



New Jersey Bankers Association and RightFax

BACKGROUND

New Jersey Bankers Association needed an efficient system for distributing weekly membership bulletins, ongoing conference literature, and committee meeting minutes to its 82 bank members. A replacement of its maintenance-intensive DOS-based fax server was needed.

THE CHALLENGE

New Jersey Bankers Association (NJBA) is a non-profit trade association representing the interests of the state's 82 commercial banks as well as industry affiliates. Situated in Princeton, NJ, the 12-employee association is an affiliate of the American Bankers Association (ABA) that provides government relations, educational seminars and communications with and on behalf of New Jersey's banks.

NJBA publishes a quarterly magazine and distributes weekly bulletins to communicate its initiatives. It also coordinates up to 30 educational seminars and conferences for its members each year, and plays a key role in the state's bank application process by publicizing new bank and branch information. It has more than 4,000 names in its database.

NJBA senior executives began to re-evaluate the agency's communication dissemination process. NJBA Director of Communications Tim Doherty says traditional mailings were becoming somewhat of a paradox and no longer made sense. "Our postal costs were rising even though the number of (member) banks in New Jersey was

decreasing." Thus, in an effort to reduce printing, paper, postage, and labor costs, the association switched to fax distribution. NJBA attached a DOS-based fax server to its Novell NetWare network. Doherty says, "The product we selected was touted as the top of the market at the time but it had definite shortcomings."

After six months, NJBA realized that the product was overly maintenance-intensive. It didn't have an automatic purge feature, so every week Doherty had to manually delete sent faxes, a multi-step, tiresome procedure which involved taking the server off line and running a batch file he created to delete the old fax transmissions, back up the server's configuration file and fax phonebooks and then restart it. "It was painfully obvious," he says, "that the process of both data management and communication was very inefficient." Doherty says the product also brought with it "numerous hair-raising incidents," namely habitual server crashes and loss of data.

"I dreaded sending out fax bulletins every week because I didn't know what the server would do," he says. Plus, due to its lack of reliability and the fact that it "was so clunky and user-unfriendly," the product was never fully deployed to the rest of the staff who might have otherwise used it to improve their productivity. After 18 months, Doherty was the only person in the building using the fax server.

THE SOLUTION

Doherty was sure there must be a better fax server solution available—one that was more reliable and could be seamlessly integrated with his centralized Microsoft Access 97 custom database and not require maintenance

of separate fax phonebooks on the fax server. He was right. Ironically, it came knocking on his doorstep in the form of a fax. The document, sent by the American Bankers Association (ABA), had the name RightFax in the header section of the fax cover sheet (the ABA had not replaced it with its own name).

Doherty called ABA and liked what he heard about RightFax the highly scalable, reliable, and adaptable product suite from Captaris that combines industry-leading network, production and IP fax for efficient electronic document delivery. He subsequently purchased RightFax and a Windows NT server and hired a consulting specialist. "Our world changed," he recalls. NJBA had consolidated its 30-odd committee, membership, conference and subscription databases into a single customized Microsoft Access database application. When RightFax, the database integrated seamlessly with RightFax through Windows' ODBC linkage and serves as the fax phonebook for all staff members.

According to Doherty, RightFax has definitely helped productivity soar within NJBA. For starters, all 12 staff members have been trained on RightFax and utilize it daily to distribute NJBA's bulletins (of which there are more than 130 every year), committee meeting announcements and minutes, as well as various single documents from their LAN workstations. There is seldom a need to generate labels or envelopes for mailings anymore. Staff can simply fax out material to multiple recipients in a matter of minutes.

Each department within NJBA has its own fax number so that inbound faxes can be routed through the NT fax server directly to designated departmental workstations.

What's more, since RightFax interfaces with MS Exchange (NJBA's resident e-mail system), staff are alerted of new faxes in their individual Outlook e-mail in-boxes. "RightFax has been so dynamic that we doubled the number of phone lines used by the fax server from four to eight just four months after the initial installation," he says, "allowing us to fax all conference notice mailings to the 1,200 names on our list. There are no printing, postage, or

mailing-house costs and we gained same-day publication and distribution of all bulletins and notices. And in combination with aggressive pricing from our new long distance and regional toll carrier, we achieved significant decreases in our information distribution costs."

In the 22 months following the installation of RightFax, NJBA has sent out more than a quarter-million faxes. Doherty and his network technology consultant were so sold on RightFax that they both took the four-day RightFax technical training class.

Doherty says that while he can't put an exact number on the return on investment the association enjoys as a result of RightFax, he describes it as immense. "We wouldn't be able to manage our workload without RightFax. We have completely revolutionized how we communicate with our constituents. And we're going to keep looking for additional ways to take advantage of this technology and the customized database that helps manage it--with RightFax at the heart of our system."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Captaris is a leading provider of business information delivery solutions that integrate and automate the flow of messages, data and documents. Captaris produces a suite of proven products and services, in partnership with leading enterprise software companies, delivered through a global distribution network. Captaris has over 100,000 systems installed worldwide, with more than 90 of the Fortune 100 using the company's award-winning products and services to reduce costs and increase the performance of critical business information investments. For more information please contact us at: www.Captaris.com or 1.888.320.7778. Outside of the U.S. please call +1.520.320.7000.