



Horry Telephone Cooperative (HTC)

Cost-efficient document management expedites customer service

Benefits

- Simplifies office activities in a cost-efficient manner
- Allows multiple users to simultaneously access the system
- Improves document preservation

Business overview

Horry Telephone Cooperative (HTC), based in Conway, South Carolina, has become the largest telephone cooperative in the country with 75,000 users, and is the 30th largest telephone company overall. Services include local and long distance, wireless and cellular, cable television, and Internet access. “We’re a unique company,” explains Sid Blackwelder, chief executive of information systems at HTC. “We plan our own buildings and self-engineer all service networks.”

Challenges

HTC began coping with the challenge of storing huge amounts of growing paperwork—over 1.3 million pages of checks, engineering schematics, vouchers, invoices, deposit statements, work orders, allocations, and the general ledger. With new documents coming in every day, the yearly cost for paper alone exceeded \$5,000. Storage space cost another \$62,000 annually, and available space was quickly disappearing.

Furthermore, the amount of paper being stored significantly slowed document retrieval. When retrieving any document, such as account payable checks, employees had to go to an onsite storage vault, find the document, make a copy, and then return it. Blackwelder estimates that employees collectively spent about 80 hours every year retrieving checks alone—costing the company almost \$11,000 in employee time and almost \$5,000 in handling. “The cost of manually dealing with company information more than justified an investment in a more efficient system,” said Blackwelder, who was also concerned with document safety. “Disasters like flood or fire were also a concern. That potential cost is immeasurable.”

Another problem with the paper storage system was the possibility of inaccuracies. After making a copy of a document, users would frequently update information or add notes. Occasionally, the altered information would not be returned to the vault to replace the original copy, resulting in the possibility of the same document being in the hands of several different employees.

EMC solution

Blackwelder made the commitment to migrate to a document management system. He contacted Palmetto Microfilm and Imaging, a team-based solutions provider in Lexington, South Carolina, and defined the HTC’s needs. “I specified the different features we needed for maximum efficiency—access to multiple users simultaneously, ability to monitor usage, ability to add electronic notes to existing documents, ability to make only portions of documents available for security reasons, ability to route information through e-mail, open data base compliance, and the guarantee of document preservation,” said Blackwelder. “It seemed like a lot, but I knew we needed all of these tools. I did my homework.”

Business profile

Horry Telephone Cooperative (HTC)

The largest telephone cooperative in the country with over 75,000 users

Industry

Telecommunications

Geographies

Based in Conway, South Carolina

Business solution

Document management, transactional content management

EMC products

EMC Documentum
ApplicationXtender, EMC
Documentum ApplicationXtender
Report Management, EMC
DiskXtender

EMC partner

Palmetto Microfilm and Imaging

HTC adopted a solution consisting of EMC® Documentum® ApplicationXtender®, EMC DiskXtender®, and EMC Documentum ApplicationXtender Report Management. The general staff found the products to be comprehensive and user-friendly, and the technical staff noted the open-platform and cost-efficiency of ApplicationXtender. "One reason we so highly recommend ApplicationXtender is the ease associated with installation," said Bill Talbert, an account representative at Palmetto. "When we left, people couldn't believe we were finished."

HTC uses ApplicationXtender to perform all document imaging processes, including the input of files, storage, retrieval, and post-storage processing such as fax and e-mail. ApplicationXtender allows for immediate customer service and problem resolution on a desktop level. For instance, when a customer calls requesting a balance statement or a copy of their bill, a customer service representative can retrieve the necessary information in a matter of seconds. If the customer is online, the information can be e-mailed directly to the customer. Furthermore, the ApplicationXtender annotation feature allows changes to be made and saved in the document, eliminating information inconsistency among users, and security features can be easily implemented to limit access to view or alter specific documents.

Using DiskXtender, HTC's employees upload scanned images of documents such as work orders and engineering plans onto an optical jukebox. The documents are therefore available through the company network and can be routed by e-mail to the accounting, customer service, and engineering departments, as well as any others who depend on them.

HTC's billing register and other computer-generated data is now automatically cached and indexed by ApplicationXtender Report Management. This data is then accessible over the company network. "The billing register used to be a nine-inch-thick book that we had to periodically copy and send by courier to all of our offices," says Blackwelder. "It was worth buying the system just to get rid of that hassle."

"The cost of manually dealing with company information more than justified an investment in a more efficient system."

Sid Blackwelder, Chief Executive of Information Systems

Summary

ApplicationXtender has expedited and simplified the office activities of Horry Telephone Cooperative in a cost-efficient manner. Technicians and users enjoy the system's ease of use, and customers appreciate the improvement in customer service that EMC software has provided. "I even wrote a letter of appreciation to Palmetto, our vendor. I've only done that twice in 19 years," says Blackwelder. "You wouldn't believe the way things have changed around here."



EMC Corporation
Hopkinton
Massachusetts
01748-9103

1-508-435-1000
In North America 1-866-464-7381

EMC², EMC, ApplicationXtender, DiskXtender, Documentum, and where information lives are registered trademarks of EMC Corporation. All other trademarks used herein are the property of their respective owners.

© Copyright 2007 EMC Corporation.
All rights reserved. Published in the USA. 11/07

Customer Profile
H3460