

Technical Programming Services, Inc. (TPSi)

A Study in Innovation

Technical Programming Services, Inc. (TPSi) is an independent service bureau located in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Established in 1975, it's a company that takes its commitment to stay ahead of the curve seriously—especially when it comes to technology. TPSi delivered on this promise six years ago when it adopted Exstream Software's Dialogue to meet customer demand to move from the printing of basic statements to more personalized documents that involve the use of color, multiple fonts and data-driven graphics and messaging. Today, Dialogue makes it possible for TPSi to produce everything from high-volume invoices and customized letters to full-color, personalized bank and credit union statements and e-statements, with a speed to market that pleases TPSi—as well as its customers.

TPSi quickly discovered Dialogue was the perfect solution for supporting its fast-growing operation. Initially, it used the software to answer a customer's need for a very complicated 401(k) statement that involved complex customization and a very quick turnaround. TPSi was asked to produce close to 50,000 multi-page documents, front and back, which required Dialogue to input the customized information and create bar coding that would be compatible with TPSi's new mailing machines and allow the information to be archived for future use. Following the success of this initial project, TPSi has continued to develop new and innovative uses for the software.



Dialogue's powerful householding capabilities enabled TPSi to consolidate mailings for 10,000 customers into 7,000 envelopes for reduced mailing costs.

EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES

TPSi has relied on Dialogue to expand its service offerings and support the growth the company has experienced over the last several years—and its internal staff is quick to credit Dialogue for a good portion of the company's current success.

"We'll always be in the print and mail business because we still see impressive growth there. But lately we are experiencing our most significant growth in the demand for electronic delivery," said Fadel Iskander, vice president at TPSi. "We couldn't handle it without Dialogue. The difference between our old software and Dialogue is night and day. The old system took five to six steps to get something developed. With Dialogue's advanced automation capabilities, it's hands off."

TPSi has seen the most growth in the demand for electronic delivery from its utilities customers. It started out with several utilities wanting to make invoices and statements available to customer service representatives so that, when customers call, both the representative and the customer would be looking at the same document. Then the company was asked to make statements available to customers for online viewing. While most utilities' customers are still getting bills on paper, TPSi was quick to anticipate the growing demand for electronic bill presentment based on these early requests.

Dialogue's interactive document creation and real-time document services allow TPSi to meet its customers' requirements for instant access to their documents. Using Dialogue, TPSi can offer the capability of quickly finding bills online, reprinting them immediately, or e-mailing a PDF to a customer upon request. The ability to create and deliver these bills in multiple print and electronic formats simultaneously allows for greater flexibility and quicker turnaround. This helps TPSi produce more than 2.3 million utility bills per month for print and electronic delivery in record time.

"If four different utilities send files to us at two in the morning, we can handle it," said Iskander. "Because of Dialogue's speed, it's possible to process 100,000 statements and get them on the Internet in one hour."

CREATIVITY WITHOUT BOUNDARIES

In addition to maximizing its space efficiency on the production side, TPSi has also taken full advantage of Dialogue's intuitive design abilities. A value-added benefit to the utility statement process is the ability to include links within the PDF of the statement to allow the web user to instantly go to the proper site to pay the bill. And, Iskander's 17-year old son (who has been a Dialogue user since the age of 12) is working with Dialogue's robust design capabilities to imbed a flash file within the PDF file to promote additional product offerings for the purpose of cross-selling or providing a verbal message from the client's company president to foster greater customer loyalty.

"So much of what we like about Dialogue always comes back to its speed and ease of use," notes Iskander. "For example, we have an application that we did about 18 months ago where we created a web portal integrated with Dialogue."

Our customers now have the ability to log on, select their own messages and graphics, and then upload their encrypted data files. All our customers have to do is push 'run' and almost immediately e-statements are created. It's totally a straight-through process from start to finish. We haven't touched it since we set up the web portal. Aside from the decrypting, it's all done through Dialogue. It amounts to a virtual 'hands-off' revenue stream for us."

Offline, Dialogue is also performing in the print and mail area with a full suite of production tools that make it possible to control postage weights, sort output by postal codes, drive inserters and consolidate applications into a single envelope. This is saving TPSi's customers money. "One postal sortation is so complex and intricate I don't know how we could have accomplished it without Dialogue," says Iskander. "It is a major application that starts with 10,000 customers, but when we finish bundling we have 7,000 pieces for the mail stream. Dialogue's ability to create multiple hierarchies for bundling makes this kind of application possible."

A POWERFUL COMBINATION

A company like TPSi is the perfect environment for a platform like Dialogue. The biggest advantage is that there is no limit to the company's ability to transform new ideas into expanded business opportunities.

"Not one day passes that we don't modify an application or create a new one," said Iskander. "Many times it is a rush project for which we have perfected brand new applications and sent a PDF for proofing within 45 minutes. Every day it's something like that. We don't just use Dialogue; we take advantage of it to create brand new work. At the time we selected Dialogue, we knew that other products weren't in the same league. But there is really no comparison when it comes to ease of use, capabilities and seamless integration. Once we started using Dialogue in earnest, we went gangbusters. I don't think we could survive without it."



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