



we can take any input from any client and put it to any printer.” With a dedicated recovery facility in Pennsylvania, a testing facility in Dallas, Texas, and two additional rollback facilities in Pennsylvania and Texas, Mail-Gard is an excellent example of distributed printing. The rollback facilities are not dedicated sites, which allows a variety of work. “Clients expect we will roll back to other facilities, and the Emtex solution became a vital part of that. Our technical analysts are very disciplined of applying best practices for all the types of data and applications we encounter, but in order to move jobs around with ease and accuracy, we need Emtex FlexServer in all locations,” he declares.

Another major advantage of Emtex is being able to install software in clients’ sites without complications. The presence of Emtex’s JESConnect software is transparent and built into the overall cost of the project, but it is essential in order to set up the right processes to handle clients’ jobs. Says Montella, “Now we can get access into the client while being transparent to them. It looks like a printer on their network.”

Once the Emtex solution is implemented at a customer site, Mail-Gard can control all jobs on the FlexServer network without concerns about modifying the workflow if a customer changes their application. For example, one client started with cut sheet output and moved to continuous form, and Emtex helped Mail-Gard make the transition transparently.

Mail-Gard strives for best practices to provide seamless print-to-mail recovery and continuity solutions to customers and meet all their privacy and compliance needs. Mail-Gard also wants to educate the market that print and mail recovery can become an asset, not simply a cost liability, and one way to prove this is to bring added value and versatility to recovery plans. “Versatility makes us better than our competitors,” says Montella, and Emtex is a key factor. “We look at how we can make it easy for clients to do business with us, and the Emtex solution is our best opportunity.”



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Emtex Raises the Bar on Recovery Services at Mail-Gard

At the forefront of disaster recovery is Mail-Gard, the nation’s leading provider of print-to-mail continuity and recovery services solutions serving over 150 customers throughout the United States.

Mail-Gard maintains a fully secured and dedicated recovery facility that supports cut sheet, continuous form, duplex, MICR and color printing, as well as accumulating, folding and inserting capabilities, with on-site US postal substations and warehousing. In case of any business interruption, human error, power outage or natural disasters, Mail-Gard can ensure that a company’s invoices, statements and other critical documents will reach clients and vendors.

Mail-Gard in Context

Business continuity is becoming an important extension of recovery planning, and helping clients understand and adopt business continuity strategies is a key focus for Mail-Gard. This opens the door for a deeper relationship with the client that has high value for both sides. The need for business continuity spans any industry that relies on printed materials for revenue, compliance and customer communication. Anything that puts a company’s document processes in jeopardy threatens business continuity, which can have serious implications including loss of revenue, failure to meet regulatory compliance to possible total business paralysis.

With the help of output management and workflow re-engineering solutions from Emtex, Mail-Gard is able to create secure safeguards and best practices that demonstrate and deliver the value of business continuity for customers in a variety of situations and markets.



“We are trying to change perceptions of disaster recovery as a liability, to viewing it as an asset that promotes business continuity. In that way, we can provide ongoing service, and clients can rely on us for overflow assistance throughout the year,” explains Jerry Montella, a founder of Mail-Gard and now vice president with current owner Transcontinental. That way, companies are assured that important work like statements, notices and other documents continue to go out accurately and on schedule.

Overcoming Obstacles, Adding Value

To maintain credibility as a champion of business continuity, Mail-Gard must provide flawless infrastructure and workflow. “If clients contract with us to handle overflow work, we have to make sure we can handle the application seamlessly for them,” declares Montella. Yet there were obstacles to achieving these goals. Mail-Gard’s existing solutions offered no easy way of receiving varied data streams and related resources directly at the recovery facility, and lack of flexibility



made it difficult to manage data streams, printer platforms and workflow.

In addition, a solution needed to demonstrate significant bottom line return by streamlining the recovery process, and reducing or eliminating costly programming changes. The costs associated with implementing and configuring communication lines from a client site eroded margins, and one of Mail-Gard's goal is to reduce the burden of configuring for customer workflow.

These were tough requirements, but with Emtex, Mail-Gard built a seamless, on-demand recovery infrastructure to meet customers' requirements. Mail-Gard now has the ability to be an extension of customers' print facility. With click and send convenience, users can submit jobs to the recovery facility, resulting in easier, more convenient service.

Mirrored print image data at the print and mail recovery center now ensure consistency and continuity, and printer resources can be stored at point of use at the recovery facility, ensuring the right resources are always available. The ability to handle multiple data streams is a particular strength of Emtex solutions, giving Mail-Gard the ability to handle a wide variety of work.

Building on an Emtex Foundation

Mail-Gard has used Emtex FlexServer for several years, and the FlexServer components continue to be a critical part of the current configuration, but Mail-Gard expanded capabilities with recent upgrades to Emtex VDE and VIP solutions. With Emtex JESConnect installed on the mainframe at the client data center, jobs can be easily and seamlessly transferred to Mail-Gard's recovery facility for immediate action. Inside the Mail-Gard firewall, Emtex FlexServer Enterprise, VIP and VDE, provide the core elements of a highly responsive recovery facility.

Emtex FlexServer delivers end-to-end, real-time control across mixed source, multi-platform document production applications, all from a single, easy-to-use graphical interface. The production-strength print server includes resource management, as well as extensive job tracking (FlexTrack) and accounting functionality. The open architecture unifies mainframe, UNIX, and Windows platforms, and brings together heterogeneous document formats and architectures, including AFP, Xerox Metacode, PDF, PCL and PostScript formats.

Emtex VIP provides open, industrial-strength output management that incorporates flexible print stream transformation, centralized resource management, and device independence. It frees users like Mail-Gard from proprietary print streams and vendors, allowing them to tailor workflow to meet clients' needs.

Emtex VDE (Virtual Document Enhance) is powerful print data stream manipulation software from Emtex that allows users to modify and enhance print applications without changing existing host-based programs. VDE-controlled changes can occur during input stage, processing stage or at the end of the document production process, providing real 'last-minute' change control that affects all document production.

Researching Best Practices

One area in particular that has been improved is working with customers' barcodes. "Barcodes are one of biggest factors on the inserting side, and their placement on the document is the biggest thorn in the recovery process. Delays in replicating barcode performance result in a longer sales cycle and create the need to write custom code or buy the appropriate barcode readers," says Montella. "With Emtex, we are able to save a huge amount of operational change over." Emtex VDE allows Mail-Gard to add, move or modify barcodes or OMR marks for mail piece integrity tracking and inserter/envelope control

without cumbersome code development for each application. Problems with the barcode can create misreads on inserting equipment. Applications like payroll checks, EOB, policies, notices, term letters and billing need absolute document integrity. For many clients, increasing regulation also requires them to track every document and mismatch, and Mail-Gard must meet the same standards. In the Mail-Gard operation, a double camera configuration validates the barcode on the document at the front end of the inserter and at the back end of the inserter. "The location of the barcode cannot be changed, but now we can remove the old one and put a new one in place in a format to work with our readers."

Mail-Gard uses Emtex VDE to standardize configurations on customers' barcoded applications. The tool has already proven to be a tremendous time saver and problem solver, and it will give them the ability to easily convert to 2D to increase

flexibility in inserting operations. In addition, they can view inserting operations from the customer site to provide a better service. "We want to extend best practices by standardizing on a 2D barcode," he says. "This is a big value add because we can bring a manufacturing approach and a higher quality control process by using a more effective 2D barcode."

Open to All Opportunities

Openness is critical for a multi-platform environment like Mail-Gard's, with Xerox cut sheet systems and Océ and IBM continuous forms printers as well as AFP, Metacode, Adobe PostScript and PCL data streams. "Flexibility is extremely important and we need to be able to provide solutions that meet our customer's unique environments. Emtex lets us target almost all of our potential clients in any market. We have not encountered a data stream that we could not get through in some way," notes Montella. "We are flexible enough to handle any data stream, so

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