



All American Asphalt

Replacing time-consuming and space-consuming paper processes for quick, easy access to accounting documents

Benefits

- Central repository gives project managers a complete view of all accounting information for each job
- Key financial documents located and accessed instantly, replacing time-consuming paper processes
- Electronic archiving facilitates compliance with legal retention policies

Business overview

All American Asphalt is a full-service provider of asphalt, concrete, and other materials for highways and other heavy construction projects. The company has been in business in Southern California for more than 40 years, and serves the construction industry in Riverside, Orange, San Bernardino, and Los Angeles counties. All American Asphalt operates five asphalt plants in Westminster, Corona, Irvine, Irwindale, and San Fernando, with a separate aggregate producing facility in Corona.

Challenges

In a normal month of shipping and delivery activity, the company generates up to 20,000 weight tickets. Each ticket contains critical data on the shipment, such as the total tonnage and type of the material being delivered, delivery location, and contact information. Once the load is delivered, the site supervisor signs the ticket to verify that the merchandise was received as ordered.

With such a large monthly delivery volume, All American Asphalt had outgrown its paper-based, time-intensive, and labor-intensive processes for accessing, sorting, and storing the weight tickets. The accounting staff would spend time every day manually sorting each ticket by plant, date, and ticket number. To respond to customer requests for copies of signed tickets, the staff would need to search through the files of paper originals to locate the requested ticket—assuming it was filed in the proper place or was not already taken by someone else. “With 10,000 to 20,000 weight tickets coming in every month, our staff was spending too much time shuffling paper—time that they could have spent on higher-value activities,” said Eugene Turner, All American Asphalt’s IT manager.

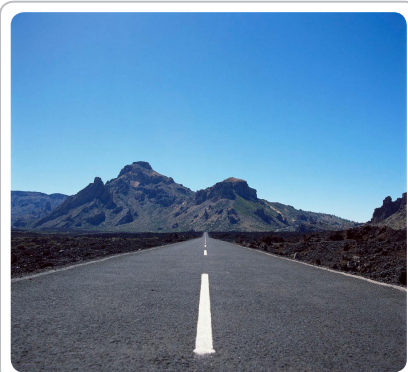
The company searched for an automated document imaging and management solution that would allow it to electronically capture the weight tickets and store them in a centralized repository, enabling easy access and retrieval.

EMC solution

For the solution, All American Asphalt chose EMC® Documentum® ApplicationXtender®, an easy-to-implement system that electronically stores, organizes, and manages virtually any type of business content. ApplicationXtender gives the company’s accounting personnel easy, instant access to a wide range of account and customer data from their desktop computers.

With Portford Solutions Group providing implementation services, All American Asphalt was able to roll out the new solution and put it into service in less than a month. “ApplicationXtender provides a centralized repository for us to scan in, index, and then access weight tickets and other accounting documents quickly and easily,” said Turner.

In the beginning stages, the company scanned an entire past year’s worth of archived weight tickets into the repository and initiated a new process whereby incoming weight tickets were scanned in using Kofax scanning software. The repository now contains an electronic archive of weight tickets from the past five years.



Business profile

All American Asphalt

Manufacturer of asphalt and other construction materials

Industry

Manufacturing

Geographies

Based in Corona, CA with five plants located throughout Southern California

Business solution

AP/AR processing/invoicing

EMC products

EMC Documentum
ApplicationXtender

Deployment summary

Electronic scanning, indexing, and archiving of accounts payable and other critical accounting documents

EMC partners

Portford Solutions Group

A comprehensive, integrated solution

Although All American Asphalt's initial focus was on improving processes for managing the weight tickets, the ApplicationXtender implementation has grown to encompass all critical accounts receivable and accounts payable documents. Using ApplicationXtender's application programming interfaces (APIs), All American Asphalt's engineers were able to integrate the repository with the company's custom-developed financial software applications. For example, an EMC Documentum ApplicationXtender Reports Management interface brings in financial data such as material invoices, financial reports, and payroll information from the company's mainframe system.

As a result, ApplicationXtender now provides a complete and integrated view for All American Asphalt project managers as well as AP/AR and payroll staff to access all information related to a customer order. Up to 50 users might be on the system throughout the day. "At any given time, a project manager might have four or five jobs in progress at once. Now, he or she can just log into the system and query a job for a given date range, and view all of the documentation supporting the job with just a few mouse clicks," said Turner.

In addition to documents and data imported from the mainframe, All American Asphalt is now scanning up to 100,000 accounts payable documents per month into the ApplicationXtender repository. All tickets and other financial documents now carry bar codes, which facilitate the system's ability to index and track the documents.

Saving time and space

With ApplicationXtender, All American Asphalt personnel can instantly access key documents that were once difficult and time consuming to locate manually. "We can respond much more quickly to customer inquiries when weight tickets and material invoices are at our fingertips, and our project managers have complete control over each job," said Turner. "These people are much more productive because they're not spending hours searching through file boxes for paper documents, which might or might not be where they're supposed to be."

The space savings benefits are also significant. "Before, we had to keep two or three months' worth of paper files within easy reach in our offices, but now we can move documents down to our storage pit almost immediately," Turner said.

"The system has truly changed the way we do business by integrating and streamlining our accounting processes and by enhancing our project managers' ability to execute multiple jobs at once."

Eugene Turner, IT Manager

Streamlined backup and compliance

The ApplicationXtender repository at All American Asphalt has yielded another important benefit: the ability to provide electronic backups of critical accounting documents that comply with the company's policies for records retention. All documents are backed up nightly, and then a sweep is performed monthly to replicate documents to an off-site storage facility. "When we searched for a document imaging solution, it was important that the electronic documents would be legally admissible in court proceedings," said Turner. "We're on solid legal ground if we can show that the backed up documents are out of our control and have not been tampered with, and the ability to do this electronically means that we can stay in compliance much more easily and quickly, with minimal labor."

In the future: customer access

With ApplicationXtender's success as an internal resource for accounting documents, All American Asphalt is looking ahead to the next step: providing customers with self-service access to their own account information. The company will use EMC Documentum ApplicationXtender Web Access to provide a customer portal to the ApplicationXtender repository. "Customer service is really critical in our business, and by giving our customers direct access to their own information, we'll be sending the message that we want to make their jobs as easy as possible," said Turner. "This will also help our employees be more productive by freeing up time that might otherwise be spent responding to customer inquiries."

Summary

The EMC ApplicationXtender system at All American Asphalt has replaced cumbersome and time-consuming manual processes for locating and managing key accounting documents, for more productive employees, smoother regulatory compliance, and enhanced customer service. "We're not completely paperless yet, but ApplicationXtender has moved us many steps beyond the old, wasteful processes associated with shuffling paper," said Turner. "The system has truly changed the way we do business by integrating and streamlining our accounting processes and by enhancing our project managers' ability to execute multiple jobs at once."

About Portford Solutions Group

Portford Solutions implements complete turnkey Document and Content Management systems. Leveraging Portford's experience can reduce the time, cost, and difficulty associated with document processes. Portford can maximize an organization's investment in document management by providing comprehensive solutions ranging from scanning services to document workflow creation and integration. Achieving the highest Return on Investment (ROI) for a content management system can require more than just a solid technical and operational understanding of the product. Portford's exclusive service and solution delivery methodology called Idea to Implementation (i2i) provides a refined set of tools and processes in order to deliver well-structured, highly-scalable content management solutions and processes. For more information on Portford Solutions, visit www.portfordsolutions.com.

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