Mortgage Company Chooses ViewWise
to Enable Growth

By Greg Rapport

Mortgage Solutions of Colorado (MS of CO) is a mortgage lending company based in Colorado Springs, CO. The company functions as the hub of a typical lending process where the need for electronic document management has never been more apparent.

MS of CO had several information management, workflow, and business scaling issues requiring solutions. The issues surfaced because business was good. In an environment where the economy was in a nosedive and lending was in flux, MS of CO was, and still is, thriving. Since 1995, they have used a simple formula for success. They maintained a conventional approach toward lending, mostly government backed, and never participated in the sub-prime boom that turned so many lenders into sub-prime busts. As competition began to disappear, more customers turned to MS of CO, and managing growth became top priority.

The company had a system where a file containing up to 300 forms would arrive electronically in pdf format. Then, they would print each page to create a paper file that would undergo all the necessary steps to process the loan. Management at MS of CO knew that if they could convert to an all-digital workflow process, the savings on printing alone would pay for the cost of the implementation.

Three Solutions Required

Steady growth caused MS of CO to need solutions that fit into three main categories:

Personnel – They needed to hire more personnel, but the available pool of mortgage professionals in their area was exhausted. In order to continue expansion, they needed a way to hire outside of their home vicinity and enable remote workflow.

Workflow – As business volume increased, MS of CO needed a better overall workflow strategy due to the complexity of the process. They could not continue their old method of printing every 300 page file. Additionally, a significant challenge was the actual arrangement of the documents within a file, referred to as the "stacking order." That is because mortgage companies work with brokers who each submit the documentation in their own order. Then, that order changes during the various processing stages. The order changes again when the paper is submitted to the actual lender. Manually restacking the documents in a file to meet the requirements of each step in the process was time-consuming and increased the potential for error.

Storage – Even though MS of CO didn't store the paper files in their office, they still suffered from paper overload. Once a loan closed, they would store an electronic version. However, during the time between when a loan initiated and closed, the amount of paper in the office became a problem. Imagine processing 600 loans a month in paper files of 300 pages or more. Since a loan doesn't close in a month, there could be two months worth of files in the office. So there could be 1,200 files containing at least 360,000 pages circulating at any given time. Additionally, there could be another 600-1200 files from previous months waiting to be shredded. It reached a point where there simply wasn't enough room.

The Process

In May 2009, Christina Baker, Chief Operating Officer of MS of CO took the reins to find solutions. She realized that, in addition to solving her three major problems, user friendliness must remain a main priority. Cumbersome as it was, employees had become so used to the manual system that they had become admirably proficient at it.

Baker recognized that a change to digital would be smooth only if it enhanced employee's work experience and sense of value, rather than diminishing it.

After initial research, Baker took her findings to the owner of the company who agreed it would be wise to create a budget and make ROI predictions. Once Baker had full go-ahead, she selected different value-added resellers to give live demonstrations of potential solutions. When Baker narrowed the field to two prospects, she invited MS of CO's Information Technology Specialist, Doug Day, as well as representatives from other departments within her organization to complete the analysis and share in the decision.

One of the demonstrating companies was D2Xchange, a value-added reseller located in Denver, near Colorado Springs . D2xchange introduced Baker to ViewWise® by Computhink, Inc.

ViewWise® is intuitive content management and e-mail archival software that helps small to mid-sized businesses store and manage paper and electronic files more securely and efficiently. Think of ViewWise as a virtual filing cabinet that stores information in one location and makes it easier and more efficient to search, retrieve, and route information across an organization.
 When Baker described her workflow needs, D2Xchange introduced the combination of ViewWise® with another software program called LoanStacker as an integrated solution to meet Baker's requirements. Says Baker, "D2Xchange knew it would be important for us to have a flexible solution. We needed to automate our customers' existing processes, rather than forcing them to reengineer around the technology. It also was essential that the system be user friendly. I expected a degree of resistance from good workers who took a professional approach to the manual nature of the old process," Baker continued, "but as our employees experienced the ease of use first hand, ViewWise® won them over."

Baker made the decision to proceed with ViewWise® in June 2009. Several meetings were held in July to enable MS of CO Representatives to fully express their needs. This helped technicians at D2Xchange and Computhink to create an appropriate roadmap to achieve the desired workflow. Implementation began in late August. By September, they had begun to test with small groups.

Doug Day was charged with the daily implementation, and he was pleased with his collaborators. "From the beginning, both Computhink and D2Xchange have been in our corner," said Day.

Feature Rich ViewWise® Produces Major Benefits

ViewWise® has proven to be an effective tool throughout the lifecycle of a loan file:

1. Submissions – Initial paperwork comes from brokers to MS of CO and enters the system, usually as a pdf attached to an email. Submissions include everything from pay stubs to tax returns. LoanStacker automatically breaks the large PDF into the individual documents. Every document type has an associated, searchable set of values that are automatically extracted. LoanStacker comes preconfigured with most all the templates required for mortgage processing. The next stage is output to ViewWise®.
2. Processing and Underwriting – As the file travels interdepartmentally, it needs to be restacked to meet the different needs of various departments, frequently. For example, the loan processors require a stacking order that's different than the one needed by the underwriters. During this process, new documents also are added to the stack and ViewWise® automates the stack order.
3. Post Closing – When the processors and underwriters complete their work, the file goes to post closing. This is where the underwritten loan is generated into the closing document. Then, that document has to be restacked using ViewWise®.
4. Upload to Investors – Post processors combine the closing documents with the origination documents, then output to the investors. Each investor has a unique stacking requirement.

ViewWise® restacks the file one final time to match the needs of the appointed investor.

Baker says there are certain features that are necessary to the process that ViewWise® provides. "We needed to be able to pick items from a file and export to pdf,"she says. "Also, stacking order is tremendously important. With

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ViewWise®, we can click a button, put the whole file into a Bank of America stacking order, convert to pdf, and send it with a click." According to Baker, "We digitized a complex procedure that used to be completely manual."

Baker also likes some of the additional features of ViewWise® that aren't always necessary, but are nice to have when the need arises. She cites ViewWise's® ability to annotate a file, as well as the ability to move pages around in a file as additional benefits.

Return on Investment (ROI)

When considering ROI, Baker takes into account both the hard and soft returns of the ViewWise® implementation.

On the hard money side, two particularly impressive numbers are a 15% savings on equipment leasing ($800/mo) and a 22% savings on office supplies ($2400/mo). Both result front no longer having to print every 300 page file.

On the soft money side, Baker cites many examples of how using ViewWise® has enabled growth—from expanding the workforce to repurposing existing employees toward profit-making functions. "It all adds up to time saved," says Baker. "We can click a button and accomplish what used to take an hour and you can see the results in our overall productivity."

All things considered, Baker is confident the system will pay for itself in three years.

Moving Forward

"We're not finished," says Baker. "One of the best features of ViewWise® is that it can be incorporated into additional departments. As ViewWise® proliferates, it will multiply the areas where we save money and increase productivity in all phases of our business.

"We're constantly upgrading the workflow," says Day. "Our latest upgrade includes the stacking order capability enabling us to add one document at a time to a file and index it with the push of a button."

Conclusion

"In the final analysis, we've accomplished our goals while realizing a substantial return on investment," says Baker. Both Baker and Day are pleased with the ongoing relationship they have with D2Xchange and Computhink. "Both companies are there when I need them," says Day. "They want the best possible outcome for us. We can't ask for more than that."

About Computhink

Computhink provides best-in-class ECM solutions for secure information sharing and compliance, targeting small and medium size organizations. Using state-of-the-art technology Computhink solutions operate on a wide range of platforms, including Windows, LINUX and Novell. The ViewWise Product line includes Email Archiving Solutions for Microsoft Exchange and Novell GroupWise. Founded in 1994, Computhink has thousands of customers worldwide in government, financial services, education, healthcare, manufacturing and utility organizations. For more information on Computhink and its products go to Computhink.com.

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