



Minisoft and Newgistics Partner to Help QCI Direct Lower Shipping Costs

QCI Direct of Churchville, New York found themselves with a dilemma when it came to the United States Postal Service's Electronic Verification System (eVS) requirements for parcel select mailings.

In order to take advantage of the numerous shipping methods which USPS provides, QCI Direct discovered that for mail classes other than 'Priority Mail', their application software vendor (Escalate Retail) did not have the functionality in the Ecometry Retail CRM package to generate a "Delivery Confirmation" barcode for these additional methods. QCI Direct wanted to realize the cost savings from using alternative classes, especially with the price of fuel and transportation costs skyrocketing. So QCI Direct turned to Minisoft and Newgistics for a solution to their problem.

Over the course of several weeks, numerous discussions were held on the logistics involved in adding the USPS Delivery Confirmation barcode to the shipping label of all USPS mail classes generated by the application software. Minisoft in collaboration with Newgistics Inc., a company that specializes in optimizing package distribution and lowering transportation costs found a solution. A plan was implemented that involved minimal procedural changes on the part of the customer.

After careful review, all parties agreed that the best possible solution was to have Minisoft modify their electronic forms product (eFORMz). The necessary change would provide the added functionality to generate a barcode which would contain all of the data elements to meet the specifications and regulatory requirements of USPS. Not only would Minisoft have to match these specific guidelines, but the enhancement would have to include the ability to generate the barcode with a unique check-sum digit. This check digit takes into consideration the values represented in the barcode which are associated with data encoded within the packing list (collate) file.

As project development progressed, the new barcode was added to the shipping label in accordance with the guidelines provided by USPS. Because of spacing issues, several minor adjustments had to be made to the existing text and barcodes in order to properly position this new image within the label. Sample shipping labels were then generated and sent to the quality control division at USPS for their full review. After minor adjustments were made, USPS approved the Delivery Confirmation barcode.

It then became apparent that the information encoded within this barcode would also have to be shared with Newgistics, Inc. as part of their daily manifest file transmission. Initially the customer proposed writing a special program to duplicate the barcode values and include this information on the manifest report. However, after taking a closer look at this process another solution came to mind.

Minisoft was asked if it were possible for eFORMz to update the Escalate Retail (Ecometry) database with this barcoded value using the eFORMz DataDirect feature. Although a database “look-up” function already existed, the ability to perform an SQL database update did not. The printing and updating functionality was enhanced with one additional improvement to eFORMz. A new function (SQL Update) was added to the core designer which permits eFORMz to update the Ecometry database table, in real-time, while processing the print file with the Delivery Confirmation barcode value. By manipulating the data in this manner, QCI Direct was able to join to their database table and include this value when creating their manifest file.

Wendy Enstrom QCI Directs Vice President of Marketing and IT was pleased with the result. “Minisoft and Newgistics were incredibly responsive in meeting our technical requirements. The eFORMz solution will save QCI Direct thousands of dollars in shipping costs. The eFORMz solution will pay for itself in just a few short months.”

Tushon Robinson Newgistics Director of Integration remarked that “The addition of an SQL update function to the already robust Minisoft eFORMz package tremendously expands the products capabilities. Now, any label or form elements created on the fly can be written to the database in real-time for later use.”

Does this sound like a solution that may fit your needs? Do you have a specific problem or need that Minisoft eFORMz might be able to solve? Please give us a call at 1-800-682-0200 or drop us an email at sales@minisoft.com.

Minisoft eFORMz solution is being used in over 1,000 companies and organizations worldwide to generate critical business forms and documents. Complete eFORMz evaluations may be downloaded from our website (www.minisoft.com).



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