

Five Questions with OPEX

By Mark Smith



1. When you talk to prospects, what do they tell you is their biggest document processing challenge, and why?

Prospects in today's tough economic climate are focused on reducing the cost of document capture. Secondly, they're interested in capturing documents as early in the process as possible.

Incoming transactional documents are the lifeblood of organizations.

Whether it is an application, order, claim, receipt, invoice, or payment-incoming documents drive the business. Transactions continue to enter the organization on paper and the information on that paper must be captured. Efficiency is the name of the game: How do I process that stream of incoming transactions in the most efficient manner and as early as possible in the process?

2. What is your company doing to address this challenge?

When you look for efficiency, it's important to consider all the steps in your process. The single largest cost over the life of a capture operation is labor. When you drill down, you frequently find "doc prep" labor eating away profits, because most documents still require manual preparation before they can be handled by an "autofeeder."

Another overlooked cost is all of the physical movement and handling of documents that is often done prior to capture.

OPEX addresses these two key costs with our unique drop feed capture products, which can reduce the need for prep and wasteful handling—thus improving capture efficiency, reducing costs, and getting documents digitized early.

3. What do you believe will be the major storyline in document processing over the next 12 months, and why?

I believe the underlying storyline will be the on going "mainstreaming" of imaging. The tools are proven and the investment makes sense for more and more businesses.

Complementing this will be the continued growth of "shared services" and "centers of excellence" within corporations around imaging and data capture. Building an efficient capture operation takes time, money, and expertise. Once an area or department of the business has proven capability, corporations will look to leverage that investment and expertise.

A related trend is the convergence of payments and document processing. Why build two separate facilities when a single operation can be your imaging *and* capture centre?

4. Looking over the horizon, what do you believe will be 'the next big thing' in document processing, and why?

We'll continue to see more intelligence (or "business knowledge") built into our capture tools and systems. One current example is IDR, where the technology now learns and "knows" the difference between different types of incoming documents. Another example is scanners. Some readers may remember "dumb terminals," which were later replaced by PCs. Today it's possible to replace a "dumb scanner" with an intelligent capture device that "understands" something about the business process, and can add-value beyond simply capturing images.

As intelligence is added to systems, customers get the payback of a higher percentage of documents flowing automatically from the mailroom into their back-end processing systems with less human intervention and fewer exceptions.

5. What's the most interesting thing in the documents processing space that you've read about recently (that wasn't put out by your own company)?

As someone who's been around scanning, imaging, and OCR for over twenty years, I continue to be amazed by the capabilities of some of the new Intelligent Document Recognition (IDR) engines. These products have progressed from concept to demo to production-ready in a relatively short time span and with amazing capabilities. I sense that the next step is to take these very powerful engines and extend them to other verticals and doc types, while also making them easier to configure and use. I can't wait to see where how technology takes off over the next few years.

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