

financialprinter.com



Bringing financial printing online

“Equipped with our enterprise portal system from Compaq and KnowledgeTrack, we’re able to service the high-value financial document needs of our clients in a fraction of the time—and at significantly lower costs—than traditional, off-line financial printers.”

—Matt Stodolnic
Vice President, Product Technology
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Everyone hears about IPOs and mergers, but few people are aware of what goes on behind the scenes—the time sensitive, high-stress process of creating the financial documents that have to be filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) before new stock is issued or companies officially merge. These documents are almost exclusively created with the support of a financial printer.

Traditionally, financial printers have been off-line. Smashing this paradigm is a new kid on the block—Mountain View, California-based financialprinter.com. The name says it all. They are totally e-business, online, and out to *evolutionize* their industry. But while the face of this company may be new, the minds behind the operation are not. The management and staff at financialprinter.com all have roots in the traditional financial printing industry with a collective base of decades of experience.

To run its skyrocketing operation, financialprinter.com relies on an Enterprise Portal solution from Compaq ISV KnowledgeTrack Corporation, running on *Compaq ProLiant* servers, and integrated by Compaq Services.

Going public made easy

Since opening its e-doors to customers in November 1999, financialprinter.com has realized widespread acceptance in its marketplace—the securities professions and public and pre-IPO companies.

Matt Stodolnic, Vice President, Product Technology comments, “We started our business by proving our concept in the marketplace with non-transactional printing—compliance

documents, Form 10-Ks, and so forth. Our roots are in Silicon Valley—and these leading-edge high tech companies immediately saw our value proposition.”

Within a few short weeks, financialprinter.com had attracted three IPOs, significant mergers, a follow-on offering, and some 50 '34 Act compliance clients—all via their Web-based technology.

financialprinter.com's IT solution is powered by The Knowledge Center, the Enterprise Portal platform from KnowledgeTrack Corporation (www.knowledgetrack.com). The Enterprise Portal is a gateway to get information from a variety of sources—which then delivers that information in a secure way to the people who need it. Enterprise Portals can help businesses speed time to market, gain and retain customers, and increase revenue streams.

Turning an Enterprise Portal into bottom-line benefits

financialprinter.com found the Enterprise Portal platform to be the ideal vehicle for making online financial printing a reality.

Here's why. When a company goes public and makes its initial public offering (IPO) of stock, it has to submit a prospectus to the SEC and potential stockholders. In order to create this document, several geographically dispersed groups—including the company, securities attorneys, investment bankers, auditor, and members of the company's Board of Directors—contribute to the process. There can be anywhere from 20 to 100 or more individuals working on the creation, collaborative revision, and distribution of a prospectus. And a prospectus is just one of the documents involved. There are hundreds of different types of documents and forms to generate—including quarterly reports, proxy statements, and more.

Working electronically is faster, cheaper, and more accurate than working off-line. Stodolnic explains, “For an off-line financial printer to make edits is very expensive, and their reliance on legacy mainframe typesetting systems requires the lawyers to give up control of the document during editing. By using an Enterprise Portal platform, we can maintain the documents in a standard desktop application. All parties involved make edits and submit them to us for proofreading and formatting. The document manager, who is usually the company's counsel, authorizes all the edits. All document distribution is done on the Web—so we're able cut down paper proofing by 80%.”

All this contributes to saving time—which is the number one concern of all financial printing customers, whether they are working on a compliance document, a merger, or an IPO.

With the traditional, off-line financial printing process, an IPO can typically take up to 6 months to complete. It's labor and time intensive, because it involves doing all writing and

editing by putting people in a room and making hard-copy edits. And it can cost anywhere from \$300,000 to \$600,000.

“Equipped with our enterprise portal system from Compaq and KnowledgeTrack, we’re able to service the high-value financial document needs of our clients in a fraction of the time—and at less than half the cost—than traditional financial printers,” says Stodolnic.

The want list

Before choosing its IT solution, financialprinter.com evaluated several options from both IT vendors and consulting firms. Stodolnic explains, “We had a list of 15 things we needed a system to do for us, and we evaluated each solution provider against that list.”

For example, they needed a solution that was highly scalable—one that could support thousands of concurrent users in a central Web environment. They needed a high level of customizable object-level security features. They needed the ability to generate Web-viewable documents. The list went on.

Also on the list were service and support. With more than 100 Compaq Services professionals and two new competency centers in North America and the United Kingdom, Compaq offered the support financialprinter.com needed to design, develop, and implement its Enterprise Portal solution.

Of all the solutions considered, KnowledgeTrack’s application on a Compaq platform best met financialprinter.com’s requirements.

According to Stodolnic, “One of the key benefits of the KnowledgeTrack solution is the level of security provided and the way it’s provided—by particular document and by reviewer. For example, with each document, the customer can determine which contributors can read, which can edit, and so forth. Only the approved editor can access the native files.” The system allows them to convert any kind of word processing file or spreadsheet, incorporate it in the document, and generate a pdf file that can be distributed via the Web.

The infrastructure workhorse

Stodolnic continues, “*Compaq ProLiant* servers are the workhorse of our infrastructure. They provide the speed, scalability, reliability, easy connectivity, and remote management we need. It’s a very solid and complete system—and it gives us the uptime and speed we need to service our clients.”

The financialprinter.com IT infrastructure includes a production center co-located at AboveNet, an ISV in San Jose. The platform includes five *Compaq ProLiant* 1850R servers, each equipped with 1 GB memory, dual Pentium® III 600MHz processors, 2 x 9

GB 10,000 RPM drives and 4 x 18 GB drives, dual NICs, and redundant power. For worry-free daily backup, they use a *Compaq StorageWorks* TL891 DLT 10-carrousel library unit.

In addition to the *ProLiant* 1850R servers used for PDCs and BDCs in each location, financialprinter.com has implemented a rack full of Compaq servers in the Los Angeles facility to run its Microsoft Exchange messaging system, Saleslogix SFA system, and Solomon accounting system. financialprinter.com plans replicate the Los Angeles processing site in New York City—purely for redundancy—and deploy three *ProLiant* 1850R servers in Mountain View, California.

Stodolnic states, “The system has proven to be superior in performance, scalability, ease of integration, and reliability—a robust combination that delivers the power and flexibility we require to consistently reduce our clients’ time to market, while at the same time increase our efficiency.”

On the horizon

Already experiencing exponential growth, financialprinters.com is planning to scale its current offering through clustering.

Also on the future horizon is extending the use of its Enterprise Portal platform for internal use. KnowledgeTrack’s Enterprise Portal platform was designed from the ground up to deliver the advantages of e-communities—more effective employees, more loyal customers, and deeper partnerships. “This system will allow us to create a workflow system because it serves as a central repository of information. As a result, everyone in our company will be able to make business decisions faster because they’re using the same application and have a single point of access. In this sense, the infrastructure is our company.”

“The system has proven to be superior in performance, scalability, ease of integration, and reliability—a robust combination that delivers the power and flexibility we require to consistently reduce our clients’ time to market and overall offering costs, while at the same time increase our efficiency.”

—Matt Stodolnic
Vice President, Product Technology
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