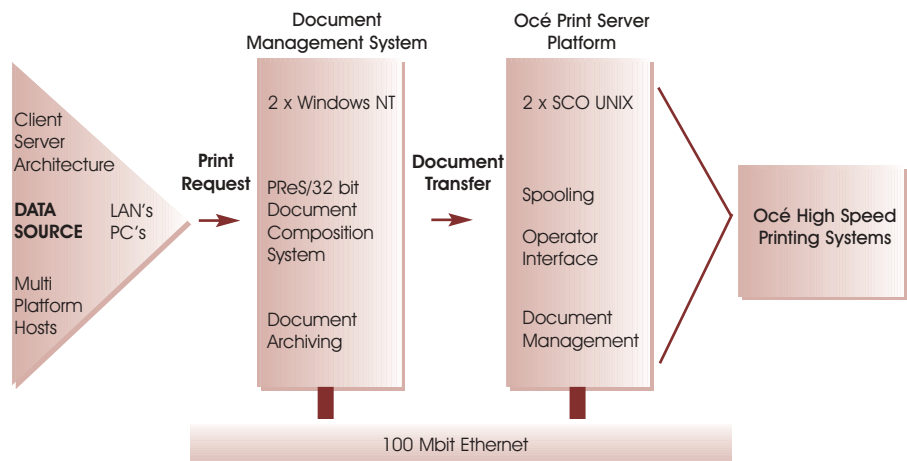




Herbert Kieleithner from Océ & Marius van Bijlon from Telkom

When Telkom in South Africa decided to introduce an advanced billing system, they had quite a challenge ahead of them. The company needed a system capable of producing customised, feature-rich statements at a rate of over 3.5 million a month.

South Africa Telkom Introduces Advanced Billing System!



Deciding to upgrade to an itemised style of account meant upgrading their entire printing solution. To do this, Telkom decided to install an Océ TWIN Duplex printing solution in each of their print centres at Pretoria and Cape Town. Approximately half of the billing is completed at each centre.

The chosen system had to be capable of merging large amounts of variable information with fixed text, while being intelligent enough to format the page according to the space available on each account. Telkom wanted to give their customers a detailed, personalised bill, totally customised to their individual needs. The criteria for the project also included the ability to position graphics according to data supplied. Obviously, because of amounts involved and the sensitive information, accuracy was a priority, as was a barcoding facility.

Accuracy is Essential

As Jakes Vermaak, Telkom senior manager: IT operations stated, "One of the greatest problems facing any corporation which processes as many accounts as Telkom does is ensuring that the correct accounts are dispatched to the correct subscriber to facilitate speedy payments of outstanding amounts."

Vermaak also highlighted the importance of the printer being integrated into the communications infrastructure as transparently as possible, so the Telkom operator does not need to see the 'behind-the-scenes processes.'

Océ have integrated PReS/32 into the Telkom printing system. After extensive evaluation, AFPDS/PReS-32 was chosen as the most appropriate tool. PReS provided all Telkom wanted to achieve while also encouraging creative design of the bill through the flexibility of the software. During the implementation stage, Shaun Williams, one of PrintSoft's support staff travelled to South Africa to work with Telkom's programmers.

Printing in a Number of Languages

The advanced features of PReS allow it to perform complex formatting tasks such as conditional processing and dynamically formatting data 'on-the-fly'. The language sensitive formatting abilities of PReS made printing in two languages a simple task. The bill needed to be printed in both Afrikaans and English. Interestingly, future political decisions mean the bills may eventually be printed in up to eleven languages which again will not be difficult to achieve using PReS.

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