

Workflow

Special Report

TELEform and Alchemy

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Adfit's two-part solution

THE clever combination of complementary data retrieval and storage technologies has helped Auckland billing company Adfit Membership Services take customer service and cost-efficiency to new heights.

Adfit is responsible for the collection and handling of fees paid to more than 130 fitness centres, from about 40,000 members throughout New Zealand.

The adoption of Alchemy was the first stage of a two-part solution to filing paper-based systems, Adfit's co-director and IT manager Paul Faint says.

Local banking regulations that required these records to be stored on paper created a dilemma. It meant that accurately storing and then quickly retrieving direct debit and membership agreement data was slow and prone to human error. Especially when information was needed quickly to handle call centre inquiries.

"The first step towards a full data capture and storage solution was to make paper-based storage obsolete," Mr Faint says.

A brand name of United States-based Information Management Research (IMR), Mr Faint says Alchemy is a smart way of storing paper-based hard copies that allows instant searching. Local support for Alchemy was a big plus and having Intacta supply and implement the solution worked well.

Alchemy and Teleform proved to be the perfect capture/storage ensemble for Adfit

Significantly streamlining the operation, the Alchemy solution saved the company employing two extra people. Being able to retrieve data immediately has significantly boosted the quality of customer service provided by the call centre, Mr Faint says.

"Our call centre receives around 500 calls a day, and 10 per cent of these require contacts to be retrieved and reviewed. Immediate data file retrieval means these inquiries can now be handled in real-time."

Further modifications were required for Adfit to successfully target the Australian market. The time between direct debit and membership forms being completed, and their final arrival via e-mail for data storage in New Zealand, was regarded as unrealistic.

As part of the solution to get Australian data quickly and accurately into the database, Adfit adopted a smart capture and data entry tool, Teleform.

Adfit was attracted to Teleform by its 90 to 95 per cent accuracy in correctly

identifying characters, Mr Faint says. Data retrieval and storage system Teleform captures data from these original images and then pushes it off to Alchemy, where it is stored and managed.

As soon as new applications are complete, fitness centres in Australia fax both direct debit and membership forms to Adfit in Auckland. Teleform then takes the fax copies and converts them into the database. With the aid of the Teleform verifier contract-loading time is reduced from about six minutes to less than a minute. However, the key benefit is that Teleform exports the images direct to Alchemy, Mr Faint says. Distributed in New Zealand by Team Progress, Teleform was identified as the missing link in a total data retrieval and storage system for opening the Australian market.

It is possible for direct debit and membership details to be in Adfit's database within 10 minutes of a new contract being signed. By year-end, fitness centres will also have access to real-time data via the Internet, Mr Faint says.

"Growth potential in Australia meant it was absolutely critical we had an excellent data retrieval and storage solution that would overcome the distance and time issues. We now have over 40 Australian clients covering 8000 to 10,000 members. Most of our future growth will come from Australia".