

## Success Story from KODAK



## Direct marketing company, The Cobra Group plc, deploys 90 Kodak desktop scanners to streamline contract processing throughout the UK & Ireland

The Cobra Group plc, a global direct sales and marketing company, has installed Kofax document capture technology and 90 Kodak i160 departmental scanners throughout the UK & Ireland to automate the whole process of contract collation and processing by staff at its head office from contracted marketing companies in the field. The system has been installed by Kodak reseller, Capital Capture.

Founded in 1988, The Cobra Group provides its clients direct sales support operating through a network of 120 in-

dependent companies nationwide. Specialising in the financial, energy, pay TV, charity and telecom sectors with clients such as Talk Talk, The Cobra Group's network has representatives on the ground who sell on behalf of clients by attending exhibitions or events, selling door-to-door or at high traffic locations like train stations, shopping centres and so on.

Historically, this process would have involved each local marketing company collating signed contracts for the day, couriering them to The Cobra Group's

head office in London, with quality checks then carried out, prior to data captured from the forms being uploaded to clients' IT systems.

The process was time consuming, prone to errors and created a huge administration and cost burden.

**First**, The Cobra Group processes between 7,000 and 10,000 contracts each day which comprise one or two page documents. As a result, the company was conservatively spending at least £250,000 annually on couriers, with a



**“The Kodak scanners are excellent. I was surprised at their size given the performance. They’re much smaller than I expected and sit on desks really easily.”**

Emmanuel Marshall,  
IT Project Manager, Cobra Group

staff of eight needed to open packages and distribute the contracts for processing.

**Second**, with so many documents being sent, the scope for paperwork to go missing was huge and required The Cobra Group to take out insurance which, over a four year period, had increased from £40,000 to £100,000 per annum. And even if there was a claim, it could take anywhere up to a year for money to be recouped.

**Third**, the loss of contracts could have a negative effect on end-user customers as they would have completed paperwork with a field representative for a new service which would then take ages to commence, as copies of paperwork would have to be found and resent.

**Fourth**, contracts were also sent onto various third parties for credit checking, data inputting and file conversion which could take anywhere between three and six weeks. The impact for The Cobra Group and its clients was that errors occurred, with Cobra ultimately losing control of the quality of data provided to clients.

After approaching five firms, The Cobra Group selected document and data capture specialist, Capital Capture, who has deployed a scanning solution at each

marketing company comprising Kofax software, along with a Kodak scanner, Dell PC and Dell monitor.

The Kofax Capture system has been installed at Cobra’s Head Office comprising Kofax Capture Network Server (KCNS) which the 120 marketing companies then connect to using Kofax Capture client software. All traffic between the central server and client PCs is encrypted and secured using https and SSL encryption to ensure that all information is completely secure during transmission. The marketing companies scan contracts and transmit them electronically to Cobra’s Head Office. On arrival the Kofax Capture application automatically checks the images against samples to make certain the correct forms have been scanned and are of suitable quality for data entry. If all the images pass this quality check, an e-mail is sent to the marketing company confirming receipt. If not, they are subsequently returned to the local Kofax application at the respective local marketing company, along with e-mail informing the administrator that attention is required.

Capital Capture recommended installing Kodak’s departmental i160 duplex scanners at each marketing company as they are simple to use and easily handle the volume of contracts to be processed.

Designed to cope with up to 3,000 pages per day, the i160 scanners can scan both sides and feature Kodak’s Perfect Page imaging technology to ensure sharp, clean images without the need to adjust settings and rescan. Marshall says, “The Kodak scanners are excellent. I was surprised at their size given the performance. They’re much smaller than I expected and sit on desks really easily.”

While the technology was installed at each marketing company by late December 2008, The Cobra Group has adopted a staggered approach to bringing clients onto the new system. This has allowed thorough testing and tailoring of the system and training of internal staff.

The software has been bespoke configured by Capital Capture to meet the group’s needs, with the scanners locked down at each location so they only work on Cobra related projects. Marshall adds, “Some marketing companies we work with are based in the same office location so it made no sense to deploy multiple scanners in one building. As sales have to be kept separate, we’ve worked around this by giving each marketing company a PIN which allows them to log in and send their respective client contracts only, with an email then sent to confirm receipt.”

Today, when paper contracts are scanned locally they are then available to Cobra Group staff at their head quarters seconds later, with a dedicated client folder populated on its network. Once contracts have been checked, they are zipped and sent to the marketing



company elec-  
tronically and  
returned within 24  
hours with all the data  
from the form extracted.

Marshall says, "I didn't want to go down an OCR route as it's too expensive, not reliable enough and, given we have to do manual checks on data anyhow, plus our data capture partner gets things right 99.8% of the time, there was no point."

The commercial benefits from this new contract management approach have been immediate. Staff at Cobra's head office are no longer required to do dull and unproductive work such as opening mail or hunting for missing documentation, expenditure on couriers has been reduced along with the associated insurance costs. Given this, the investment

in the hardware and software solution is expected to be realised within 16 months. Most importantly, contract information is managed far quicker so that Cobra clients can get new customers using their services far faster, with the corresponding billing occurring quicker and revenues increased which over a course of a year equates to hundreds of thousands of pounds.

The system has bought a range of other advantages. Data Protection has been markedly improved as the electronic document management system only allows authorised users access to contract information. Additionally, The Cobra Group has been able to remove the numerous boxes of contracts stored in boxes at their head office which contain customer sensitive data, with off site storage now being phased out.

The system has also meant a radical change in how administrators at marketing companies work as they no longer have to spend lots of time bogged down in processing contracts. This has freed

them to focus on far more important commercial activities such as recruiting representatives to drive business growth.

Furthermore, with so many partner firms and a range of clients – all with specific service requirements – the new system has allowed better overall account control. Marshall explains, "If you take our charity clients, for example, we're legally only allowed to run campaigns to generate new donors for a set amount of time in any given area. So, the system won't allow forms to be sent after a certain point as we manage the campaign codes from London."

This central control has also meant that The Cobra Group is able to help support everyone using the new system by undertaking remote monitoring using Cisco's WebEx Remote Access online monitoring software. So, should an administrator have an issue scanning a batch of documents, Capital Capture can quickly log in to see what the issue is and resolve it fast.

Moving forward, The Cobra Group is considering deploying the document scanning and capture solution to companies on mainland Europe to replicate the success of the UK & Ireland project.

**To learn more:**

[www.kodak.com/go/i100Series](http://www.kodak.com/go/i100Series)

Printed using Kodak Technologies.

United Kingdom, Phone: +44 870 8502351, Fax: +44 870 850 2352  
Nordic, Phone: +46 (8) 555 638 31, Fax: +46 (8) 555 995 04  
Africa, Phone: +44 1442 846547, Fax: +44 1442 846606  
Germany, Austria and Switzerland, Phone: +49 711 406 2535, Fax: +49 711 406 3619  
Eastern Europe, Near and Middle East, Phone: +36 1 454 3031, Fax: +36 1 387 9113  
France, Spain and Portugal, Phone: +33 1 4001 3180, Fax +33 1 4001 3981  
Italy, Phone: +39 0266028338, Fax: +39 0266028358  
The Netherlands, Phone: +31 33 2998751, Fax: +31 20 6545227  
Belgium and Luxembourg, Phone: +32 2 352 27 04, Fax: +32 2 352 30 28

© Kodak, 2009. Kodak is a trademark. DoldeMedien\_103\_09

**Kodak**