



DIGITAL DOCUMENT STORAGE HITS THE RIGHT NOTE AT YAMAHA CORPORATION

Yamaha Corporation of America, a wholly owned subsidiary of Yamaha Corporation in Japan, has been in business for almost 40 years and is a leader in musical products. Yamaha also distributes home electronics products, sound chips and cards and CD-Rs. About 300 employees work at Yamaha headquarters in Buena Park, California, and there are manufacturing facilities in Michigan and Georgia, with distribution centers throughout the U.S.

The production, distribution and sale of Yamaha products generate huge volumes of transaction documents and reports. These include about 1,500 invoices a day, along with dealer statements, bills of lading and thousands of pages of reports. From six to seven thousand pages of statements are generated monthly, and volumes typically increase during the peak selling season beginning in July.

Digital Storage Cuts Response Time, Improves Productivity

Five or six years ago, Yamaha noticed problems with the old process for storing invoices. The documents were kept on the mainframe, and when a customer called, someone had to access the mainframe, locate the appropriate information and then print it - a time-consuming and often frustrating process. This all changed when Yamaha implemented COINSERV digital document technology from INSCI Corporation to handle management of and access to invoices, statements and reports.

COINSERV is an integrated suite of software products that support electronic printing and high-volume document storage and retrieval. With the system's powerful document management capabilities, users can quickly index, archive, retrieve and distribute computer-generated documents and scanned images electronically.

"Now we can search on line and fax from within the application without ever leaving the desk. We have better productivity, along with newer, better technology," said Vimal Thomas, Assistant General Manager of IS for Yamaha. He helps lead the IT arm of Yamaha Corporation of America, which is responsible for managing all information at all locations in the U.S.

Original System Grows with Needs

As a longtime INSCI customer, Yamaha has had two generations of COINSERV products. "The first was a UNIX-based system implemented about five years ago," said Thomas. "Then we went from a Unisys mainframe to a Sun Solaris UNIX-based client/server platform running Oracle applications. We moved to our current COINSERV for Windows NT technology because we needed PostScript handling capability, and it allows us to fax directly from the application." Documents created by the Oracle application are in PostScript, and Yamaha's COINSERV system handles this format with ease.

"It was a very smooth upgrade," he said. "We took all our files to INSCI for conversion, and they sent someone to install everything. We set up a process to migrate new invoices to the COINSERV application and to ensure that the PostScript documents were indexed correctly."

Yamaha has about 150 users currently set up for COINSERV, with 18-20 people logged on at any one time. Although document volume has increased over the years, that has not impacted COINSERV functionality. "The system still handles our volume," said Thomas. "We also have the capability with INSCI's WebCOINS software to access over the Internet and look at invoices, but we aren't ready to do that yet. At some point we may want to look up an invoice while in a customer's office, but first we have to establish

security procedures, and we want to look at our invoice design."

WebCOINS lets users access the COINSERV repository through a web browser instead of a dedicated client program. WebCOINS supports standard browsers like Netscape and Internet Explorer, and all communication with the document repository is performed by the web server, not the user's browser.

Putting Productivity on the Desktop

Yamaha has not done a quantitative analysis on the results achieved with COINSERV. "Even without this analysis, we know there are tremendous productivity and time-saving benefits by eliminating the warehousing space and enabling quick document retrieval and distribution," Thomas said. "The original analysis that we performed six years ago, when COINSERV was first implemented, continues to remain valid and to provide ample justification for the investment. We really like the technology and the job it's doing for us."

Four main areas currently employ COINSERV at Yamaha. Customer service is using the technology to respond to questions and inquiries from customers. The distribution center uses the easier information access it provides to help streamline shipping. Finance and accounts receivable rely on COINSERV to track down invoices.

New Applications Will Expand Benefits

Yamaha will expand and evolve its use of COINSERV with the implementation of a bill of lading application and an image capture solution. "Once we have our new bill of lading application in place, we will be looking at handling about 1,500 bills per day," explained Thomas. "We are waiting on our distribution people to define their requirements for automation." With this application, Yamaha plans to take full advantage of COINScan software.

COINScan is an image capture solution for storing and retrieving scanned images from COINSERV systems. It gives Yamaha the ability to input documents from a wide variety of scanners and can be configured to meet the specific volume and indexing needs of many different document imaging profiles.

"The impact of the new bill of lading application will garner savings in a couple of areas," Thomas said. "One is storage space. We currently have areas filled with filing cabinets that we will not need anymore. Marketing will also benefit by being better able to research shipped products. Shipping will be able to close the loop on tracking shipments and proof of delivery. They can get online and see who signed for a delivery, reducing cycle time from days to minutes.

"Also, COINScan will basically speed things up. If a client calls with questions after we ship something, it ties up phone lines, so the customer who calls to place an order is on hold. The more lines we can keep available, the better for sales," and for Vimal Thomas and a competitive company like Yamaha, the sound of phones ringing is music to their ears.

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