Maintaining Sustainability and Saving Space: From Oceans of Paper, to Fishbowl!

With almost 600 passionate fishermen (members) delivering high-quality fish product to customers and businesses worldwide since 1944, Seafood Producers Cooperative (SPC) is the oldest and most successful fishing co-op in North America. In order to update their business processes and maintain their sustainable livelihood, SPC turned to a paperless, system of record solution.

The Situation

SPC has been fishing the North Pacific for decades, delivering high quality salmon, halibut, sablefish, and albacore tuna, sustainably caught on hook and line, and they continue to provide a high quality product "one hook, one fish at a time." SPC's headquarters is located in Bellingham, Washington, where 12 employees manage the corporate office, and they have 250 seasonal employees at their facility in Sitka, Alaska. Accounts Receivable Administrator, Sherri Willand, and Accounts Payable Administrator, Georgia Pelton, manage the invoices that SPC receives and sends, as well as member information such as tax records, loan details, etc. Unfortunately, most business information was managed at the speed of paper.

Key Benefits

- Reduced time spent finding and delivering critical information by 8 hours per customer service call
- Saved $891,000 in sq. ft. by reallocating office space and eliminating storage unit space
- Advanced collaboration and information accessibility in both corporate, Washington office and Sitka facility
- Boosted employee morale by replacing manual, time-consuming tasks with processes automation features

Pelton or Willand had to physically go and find files, documents, records, etc. which were sometimes located in their off-site 20x20 storage unit that they fittingly called "The Cage." Pelton explained, "Some information could be found on our shared network drive, but most of the time we had to turn to paper to see if something wasn't saved to the system." All of SPC's retained records were stored in The Cage, or throughout 23 filing cabinets onsite. These records are retained for five to seven years to comply with regulations, however hand-written fisherman's logs dated in the 1970s have been found. This storage system hindered customer service, because any time members called with a question about their loan account balance, or to request a tax record, it would take up to eight hours before Willand or Pelton could find the information and return the call. "It was difficult and left our members waiting on the phone. We usually had to call back the next day, because records were so difficult to locate," Pelton said.

Managing information was also challenging for Pelton and Willand. They manage invoices that are sent out to customers who buy fish from SPC members, and they manage invoices from various business who wholesale and sell SPC fish in stores and restaurants. With 575 members, SPC was handling 2,300 paper pages per month for member invoices alone. Sometimes statements were not stored in the right file, or they were untraced through workflow, so the time and space-consuming paper processes did not do justice to their high-quality product and passionate fishermen. "We wanted to get up to date with today's technology," Willand said. "We could no longer grow as a sustainable company if we continued to be inundated with paper."

The Solution

Following an update to Northscope ERP software, Daniel Grove from DocuDriven has helped Willand and Pelton take the next step forward to paperless with PaperVision.com. Willand and Pelton work in this licensed, per-user-per-month, feature-based system of record (SoR) quite often, scanning in and managing all business information with ease. DocuDriven has scanned more than 600,000 records from their backfile into the SoR, and all day-forward scanning is

completed by Willand and Pelton with PaperVision Capture and PaperVision Forms Magic Technology to recognize information on scanned documents and auto populate index values. SPC continues to set up new invoices with PaperVision Forms Magic Technology to streamline invoice processing, and will also soon implement automated workflow to route and track their invoices, records, files, etc. through every business process.

Recognized Benefits

PaperVision.com is a cloud-hosted SoR that is simple to subscribe to and integrate with, so Willand and Pelton noticed benefits as soon as they started implementation. As PaperVision.com is allowing them to go paperless, SPC's storage security and efficiency has increased, and the corporate office can now access most records in PaperVision.com. Willand and Pelton currently spend 30 minutes on daily scanning, so the corporate office is no longer consumed by 23 filing cabinets, or their offsite storage unit. They were able to reallocate 3000 sq ft, saving them $891,000 in office space. Willand summarized, "We went from an ocean to a fishbowl!" Since most files are easily accessible in PaperVision.com, customer service has also improved. Willand and Pelton can answer fishermen's requests in minutes, saving eight hours of finding, accessing, and delivering paper-based information every time someone calls. Employees in Sitka can also go into PaperVision.com themselves to find the information they need in seconds, which advances collaboration and decision making. They're looking forward to giving fishermen this same level of mobile access. Pelton explained, "Sherri and I are in PaperVision.com all day long. We find it very easy!"

> *"We love that we can personalize how we code the documents to suit how we use them. The flexibility of PaperVision.com has been key to our success."*
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> -Georgia Pelton, Accounts Payable Administrator, Seafood Producers Cooperative

> *"Integrating the Northscope software right into PaperVision.com really helped us move forward. Now we're a clean, paperless company."*
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> -Sherri Willand, Accounts Receivable Administrator, Seafood Producers Cooperative

Willand and Pelton have also noticed how accurate and easy managing business processes is becoming. PaperVision Forms Magic Technology was added to SPC's scanning software to ensure accuracy and control of information with their efficient processes. Willand said, "Every time we set up a new invoice or form, the system is very consistent in recognizing them, so we no longer have to go back and review if the data is correct." Pelton added, "Human error can happen anywhere, but Forms Magic stops most of it." One of their favorite features is PaperVision Capture's auto page break, which uses a barcode to distinguish stacks of files like member packets. Forms Magic reads the barcode and recognizes when a new member packet is being indexed. "We can place a whole pile of member folders on the scanner and walk away, rather than having to sort them and scan each packet separately," Pelton said.

Their system of record solution met their goal of updated technology, and the move to paperless supports the company's mission of a sustainable livelihood, including trying to keep their waters safe and pure. They participate in the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), so SPC goes to great lengths to be a sustainable fisherman operation to protect their waters, and to make sure they are fishing in a way that protects a thriving fish population and fishing ethic that supports future generations. "PaperVision.com contributes to our efforts to use resources wisely on the business side, in addition to our support for sustainable fishing," Willand said. "I wish everyone could see where we were then and where we are now." Willand and Pelton are enjoying the ease-of-use of PaperVision.com and are relieved knowing their records are safe in this sustainable system of record. Looking forward, they're excited to add automated workflow for auto-routing documents through business processes to further streamline and reduce time spent managing information.

About DocuDriven

DocuDriven is a Business Process Optimization (BPO) company with an emphasis on Data and Document Management that is based out of La Center, Washington. They specialize in smart products and convenient services that streamline your business saving you time and money. They offer products and services locally, nationally, and internationally and specialize in document management, Accounts Payable automation, scanning and conversion services, consulting, programming, and secure document storage. To learn more about DocuDriven, visit their website www.docudriven.com or call 360.760.4266.