



Whitepaper: Implementing an automatic fax back application for Office Equipment Manufacturer



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| Integration Technology | .Net OCR/ICR/OMR |
| Industry | Distribution |
| Enterprise Applications | RightFax SQL Server |
| Document Flow | Inbound Outbound Fax |
| SNAPS Products | Snapsflow |
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Executive Summary

This manufacturer provided a service to its customers that confirmed their fax machine was working properly. The customer would program their fax machine telephone number and then fax a registration card to a toll free number. Several temporary employees were required to manually respond to all the incoming registration/confirmation requests and they wanted a way to automate this process. The goal was to eliminate the cost associated with the temporary employees.

Case Study Details

The fax machine manufacturer sold over 20,000 fax machines per month through its distribution channels. If the customer completed a registration form, included in the box, and faxed it to a certain number, they would get a confirmation back to the same fax number. This proved that the fax machine worked properly. The registration cards contained multiple choice questions to help the marketing department understand its customers better.

Our client's marketing department came up with the idea to include some marketing material in the reply fax. This material included specials on toner cartridges and other office products that they sell. There were two major problems with this approach.

The first problem was that the volume of incoming faxes required several people to manually feed the reply faxes into machines and send them. This led to significant delays in responding especially when the volume was high. The second problem was that in certain parts of the US, they were not allowed to send the marketing material with the confirmation because of laws regarding solicitation via fax.

To address these problems the customer chose RightFax and Snapsflow to automate the entire process and eliminate both problems. Instructions on the confirmation form instructed the customer to program their fax number in the fax machine's station ID (CSID). When the fax was received into RightFax, Snapsflow was configured to monitor different RightFax mailboxes associated with different products. It would parse the CSID looking for valid 10 digit telephone numbers. When it found a valid telephone number, Snapsflow would obtain the correct reply fax (for that product) and send the response immediately. This completely eliminated the need for temporary employees to manually send the replies.

In order to address the issue of solicitation, a simple text file containing area codes was created. Additional logic was added to Snapsflow to check this file before sending the reply. If the area code was found in the file, no marketing solicitation would be included in the reply. If the area code was not found, the appropriate solicitation would be included. The project required no custom programming and was completed in less than 5 days.

Later, the process was enhanced to include other types of office equipment such as label makers, shredders and printers. These devices had registration forms, in the box that included bar-codes. Snapsflow was configured to read the bar-codes and drop the fax images into certain directories based on the type of document. At that point a data capture software system would pick them up and perform ICR/OMR on them to extract the customer data for marketing purposes.

Business Need

Global manufacturer of fax machines, label makers and other office equipment needed an application that would automatically send a fax response in order to confirm that a customer's fax machine was working correctly.

Benefit/ROI

This solution eliminated the cost associated with several temporary employees and reduced the likelihood of legal fees associated with sending marketing solicitations (via fax) into regions of the country where this is not allowed.

It also helped the company drive revenue by including marketing materials related to the products the customer was registering. Finally, it enabled our client to automate the data capture process, thus eliminating the need for humans to manually key data from the forms that were received.