

National Frozen Foods Gets Greener with Web-based Capture and Agile ECM Platform



“ILINX CAPTURE HAS THE COOL ‘LEGO EFFECT’ OF BEING ABLE TO SNAP THINGS TOGETHER. ONCE OUR DOCS MAKE IT OUT OF CAPTURE THEY MOVE INTO ILINX CONTENT STORE, A LEAN, MEAN CONTENT STORE MACHINE.”

— Michael Ellerbeck, Business Analyst, National Frozen Foods

ORGANIZATION

National Frozen Foods Corporation
www.NFFC.com

INDUSTRY

Food Processing

SOLUTION

- › Capture & Workflow for Accounts Payable
- › Integration with legacy ERP system

CHALLENGE

- › AP processes paper-based with manual workflow
- › Invoices & AP documents generated at five disparate locations
- › Traditional ECM system too large a footprint and difficult to extend with internal IT resources
- › Traditional Capture solution not flexible enough for geographically dispersed locations

KEY BENEFITS

- › Capture & ECM system is agile, yet highly functional
- › Technology can be implemented in about half the time of traditional ECM solutions
- › Straightforward architecture easy for internal IT resources to expand
- › Web-based technology can be deployed, serviced, upgraded & managed from central location
- › Simple user interface & behind-the-scenes functionality require little training
- › Runs on single server, reducing cost and carbon footprint
- › Distributed capture platform can extend to include ad-hoc & transactional activities

National Frozen Foods Corporation, based in Seattle, Washington, produces nearly 300 million pounds of frozen vegetables yearly, including corn, beans, peas, carrots and a variety of blends.

With a history of commitment to superior customer service, the Company’s goal is both simple and lofty—to produce the highest quality frozen vegetables in the world, consistently, on time and at a competitive price.

Within eight years of its founding in 1912, the Company moved into frozen food processing. By 1928, it was packaging frozen strawberries in one pound containers, marking some of the first frozen retail foods anywhere. In 1958, National Frozen Foods implemented technology to quickly freeze individual vegetables, among other processing modernizations.

Staying true to their history of innovation, National Frozen Foods has looked beyond efficiencies for processing the green stuff you put on our table. They are now extending automation to include core business processes, focusing on another kind of green that will reduce the carbon footprint for doing business.

An Alternative to Traditional ECM

Information Technology specialists at National Frozen Foods, while looking for ways to improve business processes, identified the benefits of an Enterprise Content Management system.

Although they wanted a platform that they could grow to meet all core processes and integrate with legacy systems, the cost for a legacy ECM system seemed disproportionate to their needs.

Not only would it require a sizable investment in software, but also a substantial number of hours of professional services for implementation. And, with content being generated at four disparate processing plants, a production capture solution was not practical.

National Frozen Foods began working with ImageSource, an independent integrator, who would be able to select from a variety of ECM products to provide National Frozen Foods with the ideal solution.



ImageSource suggested that National Frozen Foods consider a combination of ILINX® products: ILINX Capture, ILINX Content Store and ILINX Integrate. With the ILINX solution, both the capture and repository software are web-based, allowing the technology to be installed and managed remotely.

Once National Frozen Foods realized the power of the ILINX components, they expanded their scope to include workflow. They saw that ILINX Capture could yield a workflow that has complex functionality, while remaining simple to the user.

A Streamlined Accounts Payable Process

With paper invoices coming in to all four locations and then being sent to corporate, the Accounts Payable process was a logical place for National Frozen Foods to roll out the new lean and green ECM technology. Approximately 2,500 invoices and checks are processed monthly, which require approvals from across the organization.

The ImageSource solution integrates with Adage, National Frozen Foods' ERP system. It utilizes ILINX Capture for capture and workflow, ILINX Content Store to provide a secure repository for document images and ILINX Integrate to image-enable Adage.

“I'D DESCRIBE ILINX AS 'SMALL FOOTPRINT, BIG FUNCTIONALITY'. THE TECHNOLOGY IS SO CLEAN, WE'LL EASILY BE ABLE TO EXTEND IT TO OTHER DEPARTMENTS OURSELVES.”

— John Meersman, Director of IT, National Frozen Foods

ILINX Capture is used to scan and index invoices as they come in. In ILINX Capture's workflow, the invoice automatically travels through two levels of approval, where metadata can be edited. Upon approval, the invoice is routed to an Accounts Payable specialist who sends critical data to Adage and contributes the document to ILINX Content Store.

While in Adage, the AP specialist can, with the push of a button, view any documentation associated with an invoice that resides in ILINX Content Store. This functionality, made possible with ILINX Integrate, makes images of documents available from within their ERP system, without having to open the ECM software.

Once approved for payment, Adage-associated metadata is pushed automatically to the document in ILINX Content Store.

At the scheduled check running time, metadata is pulled from Adage to a printer, where the checks are automatically printed. An image of the check, an identical replica, is automatically created and the original invoice document is prepended, with the check appearing at the front of the package.

Clean ECM Components Translate to Savings for the Organization

For National Frozen Foods, the ILINX solution provided all of the required functionality and was implemented in about half the time a legacy ECM solution would require. Besides a lower initial investment, the technology will provide the organization with ongoing savings.

In addition to eliminating paper associated with a manual workflow and archive, National Frozen Foods will be able to reduce their carbon footprint in various ways.

ILINX Capture, the preeminent distributed capture platform, allows anyone at any of the Company's geographically dispersed locations to capture and push content into ILINX Content Store. Once in the ECM system, the documentation no longer requires physical area infrastructure for storage or shipping from one location to another. Because both are thin-client applications, the software can be easily deployed, serviced, upgraded and managed.

Further, the ILINX technology implemented at National Frozen Foods is able to run on just one server. For the Company, that translates to lower initial investment and ongoing electricity costs.

Finally, the ILINX applications feature easy-to-master functionality. Simple user interfaces in ILINX Capture and ILINX Content Store mean minimal user training. The solution also features the ability to image enable their ERP, and virtually any other application, using ILINX Integrate, again, requiring little training for knowledge workers.

A True, Extensible Solution

National Frozen Foods has plans to expand the ECM infrastructure to a variety of business processes. In addition, ad hoc and transactional capture can be extended throughout the organization, to any and all of their processing locations.

True to their innovative spirit, National Frozen Foods is embracing Enterprise Content Management, and is excited about finding a great technology fit.

Technology



ILINX CAPTURE

Capture Information. Any Place, Any Time.

A flexible, lean and highly adoptable web-based platform, ILINX® Capture empowers anyone in your organization to easily capture information in-process from a desktop, MFP or mobile device. Perfect for ad hoc or transactional activities, ILINX automates the capture of information from both paper and electronic sources, converts it into functional information and delivers a variety of digital formats to the systems that manage your business processes.
www.imagesourceinc.com

ILINX INTEGRATE

Image-enable any application with content residing in another system. Retrieve and display images from within virtually any application regardless of source—host based, Windows, Web or Citrix—saving time and increasing efficiencies. Requiring no development, ILINX can integrate whatever is running on your client desktop into a cohesive system that allows data to pass easily between two or more applications.
www.imagesourceinc.com

ILINX CONTENT STORE

Easy-to-use, powerful, web-based content repository with built-in capture. This secure repository provides a scalable and affordable capture and storage for all document types and digital assets. Running on a common browser, users access ILINX® Content Store at any desktop, while administrators maintain and control user security and access in minutes from a central location. This robust application deploys in a fraction of the time it takes to set up a traditional system.
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