

# Hardware Transformation

## Finding New Business Value In Legacy Scanners

By Jim Bunn



In the face of challenging economic conditions and an ever-evolving document automation environment, many companies are looking to their back-office operations for increased productivity and cost reductions. The success of back-office operations is becoming increasingly tied to their ability to operate in an efficient, highly agile, highly integrated way. This is a big change for legacy systems that historically lacked the flexibility to quickly and cost effectively adapt to changing business requirements.

Aging, inflexible technology can no longer be an inhibitor in executing business strategy. Legacy systems can't be a bottleneck in getting new products and services to market quickly. Moreover, they shouldn't thwart the ability of companies to integrate their operations after an acquisition or merger. And, they can't stand in the way of a company's compliance efforts.

Industry consolidation, government compliance, and competitive threats have caused companies to redefine their document imaging requirements. Legacy document scanning systems were not designed with the flexibility to quickly and cost effectively adapt to changing business requirements. That's why more companies are looking to transform the way they leverage legacy hardware.

One leading provider of business process outsourcing solutions put this transformation into action when one of its clients, a leading healthcare provider, allowed it to centralize the processing it did on behalf of the company.

Previously, the BPO provider used decentralized Kodak 3520D scanners to process the healthcare firm's work. As part of its move to centralized processing, the BPO company upgraded from its old 3520s to Kodak i660s.

But centralized processing meant it would be handling an average of 80,000 pages a day at one site for the healthcare firm—a tall order for the Kodak devices. That's why the BPO provider decided to add an IBML ImageTrac III scanner. However, a financial analysis of the project didn't justify having a second ImageTrac scanner at the site for backup and overflow.

What the BPO provider needed was the ability to seamlessly integrate some of the healthcare firm's Kodak scanners into the process, so that batches that might have run on the IBML ImageTrac III could run on the legacy Kodak i660 scanners with no re-prepare or other process changes. It was also important that the solution provided a similar look and feel for operators of both devices and that the software was affordable as a disaster recovery solution.

### The Solution

After evaluating three solutions and running the chosen application in a test environment for about a month, the BPO provider selected IBML's SoftTrac TE. SoftTrac TE is a version of IBML's SoftTrac scanner application modified to operate non-IBML scanners such as the Kodak i-Series (200, 600, and 800). SoftTrac TE uses the same job setups (with some exceptions) and SQL database that is used on the ImageTrac. This means that ImageTrac III customers like BPO providers can protect their legacy hardware investments and reduce the initial capital expense of moving to the IBML platform by seamlessly using their legacy scanners for capacity overflow, business continuity, and remote scanning.

In fact, the software hasn't forced any changes to the BPO provider's day-to-day operations. SoftTrac TE allows the company to run the Kodak scanners just like the ImageTrac III with no changes to operations.

This provides an excellent testing tool for new jobs and serves very well as a disaster recovery application. The company also is able to process work at the rated speed of the Kodak scanner and can accurately read barcodes through the software.

### The Benefits

Thanks in large part to SoftTrac TE, the BPO provider has centralized the medical records processing it does on behalf of the healthcare firm. From a scanning operation within the same building as the healthcare firm's main records storage facility, the BPO provider now scans 65,000 to 90,000 pages a day on behalf of the company. The work includes in-patient charts, outpatient charts, and emergency room charts. With SoftTrac TE, the BPO provider doesn't have to re-prepare batches or train operators on two scanner applications, and it has kept costs down. Additionally, if the BPO provider's IBML scanners go down, SoftTrac TE enables it to continue processing with its Kodak i660 scanners to meet the deadlines.

SoftTrac TE is an economical solution for remote sites since users can mimic their production environments without re-writing export routines or customizing other software platforms.

Using SoftTrac TE makes a BPO provider's legacy hardware more efficient, more agile, and better integrated. That's a transformation.

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