Print Solutions from Atac

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Using Output Manager for Inline Inserts

Insertion of marketing materials into our Utility and Bank statement envelopes is fairly commonplace. It usually happens in the back print room where the mailing equipment resides, with special marks on the statement triggering the equipment to insert one or more pages from specific bins into each mailpack.

This requires the document to be pre-coded in some way, to trigger the insertion(s). Additionally, the mailing equipment has to be setup and tested appropriately, insertion stock must be ordered, warehoused, conditioned etc. and more staff are involved in the entire process at several levels.

Output Manager can insert duplex pages with full-colour images front and back as the file is processed; these are called "Inline Inserts". These can be inserted conditionally, based on any criteria in the document itself, such as the CLOSING BALANCE or ACCOUNT TYPE etc.

Rather than inserting physical pieces of paper into mailpacks at the mailing equipment stage, Inline Inserts can provide many benefits, including:

- No insertion stock to order/warehouse/condition etc.
- Last minute changes can be made *at the last minute*.
- Insertion based on external factors or document content.
- Easier setup in the mailing room, as mailpacks are already fully composed.
- "Pre-loaded" inserts can include Customer Name, Address, Account etc. Generic Inserts are first added, then customer info is applied by Output Manager. Research has shown customers are less likely to throw a pre-loaded form away, and more likely to peruse and complete same.
- This process takes *chargeable* impressions off the typesetter and gives them to the print shop.

A number of print bureaux and large Output Manager customers are already using this functionality, which they claim makes a significant difference to responsive, targeted mail campaigns.

When combined with Output Manager's co-enveloping logic, two identically addressed letters being co-enveloped (put into the same envelope) will only receive one copy of each applicable Inline Insert, further adding to cost savings and efficiency.

Contact Atac to further discuss implementation of Inline Inserts.

Using Output Manager for DPID Application & Sorting

Postage is expensive! The price to post a standard letter on a regular timetable in Australia is now $1.20 (and about to increase again). However, if barcoded and grouped by state, there are savings to be made. Same state, DPID barcoded standard letters cost $1.10. A 10c per letter saving is significant, so how is it achieved?

In order to add a DPID (Delivery Point Identifier) barcode to an address block, visible through a window envelope, you need access to a PAF (Postal Address File) database and address matching software certified by Australia Post's AMAS (Address Matching Approval System).

File-based address matching software can take a text file of addresses, find and allocate a DPID string to each address, then sort the whole bundle into postman "walking sequence". So, how do we take advantage of this programmatically?

1. A pre-processing step using Output Enhancement (OE) extracts address blocks from a bundle of letters and writes them to a text file (MRDF), numbering each sequentially (InputOrder).

2. The MRDF file is given to the DPID allocation software, which populates a pre-defined field with the DPID for each address. The file is then sorted by the DPID allocation software into DPID desired order, and each record is numbered sequentially again (OutputOrder). Finally, the file is re-sorted back into InputOrder sequence and returned to Output Manager/Enhancement.

3. OE performs a standard pass through the input print file, accessing the matching MRDF record for each mailpiece as they are encountered. Each mailpiece is indexed by the OutputOrder field and the DPID barcode is applied.

4. Finally, the print file is processed again, using the OutputOrder index to produce print output in the desired DPID "walking sequence". It's usual for a new MRDF file to be produced at this stage, for processing by insertion equipment and production of automatic, "closed-loop" spoils requests. Huh?

Yes, if the inserting equipment screws up a mailpiece, it writes a file comprising one text line per mailpiece to be re-produced and deposits the file into a pre-defined folder. Output Manager sees the file and re-runs the mailpieces from the info on each line, essentially an index key to each mailpiece.

The spoils are sent back to the insertion equipment to process and cross off the list of outstanding reprints it is waiting on. If the spoils themselves have spoils, the loop iterates until every mailpiece has been accounted for and successfully inserted into an envelope.

Postal savings and high-integrity, both achieved at once! Talk to Atac.

Co-Enveloping, Sorting and Splitting

Co-Enveloping means putting two mailpieces (or more) into a single envelope for postage savings. Generally, this will only happen if the address blocks are an exact match. Co-envelope "grouping" can push the number of pages up to the next envelope size, so must occur first, before DPID and/or Volume sorting and splitting takes place.

Envelope sizes are defined and given a letter of the alphabet, via profile entries, i.e.
Envelope_A=1-7
Envelope_B=8-20
Envelope_C=21-99
Envelope_D=100+

The process works like this:

1. First pass through the data indexes every mailpiece on the total address, i.e. all address lines are concatenated into a single index key, for each mailpiece. Duplicate index values are allowed (expected), with exact duplicates resulting in Co-Enveloping candidates appearing in the index sequentially.

2. Second pass reads the data using the index from pass 1, where the mailpiece "boundary" is taken to be when the index changes (a new address is encountered). Mailpieces are again indexed, this time by envelope size (A, B, C or D, including inserts) + DPID. (Insert flags are amalgamated, so only one insert of each type is inserted and mailed in each envelope.)

3. Third pass reads the data using the index from pass 2, DPID within envelope size. As each envelope size changes, a split occurs where the output file and matching MRDF are closed and a new output file and MRDF are created for subsequent output.

4. If the total number of pages for an envelope type exceeds pre-defined thresholding or "chunking" levels, another split may occur, enabling output to be spread over several printers. Each split results in a stand-alone print file and matching MRDF, suitable for independent processing. Each split may have coloured banner and trailer pages, as well as variable info/stats for the split.

Envelope size breaks and thresholding values are passed to the Output Enhancement script from the job profile. Splitting and Thresholding may also be turned on and off via profile entries.

Optionally, a report detailing the number of input mailpieces, pages, number of output mailpieces, inserts applied etc. can be obtained for reconciliation purposes.

Co-Enveloping and "DPID within envelope size" sorting can help to maximise your postal efficiency and savings.

Contact Atac to discuss.

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Q & A

Q. Output Manager 2.5 came with a dongle driver which automatically installs with Output Manager. If we are now using a soft-licence tied to an IP address, how do we remove the Aladdin/Safenet HASP software?

A. In the installation pack, you should find \Dongle Driver\haspdinst.exe. At a CMD prompt, go to \Dongle Driver and run "haspdinst.exe -r". You should see "Operation successfully completed".

Q. We are having a Disaster Recovery test next weekend. Can you confirm your availability to provide any support we may require?

A. Absolutely, we will be contactable at all stages of your DR exercise.

Q. Can Barr 7.2.2.44 be installed on Server 2019?

A. According to HELP, Server 2019 support only appeared in version 7.2.3.5.
BHCS 7.2.2.44 only officially supports up to Server 2012 R2 and Windows 7/8.
So, you need BHCS 7.2.3.5 or later; current version is 7.3.1.16.
Application, File & Print Roles need to be installed first.
You must also have .NET Framework 4.0 installed.
And you must be a member of the Local Administrators Group to Install BHCS.

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