

New scanning solution increases processing capacity to 10 million items per month

The UK's first implementation of the IntelliScan 9000 allows document services company to offer higher service levels

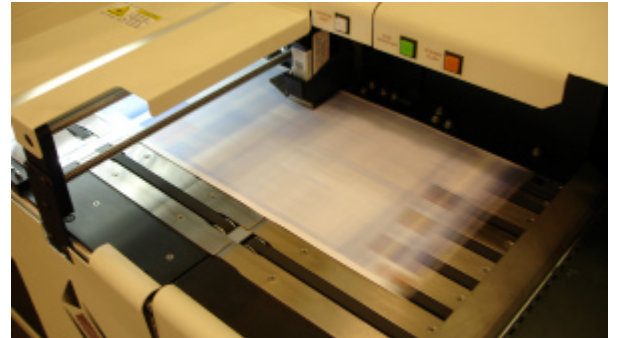


According to February's IoD economic briefing, business investment in the UK is in good health. Recent figures show that investment for UK businesses is high as a proportion of GDP when compared with the 1980's and 90's*. In this kind of commercial climate, businesses not only have to invest to maintain a competitive advantage, but the investment must be made in the right areas.

One organisation that understands the importance of making the right investment is e-Docs UK, a provider of client-focused document management services and solutions including document scanning and web-based archiving. The company started out in 1988 by providing microfilm services to help better manage their clients' documents. In 1996 investment in new technology allowed it to start offering digital archive services, providing a competitive edge and quicker access for clients. The services offered range from invoice and application forms processing to document scanning and data conversion. Today, the hosting service currently holds over 25 million documents and numerous clients perform around 100,000 retrievals each month via individually branded web interfaces.

Benefits for e-Docs UK

- Increases scanning capacity to 10 million items per month.
- e-Docs UK can now offer better SLA terms for their customers.
- Replaces up to seven mid-volume scanners and operators.
- Reduced scanner 'downtime' when switching between client jobs.
- Benchmark found the IntelliScan to have the fastest throughput in its class.



The IntelliScan 9000 scans over 200 documents every minute

The need for speed

The customers of e-Docs UK come from a range of industry sectors. Many are from the pharmaceutical, recruitment and construction sectors from where the company receives thousands of customer, business and financial documents every week. These clients need quick, secure access to their documents in order that the information can be used the same day it arrives. For e-Docs UK to be able to offer this rapid service, improvements were required to increase the speed and efficiency of the scanning operations.

So in April this year, e-Docs UK completed the latest stage of a new £500K programme of investment in hardware and software to help further improve the business operations. This saw the installation of a new high volume scanning system, the IntelliScan 9000 from BancTec, at e-Docs UK's head office in Hertfordshire. The IntelliScan 9000 is the first major component of a new document processing system to be implemented. The new system will provide e-Docs UK with the capacity to process up to 10 million documents per month, making a significant improvement to the service levels offered to clients.

* Source: UK Business Investment in Good Health, IoD Economic Briefing [February 14, 2006].



The new system, which is capable of scanning 240 documents every minute, is the first such installation in the UK and provides e-Docs UK with one of the most efficient front end capture systems available on today's market. Colin Baterip, Managing Director of e-Docs UK said, "The installation of the IntelliScan 9000 has allowed us to significantly increase our processing capacity, take on bigger contracts and offer higher service levels to our clients."

Selecting the right scanning system

Prior to the new scanning system, the operation was using fifteen mid-volume scanners to capture client documentation. Each scanner required its own operator to regularly load the devices, set up different scanning jobs and re-start the machines when they jammed.

e-Docs UK evaluated no less than five high volume-scanning systems and found that the BancTec system performed the best overall. Each device was benchmarked by running batches of documents relating to three very different scanning jobs; thin carbon documents, documents with sprocket holes and a batch of documents with a wide range of different sizes and thicknesses. 500 documents from each batch were consecutively scanned by each system so that a true operational throughput could be recorded.

The benchmark test was chosen to best represent a snapshot of the typical scanning requirements e-Docs UK undertakes during a normal business day. The hosting company regularly processes hundreds of different scanning jobs each day for its clients. So a system was needed that could scan a wide range of document types, no matter how poor a condition they may be in, without having to suffer from down time caused by changing scanner job settings or recovering from document jams. Therefore, as well as the scanning speed for each device, it also recorded how many times the devices jammed with each batch of documents, how quickly the system could recover from an error and how quickly the operator could change the scanner settings for each new client job.

e-Docs UK chose the IntelliScan 9000 as it gave the fastest document throughput with the best document feeding capability, caused the least downtime triggered by document jams and offered instantaneous job selection. The 'open track' design of the device minimises scanning errors and jammed documents and has the ability to identify between different document types and sort them into different collection pockets whilst being scanned. This allows e-Docs UK to simultaneously scan multiple jobs and speed up the document preparation tasks.

Improving the entire process

Within a couple of hours of the system arriving at the Hertfordshire premises, it was up and running and scanning documents. The new scanning system now allows e-Docs UK to scan approximately 10,000 documents per hour, replacing up to 7 existing scanning devices. This greatly speeds up the scanning process and allows a reduction in the number of scanning operators required, passing cost savings to the end user.

"This investment will help us to deliver faster and more cost effective document scanning and archive services. It will enable us to process a higher volume of documents giving more clients same-day online access to stored documents."



Colin Baterip, MD of e-Docs UK puts the DocuScan 9000 through its paces

In order to speed up the complete scanning and archive process, it is important that no bottlenecks exist. And now that the scanning has been significantly speeded up, e-Docs UK's next objective is to optimise other parts of the process to deliver the best service levels possible to clients.

To achieve this, e-Docs UK is currently upgrading its tracking management system that allows the control and recording of information about each scanning job. The entire operation will run as a continuous conveyor belt process, routing documents that arrive into the mailroom through the preparation area and, with the use of job separator sheets, directly onto the scanner. Once scanned, the images will be sent for processing and automatic indexing for storage, or sent directly to operators for validation and the appropriate manual checks to be made. When approved, the images and data will be routed to the hosted archive for immediate availability to the client via a secure web browser.

Colin Baterip, Managing Director of e-Docs UK said: "This investment will help us to deliver faster and more cost effective document scanning and archive services. It will enable us to process a higher volume of documents giving more clients same-day online access to stored documents. We are committed to developing the business to stay ahead of our largest competitors and this additional capacity gives us more ability to effectively compete for the largest contracts."

The new system is already processing twelve high volume client scanning applications and has enabled e-Docs UK to take on higher document volumes from clients and process them within a shorter time frame. e-Docs UK has also implemented a training programme for its staff to maximise the efficiency of the new processes. By investing in employee skills, as well as technology and processes, e-Docs UK now achieves the best scanning throughput available.

Future direction

For the near future, e-Docs UK is now looking to totally automate the entire process, from job booking and receipt, through to document preparation and routing and distribution. The combination of the new tracking management system together with the IntelliScan 9000 system, will allow the bureau to monitor the performance of each operator and track each job through the entire process. Thanks to its on-board data recognition capabilities, the IntelliScan 9000 can identify and separate each job allowing e-Docs UK to capture performance data on tasks such as document preparation, as well as determine the scanning throughput. Something that has never before been possible.

The implementation of the IntelliScan 9000 has helped e-Docs UK develop the business into one of the UK's leading providers of hosted and web-based document services by delivering significant cost savings and productivity improvements to clients. This has significantly raised the bar for document services organisations and provides a tough challenge for its competitors to match.

About BancTec

BancTec is a worldwide systems integration, business processing outsourcing (BPO) and services company delivering high-volume,

mission-critical solutions to automate and streamline data and paper-intensive business processes. As a leading worldwide vendor, at least 50 million documents or items are captured and processed by BancTec systems every day across the world.



BancTec UK Headquarters in Colnbrook

BancTec Ltd, Jarman House Mathisen Way, Poyle Road, Colnbrook, Berkshire SL3 0HF
Telephone: +44 (0) 1753 778888 **Facsimile:** +44 (0) 1753 778707
Email: ukmarketing@bancotec.co.uk

w w w . b a n c t e c . c o . u k