

## Choosing The Right eForms Solution

Converting manual processes to automated processes using eForms has proven to be an effective way to reduce costs and improve productivity for any organization. Still, not every eForm solution delivers these results, which is why open standards to automate the delivery and processing of forms has become so widely accepted in both the public and private sector.

Many workflow solutions promise to move forms and documents through an organization with ease – so long as you are willing to pay a per-seat license and have a staff of IT specialists that can program work processes into the software. Other eForm solutions offer an affordable start-up cost to automate business processes, yet charge a per-seat fee for the each user. These charges quickly add up in mid-sized to large enterprise organizations, making a return-on-investment hard to rationalize.

Other challenges reside in the design and use of a form. Approaches that require a special piece of software, known as a form filler, require specific settings within Web browsers, and usually require a license for every PC that will use the form. Since every submitted form includes a charge, enabling every worker or Web site visitor access to forms is prohibitive. Because of this, filler-based approaches have limited the number of forms organizations are able to automate.

The solution is found in standards-based applications, where organizations design a form, publish as HTML or PDF, set-up data collection, and configure business rules, using point & click tools. Since almost every desktop today has a Web browser, HTML is an ideal delivery mechanism and it works the same way in almost every browser. PDF requires Acrobat Reader, but as a free download, it has become almost as pervasive as Web browsers. By delivering forms using HTML and PDF standards, the forms are accessible to anyone – anywhere around the world.

Cardiff has taken this simple concept - and by leveraging XML connectivity - created an integrated product suite that offers a total life-cycle solution encompassing information capture, eForms management and PDF document assembly solutions.

Working together, Cardiff TELEform, LiquidOffice and LiquidPDF integrate the collection, management and response processes of government and corporate organizations for forms and documents. TELEform quickly and easily captures and converts paper-based and electronic forms into digital data. The data is then passed to LiquidOffice, which extends the process-automation lifecycle by automatically managing the routing, tracking and approval processes throughout the organization. Finally, LiquidPDF completes the transaction by automatically creating a personalized response document set from a library of existing PDF files – including “fillable and signable forms.” Within seconds, customers receive a personalized document set based on the information they requested delivered via paper, email or browser.

Examples of complete process automation include the collection, processing and response delivery of government permits, loan applications and product information requests - from either paper or on-line sources. The total process automation approach binds together each step of the automation process, allowing organizations to pull even more costs out of their manual processes.

Converting manual processes to automated processes using eForms can indeed reduce costs and improve productivity for any organization. But open standards must be employed to increase the amount of automation that can take place within an organization for the delivery and processing of eForms.

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