

C a s e S t u d y

Plus Technologies is a provider of secure application output delivery solutions since 1995. They have thousands of customers in over 35 countries around the world.

Streamlining the Management of Output in an Oracle Applications Environment

PLUS TECHNOLOGIES CASE STUDY SERIES

This series of case studies will discuss the advantages of modern document delivery/administration methods over the old traditional print job methods.

Utilizing modern document delivery methods, print jobs or applicable parts of the jobs can be delivered to the correct locations, people, web sites, faxes, emails or printers. Modern document delivery methods provide user-friendly interfaces that assist getting jobs where they need to be, when they need to be there.

This technology saves time, network resources, consumables and training. If there is problem along the way, it can be tracked down to a place, time, printer and page so it can be resolved quickly. This technology provides confirmation of job delivery and more importantly job completion.

Where appropriate, jobs can also be encrypted which ensures security of the information.

The customer associated with this case study is a large, multi-national manufacturer of product branding and labeling systems, inventory tracking systems, retail control systems and pricing control systems. The customer is a \$600 million plus company that services over 250,000 customers worldwide.

Business Problem – The customer had completed the migration from legacy mainframe applications to one of the largest Oracle 11i Applications implementations known at that time. Their application servers (hosted remotely by IBM Global Services) run the Oracle E-Business Suite including the Financials, HR, Supply Chain, Manufacturing, Procurement, Sales and Order Management modules. After the migration, they continued to have a very labor-intensive tech support problem related to supporting the printing, faxing and emailing of the output created by the Oracle applications. The tech support team was delivering a poor level of service to end-users due to a lack of tools, thereby, impacting customer service. There were many delays in troubleshooting print and output related problems causing expensive delays throughout the organization when print problems could not be resolved quickly. Even though they had implemented RightFax fax server software, they still utilized a “print then fax” method to send application output via fax. This method was inefficient at best, but the team had little time available to customize the Oracle environment to utilize the fax solution because their hands had been full with the Oracle Applications migration. More technical resources were needed than originally anticipated to manage the output created by their new Oracle environment. The bottom line was that the costs associated with supporting the new enterprise-wide print and output environment were spiraling out of control.

Objective – In order to improve end-user support and satisfaction, system administrators needed a single, automated, enterprise-wide solution to manage fax and print jobs and print queues. End-users needed a tool that allowed them to resolve Oracle Application

PLUS TECHNOLOGIES WHITE
PAPER SERIES

This series of white papers addresses common customer problems associated with print spooling, printer management and advanced document delivery.

If you have a topic that you would like Plus Technologies to consider for a white paper, please e-mail us contactus@plustechnologies.com

PREVIOUS WHITE PAPERS

View previous white papers on our web site at www.plustechnologies.com in the Solutions Section

Previous Topics

Streamlining Multi-Host Printing

Job Splitting and Load Balancing

Unplanned Downtime

Replacing HP OpenSpool

The Value of Bi-Directional Communications and Print Job Delivery Confirmation

OM Plus is Plus Technologies' highly reliable, easy-to-use, Advanced Print Spooling, Printer Management and Document Delivery software solution.

Plus Technologies provides secure application output delivery solutions that focus on the movement of business documents from their point of creation (i.e. business application) to their final destination (i.e. Printers/MFD's, email, web, fax, other) and provide a host of value-add functions along the way. Plus Technologies offers software, consulting services, implementation services and technical support. Our ultimate goal of is to streamline document related business processes to increase efficiency and, therefore, the profitability of our customers.

related print issues themselves. Additionally, they needed to provide the ability to securely start and re-start jobs without having root password access to their server, be able to differentiate jobs with different colored banner pages, provide administrators and end-users secure control and access to print jobs from their PC's (remotely, because IBM is hosting their application servers) even if they had very little or no Oracle or UNIX experience. Finally, they also needed to be able to fax print jobs directly from their application instead of printing them and then faxing them, which had proven to be costly and cumbersome.

Customer Technical Environment - See diagram

- Oracle 11i E-Business Suite
- Four servers running AIX 5.1 hosted by IBM Global Services
- RightFax fax server software
- Over 500 printers and multi-function devices from multiple vendors across ten facilities in North America
- Over 10,000 print jobs per day
- See diagram – At the end of this document

Key Technical Requirements – Integration with both the RightFax fax system and their email system without requiring any changes needing to be made to the Oracle Applications. Also, they did not want to add client software on the end-users PC's.

Due to the critical nature of the documents, a fully redundant, fail-over configuration was required. Since the application servers were being hosted, the solution they implemented needed to be able to provide a "wide area", enterprise view of all application servers, printers (and other output devices) and the documents created by the applications. Finally, because the delivery of the documents created by the application can be mission critical, the solution must support bi-directional communication directly with the printers to ensure and guarantee document delivery confirmation.

Technical Solution – After considering and evaluating several vendors, the customer chose to implement OM Plus from Plus Technologies. They chose to implement the base OM Plus server module, the OM Plus Java GUI User Interface for their administrators/help desk and the OM Plus HTML User Interface for the end-users who want to check the status and control their print jobs. OM Plus provides advanced delivery and control of documents across complex networks to multiple destination types including printers, fax, email, and web/intranet sites.

OM Plus was installed on the customer's Oracle database server to manage and control all of the print/output across the enterprise. OM Plus replaced the native print spooling system in the Oracle/AIX environment. Print Jobs are now "captured" by OM Plus and delivered to the appropriate device, fax system or email system. No modifications were required to either the Oracle Applications or the AIX operating environment. The users just print as they normally do within Oracle, and OM Plus does the rest. Security is enhanced because end-users can access their print jobs without "root" access and can look at any print job they are authorized to see from any PC using their browser. Administrators have a single, easy-to-use tool to solve printing and fax delivery issues in their new environment saving many help desk man-hours each week. Utilizing functionality built into OM Plus, users can also now select Fax as a destination and "print" their job directly to a fax server. No more print and then fax redundancy.

System Administrators see their whole print operation through the centralized administration function of OM Plus providing tremendous efficiency and major cost control. In addition, end-users can utilize the OM Plus HTML Interface to view, manage and control their own print jobs without adding any additional client software on their PC's. They access OM Plus from their browser.

Implementation – Installing, configuring, and testing were completed in under a week. The customer installed the OM Plus system without any formal training. A Plus Technologies engineer worked remotely via phone to assist the customer with the installation of the OM Plus software and to provide configuration assistance. This level of phone-based service is standard and included without additional charge in all purchases of Plus Technologies software.

Results – Utilizing OM Plus allows the customer's system administrators to centrally manage their print/output to over 500 printers and multi-function devices of various makes and models and their fax and email systems across the entire enterprise. System Administrators see their whole print operation through the centralized administration function of OM Plus providing tremendous efficiency and control. They can access all the features of the system designed to help them control and manage their output to printers, fax or email including re-routing, re-printing, audit, accounting and many other functions. The end-users can resolve many of their print related problems on their own through the use of OM Plus without having to add any client software on their PC. Finally, OM Plus was seamlessly integrated into the customer's fully redundant, fail-over server configuration without requiring additional technical resources.

The end result for this customer was that the implementation of OM Plus streamlined their operations and reduced the costs related to the administration and support of the output generated by their Oracle 11i Applications, thereby, improving end-user satisfaction and customer service levels across the enterprise.

Customer Quote – “We can now provide a much higher level of customer service because our end-users are able to manage and control their own output. Our company is so satisfied with OM Plus that we have started selling it to our own customers.”

Plus Technologies Case Studies – The Plus Technologies case study series includes real examples of how companies use Advanced Spooling Solutions to streamline operations, reduce cost and/or add functionality to existing business processes. For more information on these case studies, contact Plus Technologies.

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 = Application Output (reports, invoices, pick tickets, etc)

 = Printing is Delivery Method

 = Faxing is Delivery Method

 = Emailing is Delivery Method

