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Mike Lincoln, IDS Northern Regional Manager/Colorado State Printer

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Any good sports metaphor tells us that success does not come overnight. The same can be said for overhauling a process, workflow, or business methodology. This can become even more difficult and require even more patience when working within strict budgetary constraints.

ABOUT A DECADE AGO, MIKE LINCOLN, IDS NORTHERN REGIONAL MANAGER/COLORADO STATE PRINTER, SAW THE WRITING ON THE WALL FOR AN IMPROVED WORKFLOW.

Lincoln oversees the State of Colorado's Integrated Document Solutions (IDS), an end-to-end document management operation, serving all government entities across Colorado. IDS advises, assists, and supports and provides a wide variety of document solutions at a professional level at a fraction of the cost of private vendors to the various state departments. From business cards, graphic design, and print, to imaging, mail, and delivery, IDS partners with each agency to offer professional services tailored to each program's need and budget. IDS is driven to provide seamless operation for agencies, resulting in more efficient processes and lower costs.

“We knew this was the direction we wanted to go as far back as eight or 10 years,” said Lincoln. “We continually strive to eliminate inefficient and outdated practices by taking advantage of 21st century technology so we can provide our customers with high-quality and cost-effective document solutions.”

“We choose a multi-phased approach. We started with an ADF solution so we could re-engineer modified documents that came into our workflow. We started with the state's warrant printing. We needed to be able to take a pre-composed PDF, data mine it, grab the information we needed to, report it back to the customer, and track it internally so we could handle the back-end processing. There was a total of 11 different process codes that defined the workflow of that particular warrant that we output.”

“It was probably a nine month process to get the workflow defined prior to the implementation and it was our first journey into this world.”

The IDS team found success and began to implement more processes and workflows.

In 2015, IDS' top internal customer began needing mail tracking ability. This began the final phase of the project as Lincoln looked for a way to integrate a dashboard, postal software, and other data services. BCC Software provided a solution for mail tracking, postal software, and data services, while Racami came through with an integrated dashboard.

STAYING THE COURSE

“It's been a rocky course, to be honest,” said Lincoln. “I have to give credit to my team. I've had some crazy ideas that they've been able to pull off, which says a lot about their ability. We have run into obstacles we've just had to fight through. Whether it's internal bureaucracy, red tape, operators embracing something new and different, and even our customers. They've had to modify how they've 'always done business' to become more efficient. It falls to me to say 'This is the right way to go. We need to forge in this direction.' To that end, we were able to secure just over 50% of the budget investment from our biggest customer to help fund these efforts.”

“Funding in the government sector is always challenging, so being able to be creative with funding is a pretty heavy lift and was a challenge of mine that, thankfully, a customer embraced the direction.”



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CHALLENGE:

The State of Colorado's Integrated Document Solutions (IDS) manages all of the documentation for Colorado government entities, from business cards to graphic design services, to direct mail and delivery. With a large and robust customer base, IDS needed to create enhanced and efficient workflows, as well as incorporate data services and postal software to be able to meet the needs of their customers. But as a government entity itself, funding projects was difficult.

SOLUTION:

Lincoln realized that in order to create seamless workflows while lowering costs, they needed a robust solution. Getting creative with funding options and by utilizing BCC Software through a multi-phased approach, they were able to leverage comprehensive postal software, expert data marketing services, and mail tracking capabilities. The organization also utilized Racami for an integrated dashboard.

RESULTS:

- » Enhanced presorting capabilities have saved valuable production hours and provided IDS continued and enhanced access to game-changing postal discounts.
- » Better address quality tools have improved deliverability and lowered return mail numbers.
- » Automating the postal processing, collection of production data, and improving the printing process has made the operation more reliable and people trust the management system.

As Lincoln says, the internal customer's pain point—needing tractability—opened their ears to his solution. The customer had funding sources that could be directed to IDS.

"I've had conversations with other governmental entities about how we got there, because they don't have the funding for it, and I have to share with them that we had to get creative, we had to go to our customers and say 'Look, this will benefit everybody if we can do it.'"

TRANSITION OUTCOMES

The IDS team has found flexibility and nimbleness in ability to respond to its customer's needs and requests.

"I'd like us to be recognized as the best governmental service bureau in existence. That's my goal," says Lincoln. "When it comes to government, what I'd like us to be, is a model for other governments. Colorado is doing this type of printing just as good as commercial bureaus and in order to be there, we had to make this investment in technology. And not just any technology. Technology that was robust enough to sustain our needs."

On the production end, new presorting capabilities has saved valuable production hours and given IDS enhanced access to postage discounts. Better address quality tools have improved deliverability and lowered return mail numbers. The Racami dashboard and automation tools enable tracking of the data processing activity and also the physical production tasks. Automating the postal processing, collection of production data, and improving the printing process has made the operation more reliable and people trust the management system.

"Not only are the efficiencies on the production side, by being able to presort in the print stream, we have been able to shift efforts by key staff by leveraging skills more efficiently. The results for the team that manages the address quality system has been a process that's faster and provides better reporting, it's really helpful," described Lincoln.

The combined Racami and BCC Software solutions work to build and drive processes that incorporate a variety of business rules, not available to them previously, accommodating the varying needs of the IDS customers. The enhancements provide IDS and their customers increased flexibility and accuracy while delivering on their promise to provide the best service to their customers.

NEXT STEPS

Lincoln acknowledges that the ride may never be truly "over," but he's enjoying it. He now feels the pull to evangelize IDS' success, and continue to solidify the organization's position as an important infrastructure by fully and continually embracing new technology. As far as his team goes, they are looking to secure additional inserting equipment to handle the sheer volume of mailing the organization is currently doing, thanks to the ability to automate jobs.

READY TO LEARN MORE?

BCC Software strives not only to see its customers succeed, but like the State of Colorado's Integrated Document Solutions has demonstrated, help the end customer succeed as well.

To learn more about the postal software, data quality services, and automation that hundreds of other industry leaders use, contact us at marketing@bccsoftware.com or **800-337-0442**.



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