European Distributor Improves Communication with Customers and Suppliers Using OpenText

Fetim Retail automates delivery and order archival with OpenText RightFax and OpenText Alchemy

Industry
Manufacturing, distribution

Customer

RETAIL EUROPE
Fetim

Business Challenges
- Labor-intensive document exchange and storage
- Costly fax lines, supplies, hardware
- Delayed order fulfillment

Business Solution
OpenText RightFax integrated with Microsoft Exchange Server, Xerox MFP, AS/400, Cisco FoIP, PDF and OpenText Alchemy archive

Business Benefits
- Enhanced productivity
- Fewer delays
- Reduced expenses
- Consolidated IP communications
- Improved communication with suppliers and retailers

Fetim Group, founded in the early 1900s and headquartered in Amsterdam, is an international trading corporation that provides products to professional trade customers and Do-It-Yourself (DIY) chains. Fetim Retail Europe is the DIY division that sources, manufactures, and distributes consumer products for all major European DIY retailers and lifestyle stores in the European Union. Fetim Retail services more than 4,000 stores with over 14,000 products.

Challenge

As a leading distributor, Fetim Retail builds its reputation on quality products delivered with speed and accuracy. Years ago, the company found their manual methods for exchanging and storing business documents were becoming outdated. Labor-intensive document management and technology inefficiencies occasionally led to delays, sometimes adding days to the usual two-day turnaround for order fulfillment.

Faxing, for its reliability and availability, is still the preferred method of communication for many of Fetim's business partners. Every day, Fetim Retail sends and receives close to 500 faxes, including purchase orders to suppliers and order confirmations returned to retail outlets. "The traditional paper process for sending, receiving, searching, and finding faxes was very time consuming," says Maarten Post, System Administrator for IBM AS/400 and System I with Fetim Retail. Sending a fax could take five minutes by the time an employee printed a file, walked to a fax machine, and stood by until transmission completed. Sent faxes were then stored in filing cabinets for records. The system was costly, including fax lines, paper, toner, and other expenses.

Fetim Retail cut down on paper-based methods when it installed fax capabilities for its AS/400 mainframe; however, the server was limited to outbound faxes only and had no user interface or email connections.

Solution

Completing its own remodeling project, Fetim Retail replaced outdated, time-consuming document processes with reliable Enterprise Content Management (ECM) solutions from OpenText. Documents are delivered from the mainframe system as well as via desktop faxing using established, market-leading technology from OpenText RightFax. Faxes and other documents are stored digitally for easy access with OpenText Alchemy. "We looked at competitors and chose OpenText solutions years ago for their robustness, reliability, and feature richness," Post says. Fetim Retail reports a good relationship with Metastore, an OpenText Premier Partner in the Netherlands, for the implementation and maintenance of the integrated solution, including Fax over IP (FoIP) functionality.

"We save a lot of time and money, and business processes are now very efficient with OpenText solutions."

Maarten Post,
System Administrator, Fetim Retail Europe

"Purchase orders to suppliers in China and other locations make up the highest volume of faxing with RightFax," Post notes. As a result, the majority of faxing is accomplished without human interaction. Purchase orders and order confirmations are automatically pushed from the AS/400 system to RightFax for delivery to hundreds of business contacts who prefer fax communication. Employees are notified via email of any delivery failures.

Besides automated faxing from the mainframe, desktop faxing constitutes about a quarter of fax traffic. Rather than walking to fax machines, employees fax documents from their personal computers. The RightFax Connector for Xerox MFP Module also enables employees to scan files at a Xerox multi-function printer for direct delivery and archival via RightFax. Another RightFax add-on, the PDF Module, allows employees to send PDF documents to RightFax for conversion to fax format.

Inbound faxes are received by the reception desk and routed digitally to departments or specific users. Using the RightFax Connector for Microsoft Exchange, employees can view, forward, or archive incoming faxes using familiar functionality within Microsoft Outlook.

Fetim Retail implemented Alchemy in the mid-2000s to manage and archive documents; users are "very happy with it," according to Post. "Before Alchemy, we had another digital system, but it was slow, and the search function did not work well. In contrast, Alchemy offers fast and accurate search functions." Outgoing invoices from the mainframe are automatically archived in Alchemy and can be retrieved via desktop computers.

Results

"We save a lot of time and money, and business processes are now very efficient with OpenText solutions," Post says. Communication with suppliers and retail outlets is enhanced by faster, more reliable document exchange. Faxes that required several minutes to send via fax machines are now delivered within seconds, most via automated back-office integrations. Service to customers is improved with faster response times. Inquiries are handled more quickly since employees have immediate, digital access to thousands of archived documents.

Within the corporation, Fetim Retail managers and employees appreciate the enhancements to productivity. "We are a growing company, so nobody lost their jobs because of efficiency with RightFax," Post notes. "Users have less paperwork; they can be more productive managing customer and partner communication."

Fetim Retail realizes additional benefits by taking advantage of RightFax support for FoIP. The company avoids the expense of separate fax lines by bundling voice, data, and fax on its IP communications system. It also spends less money and time on hardware and related maintenance. Jack Warnars, consultant with Metastore, adds, "OpenText RightFax doesn't need a dedicated server, but it can be virtualized. It simplifies communication for integrated offices to work with one RightFax server at the headquarters location."

In the future, Fetim Retail plans to work with Metastore to deploy OpenText ECM solutions for other business processes.

For more information about Metastore, please visit www.metastore.nl

www.**opentext**.com

sales@opentext.com   800 499 6544