DIGITECH SYSTEMS

125,000
pages of records securely accessible

Up to
70,000
annual purchase records simply compiled and converted to member rebates

100%
of records now protected from loss, theft and natural disaster

#1 BUYING GROUP
IBPI
EST 1987
FOR OFFICE TECHNOLOGIES

IBPI Streamlines Operations with PaperVision®.com to Better Serve Members and Vendors

Case Study Summary:

Challenge:

Securely managing more than 100,000 records and up to 17,500 quarterly member-vendor transactions

Solution:

PaperVision®.com with WorkFlow, PaperFlow™ Direct

Results:

Business records are now securely available to remote workers for collaboration

Introduction

From their founding more than 35 years ago, IBPI has streamlined buying for their members, including everything from software and business services to office supplies, car rentals, web design, and more. As business records piled up and the association grew to more than 500 members, Executive Director Mark Grice knew a shift to information management technology would speed business process efficiencies and improve data security.

After implementing PaperFlow™ Direct to scan paper records and PaperVision.com for secure management and access to information in the cloud, IBPI now delivers quarterly statements and annual rebates more quickly to members while improving accessibility for their staff.

The Situation

In 1987, 51 office equipment companies came together to form International Business Products Inc. (IBPI) when they recognized the opportunity for group purchasing power. "The trend represented an opportunity for growth," says Grice. The companies came together to negotiate a group buy for a better deal. Today, IBPI has grown from this simple beginning to include more than 500 members throughout North America and more than 35 vendor partners.

As the largest buying group in the office equipment industry, IBPI negotiates discounts with manufacturers and service providers by leveraging the buying power of their membership. Through IBPI's

efforts, their members receive preferred pricing and rebates on purchases.

With more than 35 years of records, IBPI faced a daunting challenge. In addition to their own business records, every quarter each vendor partner submits information about their sales to individual members, which could total as many as 17,500 items that need to be consolidated and carefully tracked to calculate rebates. Paper records occupied 25 large bankers boxes representing approximately 125,000 pages, and were only accessible to one employee who was physically located in the same place the boxes were stored.[1] "We needed a new system, because our staff live in multiple states and it was difficult and time-consuming to view records," explained Grice.

The Solution

Though they had started to move some records into a digital format for easier access, Grice jumped on the chance to digitize everything using PaperFlow Direct with its simple upload to the cloud service PaperVision.com for secure records management and retrieval along with process automation and workflow. IBPI was already aware of Digitech Systems, as their PaperVision®, PaperFlow™, and ImageSilo® technologies make them an ideal vendor partner for IBPI members who are helping their customers make the digital transformation from paper files to digital records and automation.

Grice negotiated a special deal in exchange for access to the technologies for IBPI. He said, "it was natural for us to work with a company we already knew and trusted, and the price couldn't be beat!" Today, 10 of the 25 boxes of records are fully digitized with more being scanned weekly. The change has automated invoice processing and approvals as well as revealed valuable insights into projects and relationships from the last three decades.

Recognized Benefits

"We've been delighted by how easy the products are to use," says Grice who explained that most of the scanning of the physical records is done by his special needs son, whose vocational training during high school taught him to scan school records. "Digitizing documents gives my son something to do that is meaningful, and PaperFlow Direct is so easy to use that all I do is pull unscannable documents and help him with the file names." It's a skillset the family leverages as well, since tubs of family photos are now digital thanks to the young man's efforts.

As many companies find, digital records are easier to keep secure. Prior to the switch, the records were being stored in an attic in Arizona where they were susceptible to heat damage and ink dissipation. Digital records never degrade, and they are protected by multiple layers of security as well as encryption and smart password policies. "The records are much more secure in PaperVision.com!" Grice explained.

The ability to automate processes has been critical for IBPI, because of their remote workforce. Though they typically receive about a dozen invoices monthly, that number can quadruple in the months around their annual member event. Grice explains that "the products seamlessly scale to streamline work regardless of the number of invoices requiring processing, and our staff can review and approve them for payment from any location.

PaperVision.com works well for us, because we all work from home."

Perhaps the most surprising benefit is the information found in the historical documents that are now easily accessible. "Being able to mine records from the 1990s and early 2000s for ideas and past approaches has been invaluable. We can see the full breadth of our long-term relationships and even spot strategies that are still smart ideas to pursue in today's market. We can all learn from history, and IBPI can take advantage of it because PaperVision.com provides secure structure and accessibility to these documents," said Grice.

Conclusion

As excited as they are about the security and efficiency gains, Mark Grice noted something else as important to the project. "Our favorite thing about working with Digitech Systems has been the people," Grice said. "We don't work with every vendor who comes to us. We're looking for organizations with a similar mindset and a values-based structure that extends to the way their people treat our people and our members." IBPI and Digitech Systems continue to deepen their technology partnership. "Our sights are set on Robotic Process Automation (RPA) to extract information from documents and automatically compile the quarterly purchase reports for our members, and we know Digitech Systems can help," said Grice. In fact, the project is already underway. It's a partnership likely to reap ongoing benefits for some time to come.

1 https://www.securescan.com/frequently-asked-questions/how-many-pages-fit-in-a-bankers-box/