

Summit Direct Mail

Direct Mail Solutions from Pitney Bowes provide the sought-after capabilities and increased productivity needed to increase returns.

Summit Direct Mail has found that even in a tight economy, smart technology—solutions that streamline operations and help generate new revenue—are essential for success.

CASE STUDY



SUMMARY

Summit Direct Mail, Inc. in Dallas, Texas is growing the old-fashioned way – by offering their clients flexible service, lower prices and the most advanced capabilities in the market. This formula has served them well for the past five years, and today this regional direct mail leader serves a broad range of clients in the non-profit, financial, retail and insurance sectors mailing up to 2.5 million pieces daily.

“We’ve grown organically – customer by customer – not by buying other shops,” notes John Barber, founder and President of Summit Direct Mail. “We are also known for our flexibility,” Barber adds. “If a client is late with a mail file, we’re going to find a way to keep them on schedule. You won’t often find that flexibility in a shop our size. Our technology plays a big role in that regard.”

Barber owns all of his equipment outright, so he looks for technology that offers flexibility, leading-edge applications and an ability to reduce costs dramatically over the long term. This focus on value led him to Pitney Bowes, where his recent technology investments include a product attaching system, inkjet printers and inserting systems.

Breakthroughs in productivity.

Summit Direct Mail recently added two Pitney Bowes FlowMaster® RS Flex inserting systems to their fleet, giving them the flexibility to run letters, flats and 10 x 13 kits on one piece of equipment.

The increase in speed paid immediate dividends. “For a typical job we’re now running at 16,000 pieces per hour,” Barber explains. “That’s more than twice as fast as our older systems—so we doubled our throughput right from the start. But we’ve made even bigger productivity gains by consolidating work cells. With the Flexible Bindery Interface, we’ve been able to create one in-line process that rolls, cuts, folds, inserts and sorts. In total, we’ve taken a six-person operation and are now doing it with one person at double the speeds.”

High-integrity cards at production speeds.

While Summit Direct Mail works hard to create cost-efficient workflows, they also invest in technologies that make mail more effective – so their clients can connect with their customers and boost response.

“Gift cards represent one of the fastest growing segments in the market,” Barber

notes. “But to do them well, you need a high

Challenge

Summit Direct Mail needed to increase capacity, expand capabilities and provide clients with new ways to save.

Solution

More flexible inserting and advanced product attaching systems helped Summit double throughput, add personalization and reduce manual processes.

degree of personalization and integrity. The Pitney Bowes AT2 Product Attaching System is a key part of our business.”

Prior to Pitney Bowes, all of their card attaching jobs required a visual scan to ensure that the card and card carrier matched. “If any discrepancies were noted, we would shut down the job,” Barber recalls. “The problem was, if one card was out of sequence, everything down the line was toast. If 50 pieces were mismatched, you need to peel off the cards, reprint the carriers, and rework the entire job.

“With the AT2, we have a 100% verified, automated process with a detailed electronic manifest,” details Barber. “Whether it’s gift cards or insurance cards, we need to account for each and every piece and verify that the right card is attached to the right carrier and is mailed to the right person. The AT2 does it all—it matches personalized cards to personalized card carriers, affixes the cards, verifies the match and folds the piece in a single in-line process.

“The AT2 allows us to run these jobs at production speeds. The system monitors and validates the match in real time, and if something is out of sync, it can be diverted without disrupting the job run. Basically, the system can catch problems and correct them as they happen.”

A growing base of satisfied customers.

Summit Direct is constantly looking for new ways to add value. Invisible barcodes, single-pass inserting and card attaching are just a few of the unique, innovative ways Pitney Bowes has helped their

business. Overall, Summit Direct Mail, Inc. has found that smart technology purchases can provide for growth – even in a tight economy. While some companies are scaling back, they continually look for new ways to provide more flexible service, lower prices and winning direct mail formats.

“Anyone can do manual processes and visual matches,” Barber explains, “but they are costly. The ability to read, write and verify using highly productive technology is essential in our industry today. Anyone who doesn’t invest in technology will be left behind.

“Our customers are not paying for debt service – they are not paying for unnecessary labor. We’ve been able to significantly lower the cost of mail production and we can pass that savings on to our customers. Our FlowMaster systems have helped us take productivity to a new level, and eventually we will phase over all of our inserters to Pitney Bowes.”

This combination of old-fashioned values and cutting-edge technologies has attracted an increasingly loyal customer base to Summit Direct Mail, but they are not resting on their laurels. Barber concludes: “To satisfy our customers, we are pushing the limits on what technology can do – and we work closely with Pitney Bowes to get even more out of the systems we have every day.”

“Basically, we’ve taken a six-person operation and are now doing it with one person at double the speeds.”

John Barber, President, Summit Direct Mail, Inc.

The Pitney Bowes advantage

With the Flexible Bindery Interface, Summit Direct now has one in-line process that rolls, cuts, folds, inserts and sorts—cutting time and costs..



Pitney Bowes
Document Messaging Technologies
37 Executive Drive
Danbury, CT 06810-4148
Main: 877-536-2736
www.pb.com

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