



United Food and Commercial Workers - Union Local ONE

General Information

UFCW is a labor union in Utica, NY that services the financial, insurance and other requirements of its 35,000 members and their dependents from the main office in Utica as well as branch offices in Syracuse, Rochester and Buffalo, NY. In addition, UFCW operates a service bureau for data processing and claims handling services for other UFCW Locals in Manhattan, Long Island and NJ that have a membership of approximately 50,000 members plus their dependents. UFCW Local ONE is very well known and highly respected for its efficient operations throughout the AFL-CIO.

UFCW Local ONE provides the following services to its members and their families: Credit Union Services including Share Draft (checking) Accounts, Savings Accounts, Loan Transactions, Credit Card Services and ATM Cards; and Self-Insured Benefits Coverage and In-House Claims Processing including Life insurance, Health Insurance, and Pension Fund Management Services.

Local ONE provides these services through a sophisticated Labor Union Management Information System that includes a Bull DPS 7000 mainframe and a Novell TCP/IP LAN and WAN, with nearly 100 PCs and 50 Macintosh computers. The facility in Utica has a communications hub for data that connects all of the above mentioned facilities (UFCW and others) to provide for immediate availability of data and other types of information.

The need for a more efficient method of providing high customer service levels, accommodating present and future growth plans (all without increasing overall costs) initiated the investigation of optical disk storage and retrieval systems in 1993.

Phase 1 - Eliminate Fiche and Reduce Paper Printing Costs

The initial interest in optical storage and retrieval was to eliminate the costs and time delays of the existing microfiche process (outsourced to a service bureau); reduce the amount of paper printing, while providing the technology to maximize personnel productivity and customer satisfaction. UFCW had previously installed a Novell .TCP/IP IAN/WAN throughout the organization with both PCs and Macs. UFCW was generating about 5,000 pages of computer output per night. This was supplemented by month-end, quarter-end and year-end

reports that increased the total to about 200,000 pages of computer output per month. All 200,000 pages of information were being printed for distribution and large portions of these reports were being sent to the off-site service bureau for microfiche production. The fiche was used for long term archival storage and was costing UFCW about \$2,500 per month. Because turnaround requirements were extremely tight, it was necessary to print the information on paper for immediate distribution to the users, and follow-up with fiche a few days later.

UFCW chose the COINSERV System for implementation for the following reasons:

- Ease of implementation
- Flexibility and power of indexing
- Integration with the existing network architecture
- Client/Server architecture
- Migration path growth capability
- Installed base in financial institutions and credit unions

The COINSERV System was installed in September of 1993 and has met the financial goals by saving over \$4,500 per month in fiche and paper printing costs. There has also been a significant improvement in the productivity of the customer service personnel because of the immediate availability of the computer data. Another, unexpected, area of savings is the reduction in "on-line" mainframe DASD storage for some applications. Because the data is available on the COINSERV System, it is no longer necessary to keep it on the DPS7000 for an extended period of time. The storage capacity of the COINSERV System has been remarkable.

Phase 2 - Imaging: Eliminate the "Paper Shuffle"

UFCW processes about 35,000 source documents per month in the customer service and claims processing department. There is a workload of approximately 2,500 claims per month, or in excess of 100 phone calls per day. These claims are handled by claims personnel, and it requires about 10 minutes per phone call to resolve the customer service issues. Each claims person is responsible for a certain section of the alphabet (to spread the workload efficiently) since all information is filed by the member's last name.

One of the reasons for the extended amount of time to resolve a phone call is due to the fact that all paper files are stored in

large automated paper file storage "elevators" call Lectrivers. The claims personnel will resolve any issues that can be resolved with computer generated information from the COIN-SERV System. However, it is quite common that some of the required information is located in the member file. This means that the person must request the members phone number for a return phone call, leave their work area and go to the Lectriever to retrieve the information, review the information in the file, and place a return phone call to the member.

Another inhibiting factor in providing the level of service that UFCW desires is that the supporting documentation may be "out of file" or otherwise not available immediately. In addition, this process also involves a considerable amount of refiling time to replace the folders in the Lectriever location.

Based upon the success of COINSERV for data at UFCW and the requirement to provide the best member service possible, the next logical step was to employ source document imaging storage and retrieval - Advanced COINScan.

There were several motivating factors that helped justify the addition of COINScan to the System:

On 12//94 UFCW will relocate some personnel to an additional facility in the Utica' area. This means duplication of some files, or a method to provide access to information from either or both locations.

In addition, there can be significant savings by scanning the source documents now and not moving these files to take up space at the new location.

The ability to view computer output data (checks, EOBs and reports) simultaneously with the "back-up" source documents on the initial phone call inquiry will benefit UFCW personnel, and also provide the members and their dependents with a higher level of customer service.

The growing number of members and the subsequent growing number of claims will require additional personnel to maintain adequate service levels. The implementation of the COINScan feature will permit these personnel to maintain service levels through the use of enhanced technology.

Without the implementation of COINScan, it would be necessary to replicate the extremely expensive Lectriever Systems at the new location. The acquisition cost is very high, and the on-going maintenance costs are high as well.

The benefit of being able to locate all items from a claim with one search will significantly reduce the amount of time required to provide service to the members. There will also be

a dramatic reduction in time required to refile information, and the incidence of a "misfile" will be eliminated.

Information can be input (scanned) from multiple locations, and can be retrieved from any Windows PC on the LAN/WAN. This initial scanning (at the mailrooms) will reduce the amount of time required before the incoming information is available to processing personnel. Also, the number of multi-part forms can be reduced and a significant amount of filing and distribution time can be eliminated.

Phase 3 - Implementing COINSERV and COINScan over the WAN

The next phase of the Labor Union Management Information System Enhancement Project is to maximize the benefits of the COINSERV/COINScan System. This phase will be to provide COINSERV System access to the Locals outside the UFCW organization. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways:

- Installing COINScan Scan Stations at the other Locals, and FTPing the scanned documents to the central COINSERV Server in Utica. The document level security feature of the System will provide the service and the protection of the information that this type of implementation would require.
- Installing COINSERV/ COINScan Systems in each of the other Local locations for their input and dedicated retrieval. This could also allow downloading of their computer-generated information to their dedicated Server.
- Some combination of the two methods mentioned above, or an implementation utilizing the CD-ROM feature of the COIN-SERV System as a distribution method.

Conclusion

UFCW and INSCI have developed a working relationship that has provided the benefits and cost savings that UFCW set out to accomplish over a year ago. The COINSERV/ COINScan System implementation and the support and assistance of personnel from both organizations will continue to enhance those benefits to our mutual advantage. Cost savings, maximizing personnel productivity through the use of information systems, continually improving service levels and the ability to leverage information systems technology to full advantage is the key to the success of the UFCW installation.

For information about COINSERV solutions, contact INSCI worldwide headquarters at 1-508-870-4000 or visit www.insci.com