

energyAustralia

Energy Australia streamlines printing process

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In early 1996, Energy Australia were investigating alternatives for the re-development of their Customer Statement printing process. The merger of Sydney Electricity and Newcastle based Orion Energy resulted in the creation of Energy Australia.

As part of the merger process, it was necessary to combine the customer database and management systems of the two companies. As a by-product of this, they also needed to streamline the two statement printing processes into one. The combined companies produce between 25,000 and 30,000 printed items daily.

Following a PrintSoft Demonstration in March '96 and further discussion during May '96, Energy Australia decided that PReS would provide them with the required power, flexibility and portability.

The PReS scripts were to be fully developed by PrintSoft's Technical Support Team in Melbourne. At implementation stage, staff

- ad-hoc marketing messages
- selective envelope inserts
- meter self-read forms
- customer service phone numbers and addresses

These items are driven by specific record types, flags and data within records, as well as TRF data. As four different stock types are required, all four input feed trays (2 simplex and 2 duplex) on the Delphax printers are being used. Multiple page documents have also been catered for. All of this was to be achieved using one print data stream.

Future Considerations

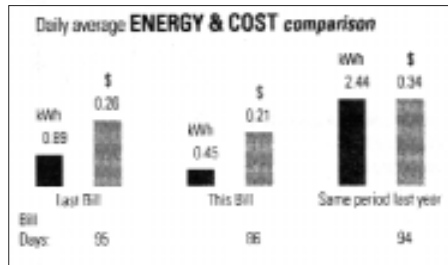
With Energy Australia's future maintenance issues in mind, we used PReS's TRF facility to control a large variety of document composition components. Items such as selective envelope inserts and marketing messages are driven by options which are set within a TRF.

There are over 300 debit items and over 500 individual tariff groups used for the display of charge and tariff details. The statement due date can be controlled by TRF and new form types can be added without any script modification. To Energy Australia, this means that most of the regular changes can be implemented by staff who have little or no computer programming knowledge simply by updating the appropriate TRF. Energy Australia have PostScript/PReS locally installed, so they are able to test changes before distributing the files to EDIPost for live production printing.

Implementation and Testing

Implementation and testing at the production site took place from mid-January '97. The process took approximately two weeks, involving many long days (and nights) for both Energy Australia and PrintSoft staff, as the input data stream and PReS scripts were refined. The first live documents were produced on January 31st.

The final stage of the project was to hand-over all PReS responsibility to Energy Australia. This took place in March, after allowing the job to 'settle in'.



Electricity usage graph from on Energy Australia's bill

at Energy Australia would take over maintenance and future job development. Australia Post's EDIPost operation in Clyde, NSW, was chosen as the production site, with the target printer being their Delphax 180PS systems.

Script development commenced in September '96. At the same time, EDIPost were developing their internal systems to handle the job. During October, a PReS training course was conducted for Energy Australia's staff in Newcastle with part of that week also devoted to a preview of the ongoing PReS development for their project.

The billing run consists of approximately 65 form types, including items such as Electricity Accounts, Refund Cheques, Estimated Accounts, Sundry Item Accounts, Extensions and Lettergrams. In addition to standard account details and letter texts, each document may contain a wide variety of variable output;

- electricity charge details
- sundry item charge details
- individual meter readings (in several different layouts)
- period usage comparisons (bar graphs)
- standard messages

"Thankyou and congratulations to your team for an outstanding job. I would like to personally and professionally commend you as a company and as individuals for providing the product and support promised."

John Puckeridge
Manager-Customer Transactions
Energy Australia

Key Requirements

- Control of the Print Formatting process was to be retained by Energy Australia
- Ability to easily convert the process to different output format, (PostScript, Metacode, IPDS...)
- Ability to produce local re-prints using the same input data stream
- Flexible, simple method of controlling criteria driven output such as marketing messages and envelope inserts

