

ALL OPTIONS ARE OPEN WITH AN ELECTRONIC DOCUMENT SOLUTION THAT OFFERS PRINTING AND ELECTRONIC DISTRIBUTION CAPABILITIES FROM A SINGLE PLATFORM

PERSPECTIVE

At least 25 years ago, analysts and futurists envisioned offices in which paper was a thing of the past. The "Office of the Future" would combine computing and communications to make the generation and transmittal of documents a fully electronic, seamless process.

Elements of the "Office of the Future" may well be here, but it is not yet the paperless package conceived by early advocates, and it may not become that for some time to come – if ever. There are some simple reasons: people like and trust paper, it conveys to them a sense of security, it is cheap to buy and easy to store.

In fact, the printing industry has even developed a specialized branch that involves the design and printing of business forms -- invoices, purchase orders, etc. However, expenses for these **preprinted forms** can be enormous, with storage, inventory, handling and spoilage potentially more than doubling the initial costs.

TECHNOLOGY TO THE RESCUE

As an alternative to these preprinted forms, recent technological advances have enabled companies to **design and print their own business forms**, using electronic forms software and a laser printer. Using this software, companies create electronic form templates that can be stored on their computer, and then printed on plain paper, as needed, using a laser printer.

Recognizing the power and flexibility inherent in these solutions, ACOM Solutions, Inc. developed electronic forms software that would:

- Enable users to design and store electronic form templates (e.g., purchase orders, invoices, statements, advanced shipping notices, etc.);
- Provide seamless connectivity to the organization's financial/ERP database in order to automatically populate these forms with the corresponding data.

ACOM calls the concept **EZeDocs**, the Electronic Document Output Management Solution. EZeDocs was initially conceived as an efficiency-enhancing, cost-saving alternative to the use of preprinted forms. However, the concept has now been extended dramatically to cover virtually all document-related functions – it permits employees to **print, fax, email, view, and archive documents at will, without ever leaving their desks**. Printed hard copies are now only one of five available output options.

A TOTAL SOLUTION APPROACH

EZeDocs is a powerful, modular Electronic Document Output Management Solution, which involves a simple, four-step process:

- Creation of the electronic version of the form
- Storage of the template on the host computer
- Establishment of document distribution protocol (print, email, fax, or archive)
- Distribution

When documents are needed, data merges with the respective form template, then the completed form is laser-printed or transmitted electronically. EZeDocs can even automatically route electronic documents based on pre-defined recipient profiles (i.e., print, email, or fax).

EZeDocs provides the following key benefits:

- Eliminates cost and inventory issues of using preprinted forms and outside print shops.
- Enables easy modifications and upgrades to documents in minutes -- no need to toss outdated preprinted forms.
- Finished documents cost pennies versus up to \$1.00 each.
- Enables electronic archiving of forms for easy retrieval, directly from their PC.
- The process **vastly enhances business efficiency and workflow**, by enabling the user to automatically split a data file and send it via fax, email, or to a laser printer, right from their PC.
- It **generates cost savings** on printing, processing, personnel, distribution, supplies and postage expenses.

Conversely, the **costly and time-consuming** traditional procedure involved preprinting and management of several multi-copy forms; secure storage and inventory of the forms; retrieval at time of use; manually loading impact printers; post-processing (including bursting, decollating and sorting); and finally, distribution of the printed copies through internal or external mail systems.

FUNCTIONAL SOLUTIONS

ACOM's EZeDocs enables companies to get their orders, shipments and invoices out more quickly, to get the money in the bank more quickly, and to better manage cash flow. Let us examine the individual modules of EZeDocs and their capabilities.

EZeDocs - eForms Module

The eForms module is the central engine of the EZeDocs total solution, as well as a powerful standalone electronic document software solution. It seamlessly integrates with each company's ERP/legacy system, and works in the background to merge accounting system data files with stored electronic templates, in order to generate completed documents on-demand, singly or in batch mode, on a laser or thermal printer.

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When a form is needed, the module pulls the required data from the company's enterprise software system, formats the data into the respective electronic document template, and spools the formatted document out to a laser or thermal printer for production on blank paper stock.

The electronic form templates are used in lieu of preprinted forms, and can be designed in two ways: using ACOM's Professional Services group, or by using the GUI design tool of the EZeDocs eForms module. Then the templates are stored on the network/PC for use as needed.

EZeDocs - Fax Module

The Fax module of the EZeDocs Solution Suite is designed to automate the creation and delivery of electronic documents processed by the EZeDocs application. Instead of printing the desired document, the Fax module creates a fax-compliant image of the document, and passes it to the installed fax package (WinFax or RightFax are supported). The fax is then sent to the recipient's fax number, which is stored in the recipient's profile. The EZeDocs Fax module is easily activated from the EZeDocs application, using a generated security code, so no additional software installation is required.

EZeDocs - eMail Module

The eMail module of the EZeDocs Solution Suite is designed to automate the creation and delivery of electronic documents processed by the EZeDocs application. Instead of printing the desired document, the eMail module creates a PDF image of the document, encrypts it (if necessary), and attaches it to an eMail. The email is then sent to the recipient's email address, which is stored in the recipient's profile, through any installed SMTP-compliant email server. The EZeDocs eMail module is easily activated from the EZeDocs application, using a generated security code, so no additional software installation is required.

EZeDocs - Archive Module

The Archive module of the EZeDocs solution suite enables users to automatically archive any documents they processed using the EZeDocs eForms Module, for later retrieval. Only the document data is stored in order to conserve valuable storage resources.

The Archive Module software comes with an easy-to-use, powerful search and retrieval engine that makes finding and viewing specific archived documents very simple. Users can search for a variety of fields, such as document type, name, date, etc. At the time of retrieval, using a PC-based graphical user interface, documents are converted into PDF format. The user can then view the document on screen or transmit it via fax or email.

IMPROVING CASH FLOW WITH eDELIVERY OF INVOICES

Most companies still collect their revenues by issuing invoices that are generated on preprinted, multipart forms and delivered by mail -- the most expensive and the slowest alternative available as well as the one that carries the greatest risk of loss or delay.

EZeDocs offers users the ability to speed up collections and improve cash management by generating invoices electronically, avoiding the printing process entirely. With EZeDocs, a company can send its invoices by automated fax, directly from their PC. The company can also create PDF documents of its invoices and include them as email attachments -- likewise delivered electronically, directly from their PC.

The savings and benefits are quickly apparent: there is no longer any need for preprinted forms or the post-processing equipment and

operating personnel required for manual invoice distribution; costs are reduced from \$1.50 or more. Finally, and perhaps most important, Days Sales Outstanding drop dramatically through instantaneous communication and the assurance that the invoices will not be lost or delayed in the mail. Cash management improves through faster collections and more precise billing procedures.

The same methodology can be applied to other transaction processes, such as purchase orders, order acknowledgements and shipping documents, with commensurate impact on the bottom line.

CONCLUSION

ACOM's EZeDocs solution supports businesses in their quest to streamline their operations, better serve their clientele, and maximize the output of their resources. EZeDocs is an extremely flexible modular solution, which means that businesses can purchase the entire **EZeDocs Total Solution Suite** and integrate all of the features and benefits right away, or they can begin with a single module, such as eForms, adding additional modules as their wants and needs ordain.

Moreover, as business technology continues to advance, ACOM's solutions are "open" enough to advance with it. Experience the effectiveness of EZeDocs effectiveness by scheduling a brief product demonstration.

Sign up at <http://www.acom.com/demo-schedule.html>

While you're visiting our website, be sure to explore our solutions for payments and B2B electronic commerce.

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