Centralised capture keeps the Followmont fleet on the move

To unlock growth and profitability in a challenging sector, transportation and logistics companies need to make bolder and more astute strategic choices than ever before. Time is definitely money in the world of transportation – where workflow solutions save time and are critical in maintaining safety and profitability.

The largest independently-owned transport company in Queensland, Followmont Transport, is ensuring its future with a host of state-of-the-art technology deployments including a new centralised EzeScan scanning and capture solution.

"If the system did not correctly rename each file when imaged, it would have to be manually corrected, which was very time consuming. On average it would take 3-4 hours in our large branches to complete document processing.

"Since the rollout of EzeScan Central OCR we have managed to save on average 2-3 hours per location on document processing, freeing up resources. EzeScan has improved our standard reporting and the Proof of Delivery documents are in the system faster. This improves our invoicing turnaround times and directly decreases our debtor days.

Followmont Transport employs over 750 staff, runs a fleet of more than 700 vehicles and has 18 company-owned depots throughout Queensland over an area that's 7 times the size of Great Britain. Followmont specialises in express freight and is responsible for pharmaceuticals, hardware, mail and many other everyday household and business delivery requirements.

The company fleet carries out around 60 freight movements every night, the fleet driving 85,000km in every 24-hour period.

"We have a responsibility to regional Queensland to make it happen and this is why we go the extra mile," said CEO Mark Tobin.

Efficiency, optimisation, speed and timing have always been crucial in logistics and transportation. Today, amidst a range of accelerating evolutions and in an increasingly digital environment, digital transformations are providing the next revolution for the industry.

There are over 35 locations across Queensland where Followmont's critical documents are scanned at the end of each working day, including its own company depots and agency sites. Each time a driver goes out and freight is delivered, a Connote document must be signed to indicate Proof of Delivery and the document returned that evening for capture. This adds up to between 5000-10000 document scans a day, including Proof of Delivery (POD), Proof of Pickup (POP) and Client Manifests. In the end, transport and logistics has one major task: making sure their customers' freight arrives at the right time and place in the best possible condition. Scanning and capture applications help transportation companies to real-time manage important documents quickly and accurately and close the loop on so called 'paperwork' associated with pick-ups and deliveries, eliminating the risk of lost documents.

The speed with which these documents can be scanned and made available within the company's Synergize document management system is critical to invoicing and hence cashflow. Followmont engaged EzeScan to implement its Central OCR platform in 2018 after experiencing problems with its existing processes.

Shane Els, Followmont Transport's Project & Systems Support Manager, explains, "Our previous imaging system required that all scanned documents have a corresponding document number (as the file name). Only then could our document management system marry the imaged document to the relevant information in our operations system.

"As always through testing phases, we needed to iron out any issues, fortunately for us EzeScan were always on hand to help with whatever issues we might have encountered or changes needed, allowing the application to work and fit in with our internal process.

"I would recommend EzeScan to anyone!" said Mr Els.

Transportation and logistics companies operate within a highly regulated environment. Teamed with the overall paper intensive nature of the industry, this reality makes the management of documents and files a highly labour-intensive process.

As a result, transportation and logistics companies make considerable investments for properly storing and organizing their business records. Even then, workflow processes are often stymied by the inefficiencies of retrieving and sharing paper documents.

Data Integrity Manager Judie Thompson said the new EzeScan solution has provided Followmont with much faster data verification, shortened billing and payment cycles, with proof of delivery available for the office within a few minutes

"Once the documents are imaged they are passed through to Synergize and the hard copies kept for a week and then destroyed."

Following its success in processing delivery documents Followmont Transport is now implementing EzeScan SERVER for AP invoice processing automation and the EzeScan Remote Indexing Assistant (RIA) WebApp for Approvals and cost centre coding.

The transportation/logistics industry is driven by a host of new challenges from the hyper-impatient world today. Capturing, storing, and distributing valuable information in real-time (no matter the location) is one example where technology is providing some much-needed light at the end of the tunnel.

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