

Industry
Manufacturing

Solutions Implemented
Reform Enterprise

Processes Automated
Printing, Faxing



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Crown Central Petroleum

FabSoft's Reform & Castelle FaxPress provides automated faxing from company's SAP system

Headquartered in Baltimore, Maryland, Crown Central Petroleum is an independent refiner and marketer of petroleum products for the East Coast with operations that encompass refining, wholesale and retail. Located throughout the mid-Atlantic and southeastern states, their 346 retail outlets consist of Fast Fare® convenience stores, mini-marts and gasoline stations.

To manage its distribution system, Crown uses SAP. One of their SAP modules provides an integrated, open solution for the entire oil and gas value chain -- from wellhead to service station. In addition to its many distribution features, the software provides an integrated infrastructure that lets Crown effectively manage its service station and convenience store retailing both at the site level and at headquarters.

For intra-company communication purposes, Crown implemented Reform. This Document Management system immediately solved two of the company's three biggest communication bottlenecks.

On a weekly basis, Crown sends a series of SAP-generated reports to its district managers located off-site. These reports include the detailed credit and debit history for each retail outlet in the manager's territory. Before Reform, the complete summary was printed on 3-inch credit card paper tape where lines are only 39 characters wide. Crown paid an outside service to send the reports in this format. And the dealers were all understandably unhappy about the hard-to-read format. With Reform, these reports are now generated by the SAP system and automatically faxed to each district manager. In addition to eliminating an outside service provider, Reform provides a much-improved format that dealers can easily read.

Crown's second communication bottleneck was in its maintenance division. Every time anything breaks anywhere (i.e., a gas pump, the cash register or even a light bulb), a to-be-completed maintenance request form is generated by the SAP system and faxed to the person responsible for fixing whatever is broken. Before Reform, the maintenance department was very unhappy about having to print out each maintenance request and manually fax it. The department, on average, processes up to 3,000 requests per month, and it took an employee anywhere from five to 10 minutes to process and fax each request. By automating the process with the Reform, the maintenance department not only sends out repair requests much faster from their desktop, but also frees up at least two employees for more productive work.

Once both district reporting and maintenance repair authorizations are fully implemented, the company plans to target their purchase order process. By automating faxes, the purchasing department expects to see major gains in processing time, vendor communication quality and employee productivity.

To integrate Reform with the SAP system, Crown used Reform Enterprise version which includes the Reform FaxPress Plug-in and Reform's SAP Plug-in. FabSoft's Reform application creates business forms on all operating systems (i.e., Windows, Unix, AS400, DOS), using preprinted form techniques to replace and enhance multipart forms. It electronically distributes forms to all printers and digital copiers, and seamlessly integrates to a majority of the fax, e-mail and archive systems.

With Reform the entire process is unattended. All the user has to do is send the proposed document to Reform. Reform takes care of formatting the fax, compiling distribution, and sending completed faxes through the FaxPress server. And, to wrap it all up, the user is e-mailed a final sending status for each transmission — success or failure.

"The best part of Reform software is that you only have to figure out the really complicated SAP system once," states Ronald Johnson, the systems administrator for Crown Central Petroleum. Once set up, only the Reform main option with its few configurations has to be modified. "And, because the entire process is so user friendly, we can get in, get it done, get out, and move on to something else really fast!"

Ultimately, Reform and FaxPress will offer easy-to-use convenience for all of the company's 120 employees at headquarters, who will be able to fax and receive faxes from their desktop. The FaxPress system is being set up to interface with the company's Nortel Meridian PBX system. Using Dual Tone Multi Frequency routing, Castelle

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software recognizes each employee's 4-digit extension as part of the fax number. Crown uses Exchange 5.5 for their e-mail server.

Right now, the company is only using two of the FaxPress 5000's eight-phone line capacity. Johnson expects that when the company's automatic faxing is fully operational, they will fax between 1,000 to 2,000 pages per day. A FaxPress 5000 with all eight lines implemented can handle around 4,000 pages in an eight-hour day, depending on graphic content.

"The Castelle FaxPress fax server was so simple to set up, it left me time to ward off the latest viruses," jokes Johnson. He likes the security that the standalone unit gives him. And, although it is a single point of failure, the company can always have redundant units or use manual fax machines just in case. "This has also been a very economical implementation," adds Johnson. "It would cost us up to \$1,000 per month to integrate our fax capability directly into the SAP system with our outside service. With FaxPress, we are able to accommodate all SAP-generated fax reports ourselves as well as fax-enable the rest of the company."