



CASE STUDY

Bond Imaging Doubles Revenue Using Workflow

Industry	Imaging and photography
Challenge	Needed automated, Web-based system for receiving orders; manual, third-party system was slow and costly, would not support desired growth
Solution	Captaris Workflow automates, speeds process; integrated with other solutions, it replaced ineffective service
Integration	Microsoft .NET; image library, lab management and digital printing software
Results	Turnaround reduced from days to minutes; 70 percent reduction in labor handles orders efficiently and paved way for new work, returning 100 percent increase in revenue; related costs cut substantially

BACKGROUND

Bond Imaging, www.bondimaging.com, is the largest and longest-standing imaging lab in Australia. Founded in 1970, the company supplies photographic and digital imaging services in the wedding and portrait, and commercial fields on an international level. It employs 50 professionals and is headquartered in Melbourne.

THE CHALLENGE

The photo shoot is done and graphic designers are waiting for images. The prints will need to be fast to make press deadline. To enhance speed and accessibility, "We need to offer a solution for clients to send images via the Internet," Anthony Goddard, Digital Services Manager for Bond Imaging, said. "We had a previous solution in place but it was labor-intensive." Once images arrived at the lab they had to be manually imported into the printing software and assigned a job type and sizing. In fact, to manage a full load of almost 500 Internet orders per day, the company relied on as much as half of its staff just to complete the data-entry work.

Worse than those hectic days, Bond executives knew its current system and workforce could not support expansion. "Because we wanted to grow our business," Goddard explained, "we were faced with the decision to employ more staff with the additional costs of office space and computer equipment or to find a way to automate the process and handle it with existing staff."

An automated method for managing digital files would need to be affordable, scalable, easy-to-use and reliable—all traits lacking in Bond's previous system. The lab catalogued images in an in-house Microsoft SQL database and used an external, Norway-based system for receiving image files online. "It was a subscription system so we paid per client...as our client base increased, costs went up," explained Carolyn Nankervis, Sales and Marketing Manager with Bond. With just its existing customer base, Bond's annual expenses for subscription averaged \$20,000 US dollars. Also, using the old system, adding new clients was a complex process. Bond had to set up subscription, "Then, we had to get that client to download software...that could cause issues when customers were not computer-savvy."

On top of everything else, the service was not reliable, according to Goddard. Normally, since files were first routed to Norway, they could take five or six hours to make it to Melbourne. When the system went down—which happened every few months—it could take an entire day before Bond was able to contact the service that offered limited assistance. "That meant lost revenue and 50 or 60 clients calling to ask why they couldn't send work," Goddard said.

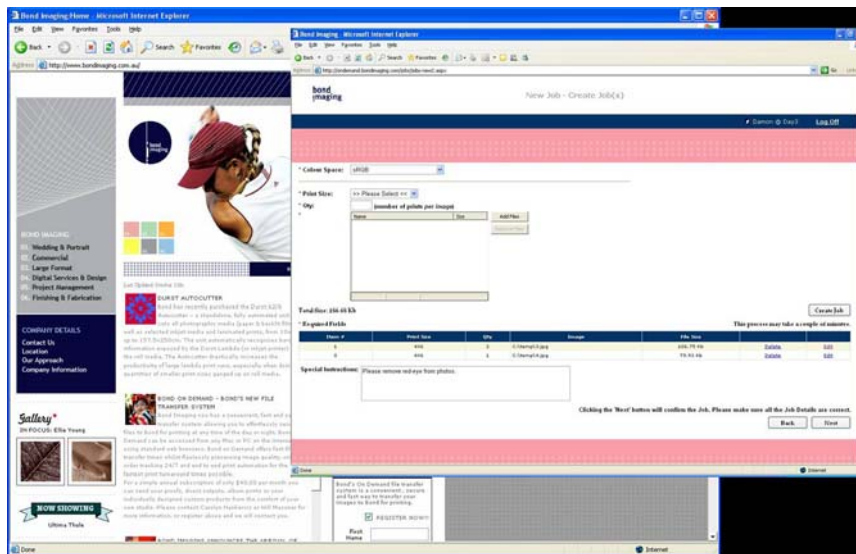
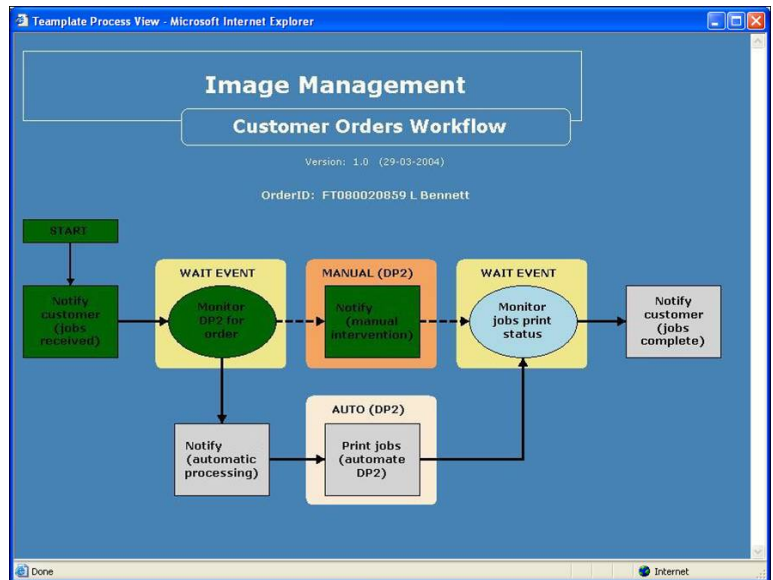
THE SOLUTION

Bond's new big picture: Web-based automation and the fastest turnaround in the industry, all leading to a 100 percent increase in revenue...and growing.

Bond OnDemand is a sophisticated online photo processing service based on Captaris Workflow. The solution accepts online client requests, then routes and monitors jobs from customer contact management to delivery of finished images and printed photos. The lab credits this streamlined system—servicing 1,000 clients and counting—as having the most impact on its dramatic 100 percent revenue increase comparing the year before installation to the first year of sales following deployment. "We've won numerous new accounts (during that time)," Nankervis said. "With an automated

process, our turnaround is faster than anyone else and we can prove it." Bond Imaging brought the big picture into focus with expert consulting and reliable hosting from Day3, its long-time Internet access provider and hosting partner.

As opposed to manual methods, Workflow accepts and completes Bond's orders without human intervention. Upon receiving a job, Workflow auto-confirms receipt via email; as soon as the job is finished, the software emails another notice to the customer with the time lapse. "We've been able to take time demos from those emails to demonstrate to new clients the turnaround we are consistently producing," Nankervis said. "Our closest competitors are a day-and-a-half; we're five minutes." Workflow integrates seamlessly with Bond's digital printing software; and Kodak DP2, software for lab management; and Canto Cumulus, a digital asset management solution for image libraries (integrated through a Simple Object Access Protocol [SOAP] layer written by Day3 for connection via web services).



THE RESULTS

- **Faster Turnaround** - For most labs, a fast turnaround is 24 hours, smaller labs work to return orders within two weeks. Customers are better equipped to meet deadlines with Bond's return of quality images in a matter of minutes—all made possible with automated management from Workflow.
- **Increased revenue** - Bond OnDemand has enabled the lab to take on new clients, even a greater amount of international customers. "Workflow allowed us, without hiring any more staff, to increase the amount of new work by 60 to 70 percent," Goddard said. "As a result, our revenue has more than doubled."
- **Enhanced productivity** - "We knew if we set up the system correctly, we'd reduce (tasks) by 50 percent," Goddard commented. "It's even better than that: the percentage of labor involved has been cut by upwards of 70 percent." Staff that used to be mired in data-entry is now retrained for more value-added efforts such as graphic retouching.
- **Reduced expenses** - "Where we've seen the greatest cost-saving is by reducing labor-intensive processes," Goddard said. "If we were doing the current amount of volume with the old system, we'd have to hire four staff members just for data-entry."
- **Improved reliability** - Bond now adds new clients easily and instantly without increased cost. Also, "By putting the infrastructure locally, we're able to increase reliability along with savings," Goddard noted. "We have direct contact to Day3 so if we ever have issues we can speak with them straight-away." He reports Workflow has been reliable and any small services have been handled transparent to customers within minutes.
- **Return on Investment** - "Workflow has well-exceeded our expectations," Goddard said. "Considering how it has helped us increase our customer base...initial estimates of ROI in 12 months is right on or ahead of schedule." Bond has plans to integrate Workflow with its SQL database, accounting packages and bar code reading facility.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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