Plans for FormFlex in Marinette County

Hruska's excited about these upcoming projects that'll use FormFlex:

- Upload the FormFlex-converted tax county bills to the Marinette County Web site with payment processing software so that county residents can view and pay tax bills online.
- Convert the state forms required for state assistance into FormFlex and upload them to the Marinette County Web site. Social workers can request the forms – already filled out with client data – and email them to the state. By streamlining the process, Hruska estimates that five days will be cut from the waiting period between application and acceptance. And for the elderly or disabled who need that aid, five days are significant.

"That's where we'd like to go in the future and we really think FormFlex can help take us there," says Hruska.

Evaluation

Hruska found the FormFlex install took just five minutes. After using the forms created in FormFlex, Hruska has made changes to them because of a department head's request. "It's very easy. FormFlex was intuitive enough that we didn't need training."

One thing that impressed Hruska was how other county departments reacted to FormFlex's time savings. "The HR Department started using the FormFlex electronic address books to send out other things, like a notice of retirement presentation or health insurance changes. So our departments are using this in ways you wouldn't have expected."

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DRV held my hand every step of the way. They were perfect.

"We just push one button and everything automatically goes to our print shop because our print shop is compatible now. It prints on one of the big industrial printers. Fold it, seal it, and it's out the door in a couple of hours."

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"FormFlex saves us so much time because of the fires we used to put out … we had to figure out the origin of them. So we save the user's time and our Information Services' time."

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"When we implemented FormFlex, all the things our last vendor told us weren't possible – we are doing with FormFlex. It made life easier, it consolidated, and it was just a more efficient, streamlined flow."

Pam Hruska
Programmer and Analyst

DRV Technologies has over 20 years experience developing superior, affordable document and report management software on the IBM System i (formerly AS/400) platform.

DRV's exceptional customer support and software development staff is located at our corporate headquarters in suburban Atlanta, Georgia, USA.

DRV - The obvious choice for IBM Midrange Software.

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