Solimar Helps San Diego County Office of Education Reduce Business Process Costs

Business Profile
San Diego County Office of Education is an organization that provides school districts quality services, effective and efficient use of resources, and innovative leadership in the County of San Diego, California.

Industry
Education

Location
San Diego, CA

Business Solution
- Flexible data stream transforms
- Automated output management
- Favorable solution functionality-to-price ratio
- Future scalability and modular design

Solimar Products
- Solimar® Print Director™ Enterprise

Benefits
- Reduced business processes expenses by 20%
- Increased output access and enabled operations to accept additional print volume
- Automated output management solution
- Solution is supported by industry award winning organization

The San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) is an organization that provides San Diego County school districts quality services, effective and efficient use of resources, and innovative leadership. This is accomplished by working collaboratively to meet the needs of students and expectations of the general public.

The mission of the SDCOE is to guarantee high levels of student achievement. In partnership with local school districts and the global learning community, they research and apply innovative 21st century practices, leverage resources, develop strategic alliances, inspire powerful leadership, and provide exemplary customized services to districts, communities and the students in all San Diego County programs.

The Centralized Printing Services function supports the Student Information System, Financial Information System, Payroll, Retirement and other systems. Using a high-speed production printer, the print output is estimated at over 3,000,000 pages annually. For mainframe Financial and Payroll based printing, the print files contain job description information that the Solimar solution interprets and processes to determine if any selected form overlays should be included. The Solimar solution also manages the print output to control the correct number of copies, punch/no-punch option, paper size selection, and duplex/simplex option.

"Using the Solimar solution, we have been able to reduce our business processes expenses by 20% annually."

Hans Kohls,
San Diego County Office of Education

Print files from the Student Information System are received by the Solimar solution and processed using a unique file naming convention. The Solimar solution reads the file name, extracts name data, and places the identifying information on the banner page. It also leverages the file name data to automatically set parameters to manage finishing requirements.

Solimar Systems interviewed Hans Kohls, Computer Operations Manager at San Diego County Office of Education to discuss how implementing Solimar technology has decreased their operating expenses.

The Challenge
The San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) determined that they were paying too much for an output management software product that they had been using for several years. "We had a software product that was cost bundled along with our production printer," said Hans Kohls. "We felt we were paying too much and not getting enough functionality for our monthly expense. When you're in a unfavorable price-functionality situation like we were in, it's time to do your homework and find a better solution."

With education budgets being cut in many areas and the need to do more with less, SDCOE felt a change in technology was needed in order for them to meet their goals. "Given all the new technology advancements available in the software industry, we felt we could get more capability for our money elsewhere," added Kohls. "It became clear to us that we were overpaying for what we were receiving."

SAN DIEGO COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION

SOLIMAR SYSTEMS, INC.

Print Smarter.™

The Solution

After a search of products and vendors to replace their older costly system, SDCOE determined that Solimar® Print Director™ Enterprise (SPDE) from Solimar Systems was the best solution fit for them. "The Solimar Print Director Enterprise solution offered the price point we were looking for and provided us with everything we needed from a functionality perspective," said Kohls.

As requirements grow, SDCOE can add software modules, install additional inputs and outputs, upgrade to subsequent versions, and take advantage of new features and functionality. "I also appreciate the fact that the Solimar solution is scalable and is very modular in design. As our needs grow or change over time, the modular nature of the Solimar solution is well suited to easily change with us to accommodate our requirements."
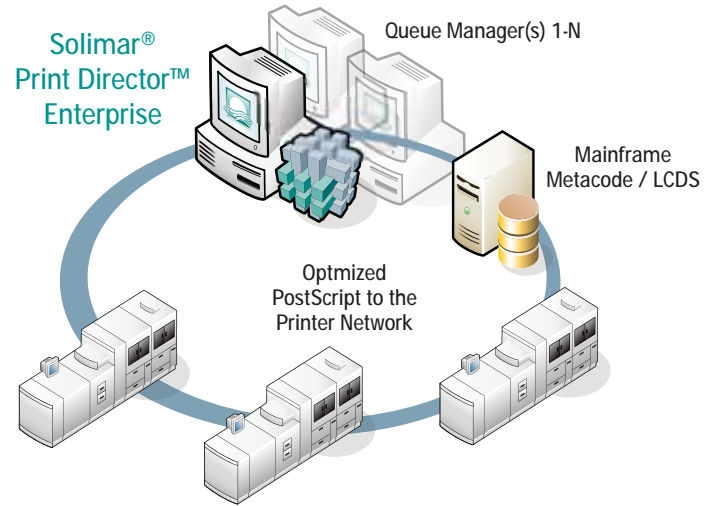
SPDE connects host computers to production printers that, under normal circumstances, cannot natively interface with each other. For example, SPDE can be used to connect midrange or mainframe hosts and networks to one or more printers and archive systems. SPDE allows printing from multiple host computers to multiple printing devices simultaneously. It can also perform multiple conversion routines on each print file.

The new SPDE system has allowed SDCOE the flexibility to choose the best printer for their situation. "SPDE has the ability to interface with virtually any host or printer, which will allow us to select any printer manufacturer or model in the future," said Kohls. "SPDE also provides us with outstanding processing control, flexible data stream conversion routines, and strong job management capabilities to control our printing environment."

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The SPDE Queue Manager provides a streamlined user interface for SDCOE. The consolidated view allows SDCOE print operators to monitor and control print queues and jobs. This allows their users to initiate and halt job processing, reorder and move jobs between queues, handle reprints, and interventions based on the security rights assigned to them. The Queue Manager's highly customizable UI allows the operators to create "views" that organize the queues and jobs according to the operator's preferences, and filter messages based on user-defined rules. A queue window can be opened for each logical queue and multiple queues can be grouped together for management within one window.

Solimar® Print Director™ Enterprise

Queue Manager(s) 1-N

Mainframe Metacode / LCDS

Optmized PostScript to the Printer Network

The Results

The SPDE is a client-server-based enterprise print management solution designed to improve the performance of production output processes and optimize management control. Utilizing advanced technology, SPDE combines multi-level security, remote administrator and operator access, event logging and notification, direct device connectivity capabilities, powerful job routing and tracking with industry-leading data stream transformations.

The SPDE solution has been a very good technology implementation decision for SDCOE. They have been able to significantly cut recurring operating costs. "Using the Solimar solution, we have been able to reduce our business processes expenses by 20% annually," said Kohls. "Given that many school districts have strict budget limitations, these savings are very important to us."

The security system in SPDE's System Manager allows SDCOE administrators to set rules that limit access and actions for the objects in a configuration and to determine what interfaces are available to each user. System administrators define and manage workflow rules using the System Manager and operators only have access to the Queue Manager for controlling and monitoring job workflow.

The award winning post-sale support that SDCOE receives from the Solimar technical support team has been a welcomed upgrade from their previous situation. "The Solimar technical support has been extremely responsible, professional and always ready to help us," added Kohls. "Compared to the support levels we were receiving prior to using the Solimar system is like night and day. We couldn't be happier with the Solimar support we are currently receiving. It's truly a breath of fresh air."