

CASE STUDY



CUSTOMER PROFILE

- Of 1,100,000 customers, 220,000 are billed quarterly
- In 2004, GCWW received 490,609 calls into its call center
- Implemented DOC1® to improve bill legibility and include personalized messages

Executive Summary

Greater Cincinnati Water Works (GCWW) utilized an older version of Indus' Bill Print that had been heavily modified. Prior to implementing the Pitney Bowes Software solution, the statements produced by GCWW used fixed-pitch fonts and were created on pre-printed stock. The result was a bill that had little information and was difficult for the customer to read. Utilizing DOC1® software, GCWW improved the legibility of its statement. Plus, DOC1® enabled GCWW to send customers personalized messages.

The organization also selected Vault to assist with the archiving and retrieval of customer statements. With its implementation, customer service reps are able to view the exact copy of a customer's bill while they are on the phone.

Business Challenge

GCWW struggled to provide customers with an easy to read statement that included the critical information they needed on a monthly or quarterly basis, and also displayed messaging that was tailored to each customer.

"For example, if a customer was on a payment plan, the bill never told them how much they owed, how much the next bill would be, and when it would be due. Now we do. In another instance, we had a snowstorm that affected some of our routes. For those customers, we had to estimate their bill. With this software, we were able to alert only those customers affected, that their bill was estimated that month because their meters couldn't be read." Mark Menkhaus, Assistant Superintendent, Commercial Services Division.

"We're saving 1.5 cents a piece—which is tremendous when you consider that we process 1.5 million pieces annually."

Mark Menkhaus
Assistant Superintendent

Solution

With the implementation of DOC1®, GCWW is able to react to and manage change more effectively. *“The City of Cincinnati changed its payment lockbox. With the old system, we would have had pre-printed stock with all the wrong information. Now, all the boilerplate information is printed on-the-fly. We didn’t need to trash all the pre-printed stock and utilize administrative time managing cutover dates and coordinating with the operators to make sure they don’t pull a box of the wrong stock,”* explained Mr. Menkhaus.

DOC1® has also enabled GCWW to reduce paper costs. According to Mr. Menkhaus, *“For multiple page bills, we can now print on the front and back of the second and ensuing pages. We also have different bill formats for different customers. For instance, an industrial plant will have several water meters and we can now send them one consolidated bill that shows each meter’s usage.”*

Customer service and employee satisfaction have improved as well. In the past, customer service agents could not see a customer’s bill unless they printed it, and retrieved it from one of the printers that could facilitate the pre-printed form—requiring more time and money to resolve customer issues. Now, with Vault, agents are able to view an exact copy of the bill while the customer is on the phone.

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TECHNOLOGY USED

- DOC1® for document composition and high speed batch production
- Vault for document archiving and retrieval

Results and Benefits

Utilizing DOC1® software, GCWW can now outsource their print and mail operations. *“We were doing our printing and insertion in-house, but we didn’t have redundancy in either equipment or operators. Now we give the DOC1®-generated print file to a print and mail service bureau,”* says Mr. Vonder Meulan. *“This is important as it enables us to provide billing and customer service to other utilities. Now we do the water and sewer billing for Butler County Department of Environmental Services. We produce a custom bill for Butler County, consolidate their bills with ours to maximize postage savings and enable their customer service agents to view bills online. We could never have offered this service before because we could not have guaranteed reliability. Now we can take on other customers with confidence,”* continued Mr. Vonder Meulan.

“From a customer service aspect, the greatest improvement is the readability of the new bill.”

Paul Vonder Meulan
Information Technology
Assistant Manager

For more information call 800.327.8627 or visit us online: www.pb.com/software

UNITED STATES

800.327.8627
pbsoftware.sales@pb.com

CANADA

800.268.3282
pbsoftware.canada.sales@pb.com

EUROPE/UNITED KINGDOM

+44.800.840.0001
pbsoftware.emea@pb.com

ASIA PACIFIC/AUSTRALIA

+61.2.9437.6255
pbsoftware.australia@pb.com
pbsoftware.singapore@pb.com



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