

Metropolitan Housing Trust

Challenge

Metropolitan Housing Trust London (MHT), part of the Metropolitan Housing Partnership, manages over 17,000 homes across London and provides services to over 40,000 customers in 40 London boroughs and a range of council districts outside London. MHT provides low-cost "social housing" for those who need it. Any trading surplus is used to help finance new property and maintain existing homes. In 2007, 44% of rent collected was used on general repairs and maintenance.

Timely payment of rent and service charges is essential in order for the trust to maintain its services, carry out improvements to tenants' homes and reduce the need to involve costly and time-consuming debt recovery agencies to chase rent payments.

MHT required 23,000 rent statement packs to be printed, each with variable page number content, highlighting recent rent changes. Historically, MHT used a non-secure mailing house, with the entire operation taking two weeks to complete.

Solution

To streamline this process and save costs, MHT decided to use Unity – a service which takes in electronic print and mail input direct from the desktop computer, and produces it in a remote service centre, taking advantage of production economies of scale and high volume mailing discounts.

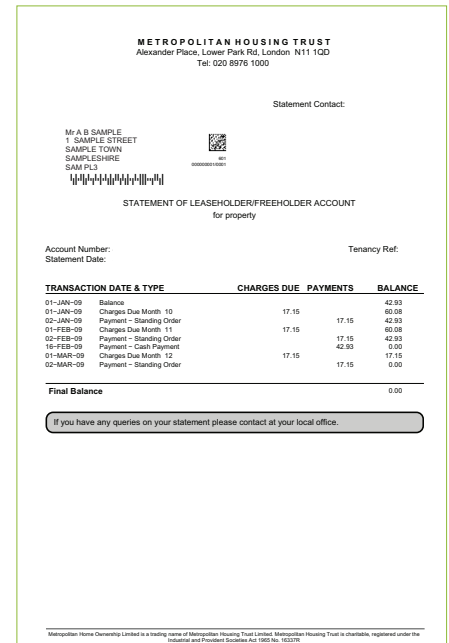
The flexibility of Unity allowed MHT to submit raw postscript data files at the click of a button with 23,000 records - each with a variable number of pages and a variable return address on the reverse of each envelope. The letters were printed and posted within two days from receipt of data. In this way, Unity provides a secure, high integrity 100% transactional statement mailing.

Unity took seven separate data files and opened and extracted address information, before purging the data and consolidating into one press ready PDF, with the file mail sorted. This enabled MHT to make significant savings on standard postal rates. The mail was then digitally printed, folded, enclosed and sorted, before being transported 'down stream' with Unity's preferred mail provider for delivery.

Using a file-based recognition system driven by 2D barcode, we guaranteed 100% integrity of MHT's variable page number transactional mailing, with an audit trail tracing each document from receipt of data through to final delivery. In other words, the service was able to ensure and prove that the right letter and accompanying contents had gone to the right person.

continued overleaf

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Results

- Unity helped MHT save 34% on standard postal rates
- Shortened production time saved MHT eight working days, allowing them to release data later and still meet legal requirements
- Using Unity MHT included five different variable return addresses on the envelope, which had all been printed separately in the past
- By printing duplex, Unity helped cut paper waste by 50% and saved money on postage by reducing envelope size from C4 to C5 to comply with pricing in proportion
- Unity allowed MHT to produce large font variants for those customers with visual impairments

Customer Comments

“Unity is brilliant. It has enabled us to send raw data from our system into a secure environment and the speed with which we are able to see soft proofs and press the go button has saved us huge amounts of time. It has given us massive efficiency gains in the production, printing and mailing of our transactional and ad hoc customer communications. Furthermore, Unity saves on wastage as we are now able to print both sides of the sheet reducing the amount of paper we use by half. We have saved further money by complying with pricing in proportion. Thanks to Unity we can spend time focusing on giving our customers a better service.”

Bernard Tominey
Procurement Director
Metropolitan Housing Trust

