



Fiat Wanted To Print, Distribute & Archive Documents at a Lower Cost. They Asked AutoFORM LaserNet for a Solution...

Overview

■ Challenge

To dramatically reduce document printing and distribution costs whilst improving the quality and speed of communication with customers and trading partners. Solution had to integrate with ten different types of application output.

■ Solution

Document design software
Document distribution via Fiat's networked printers, fax, email and intranet/extranet.
On-line Archive

■ Why AutoFORM LaserNet?

Global Value have extensive knowledge of output and document management software. They chose AutoFORM LaserNet as their partner for the Fiat Group purely on its technical merits. In particular AutoFORM LaserNet, could offer document formatting, electronic delivery and archiving, for the 10 different applications used within Fiat - and therefore provided a means of sharing information across different operating platforms.

■ Key Business Benefits

100% payback in first year, with large savings in printing and stationery costs. Faster and more accurate document production with variable data incorporated automatically rather than manually. The flexibility to change document templates on demand without re-programming the application. Better customer service through the ability to immediately retrieve exact copies of queried documents at the desktop. High quality paperwork that promotes the company image. Seamlessly integrates, with all Fiat applications, no application programming required.

■ Business Partner

Global Value, Fiat's IT consultants, jointly owned by IBM and Fiat.



GlobalValue – Fiat's IT Service Provider

Whoever coined the phrase "a verbal contract is not worth the paper it is written on" appreciated the value of documents. Certainly – Fiat, with over 1000 companies, in 64 countries, depends on sending and receiving several thousand critical business documents per day.

To process these transactions promptly, Fiat's IT consultants Global Value (jointly owned by IBM and FIAT) have developed one of the worlds most sophisticated IT systems. This includes IBM mainframes in Turin and Bruges, networked with a series of AS400s and NT servers, hosting the most advanced operating applications available including, OLAS and SAP. IT investment has delivered significant operational improvements, but one difficulty remains.

Julie Clark – Finance Manager at Iveco FORD Truck Ltd explains: "The traditional method of printing documents and delivering them by post or manual fax, takes too long and costs too much. In fact it is fast becoming a trading liability."

In the mid 90's, forward thinking Global Value set up a development team to look at the issues and create a solution. Through Global Value's contacts in the IT industry they became aware of a powerful electronic document technology – AutoFORM LaserNet. What was particularly advantageous was that AutoFORM LaserNet could integrate with all Fiat's applications and thereby provide a company wide solution.

Architecture & Software

Turin –Italy

IBM Mainframe-UNI2000

Peterborough Software, Payroll & personnel

OLAS-QSP/Elevon, financials

Warranty/order processing
(in house system)

QSP Financials (NT Client Server)

AS/400

Sofice - sales accounting

UNIX

SAP (Enterprise Resource Planning)

Watford—UK

Novelle Server

Motivity-Fleet Management

NT Server

NTA, vehicle documents

Bruges-Belgium

IBM Mainframe

Customs & Excise System

Three Applications With a Common Theme: Rapid Payback

Following a detailed product evaluation, a vision emerged as to how Fiat companies could save significant costs and improve communication by:

- **Designing More Effective, Attractive, laser printable documents incorporating logos, and specific customer data – eliminating the cost and difficulties with pre-printed multipart stationery.**
- **Electronic Delivery.** Fiat's extensive intranet/extranet in addition to automated fax and email could be used to deliver documents directly to the recipient or alternatively to the regional office for printing & posting.
- **Web Access Document Retrieval and Viewing System** to equip customer-service agents with complete billing histories at their desktop so they could resolve queries immediately.

The power of AutoFORM LaserNet lies in its adaptability, enabling Global Value to tailor solutions to each business units requirements. The initial implementations at Fiat's Iveco Ford and Gesco subsidiaries, have gone extremely well delivering a rapid return on investment. But far outweighing this hard cost analysis is the corresponding boost to customer service levels and improved communication between business units and trading partners.

Developing the Global Value Solution

Designing More Effective Documentation—at Less Cost.

Mark Owen – comments: "Quite frankly the documents produced by most computer systems looked awful and required high levels of supplementary manual input to make them useful. For example we found administrators typing in vehicle identification details, on maintenance invoices, or customer specific trading terms and country export information into order acknowledgements. This is not only time consuming, it risks operator error - and mistakes cost money and lose business.

It seemed obvious that we should arrange for the applications to incorporate this data automatically. However, the logistical difficulties of re-programming computer output on mainframes several thousand miles away, not to mention the cost, made this a practical non starter.

AutoFORM LaserNet overcomes this limitation with a PC interface at Global Value's Watford Data Centre which is used to design the document templates. Once designed they are uploaded to the AutoFORM LaserNet server to be converged with the application output. AutoFORM LaserNet analyses the incoming data stream, collecting triggers such as country codes, or client status and uses these to switch to the appropriate template. In this way you can vary the content of documents to include customer/supplier specific information or marketing and credit control messages. Additional facilities are also provided for the incorporation of bar-codes, graphics, foreign languages, or dual currency pricing and of course the appropriate Fiat Company branding and address.

"..traditional methods of printing and delivering documents take too long and cost too much. In fact, they are fast becoming a trading liability."

Julie Clark
Finance Manager
Iveco FORD Truck Limited

Output & Document Management

The result is not only more attractive dynamic documents, that reflect positively on Fiat's goods and services, but each business saves thousands of pounds by eliminating the cost and difficulties associated with pre-printed stationery."

Distributed Print

Deliver Documents Using Fiat's Network, Email & Fax

Mark Owen continues: "Traditionally documents were printed on central mainframe printers, split by hand copied numerous times and distributed by international post or courier taking up to a week to be received. Mainframe printers are also costly to purchase, maintain and operate.

Naturally many managers try to short-circuit the print operation: obtaining purchase order numbers and manually faxing instructions is common practice but risks orders being duplicated. Sales agents and remote workers demand documents to be faxed to them rather than waiting for the posted copy. And not surprisingly staff complain about having to spend far too long standing at fax machines: time that could be more profitably used to serve customers."

Global Value recognised that as AutoFORM LaserNet converts printed output to an electronic format, they could deliver documents direct to the recipient either over the network by email, fax or web-link. Now several Group companies are reaping significant cost and time-savings by switching to distributed printing. One Fiat company, Gesco Financial Services, goes a stage further and by-passes print & post altogether in favour of automated fax transmission direct from the server, particularly for direct debit notifications and other urgent financial statements.

Following the initial installations, Global Value began to consider what other advantages AutoFORM LaserNet could offer..



"AutoFORM LaserNet was precisely what we were looking for and offered good value for money

100% payback was achieved within a few months, but the improvement to operational efficiency and customer service levels far outweighs the raw cost justification"

**Mark Owen
Systems Development Manager
Global Value**

DOCUMENT REALITY CHECK

GARTNER found that managers and front-line staff can waste up to 8 hours per week locating paper documents to resolve queries.

GARTNER estimate that traditional document printing systems and postal delivery typically account for 20% of total operating costs

GLOBALVALUE'S own investigations concluded that customers and trading partners are increasingly demanding documents to be sent by email, fax or web.

Output & Document Management

Desktop Document Retrieval and Viewing System. 75% More Calls Handled per Day

Global Value talked with Fiat Group Managers and they told us that they like to refer to original documents to resolve customer queries. For example: customer service agents need to see the name on a GRN note to see who has signed for a delivery.... Or they want to see the letter or email that the customer has sent with the corresponding response.... These illustrations demonstrate that it is documents – not lines of computer data – that provide answers. But constantly referring to paper files – causes delays. And delay means unacceptable customer service.

Global Value had no doubt that Fiat needed to circulate and view documents electronically. But in order to do this, output generated from a variety of different computer systems would have to be converted to a common format. Fortunately, this is exactly what AutoFORM LaserNet provides. Now, as documents are generated they are simultaneously transmitted to a web-based document retrieval system, which enables documents from any of Fiats applications to be viewed from anywhere in the world, with a click of the mouse, (subject to security authorisation).

Gesco – Group Financial Services Comments:

The AutoFORM Archive is a tremendous boon to customer service, comments Karl Gravenor – Finance Manager Gesco.

“The elimination of the costs and delays associated with paper filing or microfiche are enough to justify the system. But the major benefit is that we can resolve up to 75% more queries per day by being able to retrieve and view all the “paperwork” on our computer screens – particularly if we have to back track over several years. Customers also tell us that they appreciate the immediate resolution of their queries without being kept on the line whilst their file is retrieved.

In addition, if we have to refer a query back to a business unit, we can electronically gather all the relevant documents and at the touch of the keyboard email them direct to the appropriate business manager for an immediate decision, which saves a lot of time all round.

The AutoFORM Archive is extremely powerful: we can view documents from any Group company – in seconds. Would I recommend it? To be honest – in today’s fast paced trading environment I can’t see how a business can prosper without it.”



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Would I recommend it? To be honest – in today’s fast paced environment I can’t see how a business can prosper without it”

**Karl Gravenor
Finance Manager
Gesco U.K. Limited**

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