



SUCCESS STORY FOR RETAIL

Damartex UK Ltd

Clothing retailer Damart slashes time taken to process cheques by 75% and frees up teams to focus on delivering seamless customer service when it introduces an automated electronic document capture and archiving solution, built on Kofax solutions.

Challenge

As the retail industry grows increasingly crowded, service excellence has become a key differentiator in the battle for competitive advantage. Today’s customers demand a seamless shopping journey, from ordering and payment right through to delivery. Retailers who fail to meet these expectations risk losing valuable business to more agile competitors.

For Damart, efficient payment processing is a critical First Mile™ activity – essential to ensuring a superior customer experience with important implications for customer satisfaction, reducing costs and increasing employee productivity.

For many years, a dedicated order processing team keyed payments for Damart personal account orders manually. Following the opening of the post, the team sorted cheques and associated remittances into batches, cross-referenced them against the company’s data processing and orders system, and cross-checked daily totals against a cash log.

The process was time-consuming and labour-intensive. In addition to slowing the processing of customer orders, it also put Damart at risk of failing to meet its own bank payment deadlines.

Jeanette Askin, Head of Customer Service at Damart, said: “As well as the time involved, manually keying in information from several hundred cheques and associated remittances each day was inherently error prone. We had the added challenges of having to deal with hand-written cheques, seasonal high volumes and tight deadlines. We were looking for ways to speed up processing payments to customer’s accounts.”



Damartex UK Ltd, known to customers as Damart, has a strong British heritage in the direct shopping market. The company is best known for its thermal products, developed from the unique Thermolactyl fabric. Damart specializes in clothing for senior women and has expanded its product range beyond its famous thermals to ladieswear, menswear, and home and garden products. The company currently serves around 2 million customers and reports annual turnover of £110 million.

Products in Use:

- ◆ Kofax Capture™
- ◆ Kofax Transformation™
- ◆ Kofax Virtual ReScan® Elite

Focus: Cheque Processing

“We have cut time spent on the cheque validation process from 25 hours per week to just over six hours – a 75% reduction. And while in the past, four colleagues spent most of their day processing cheques and reconciling bank statements, the same task now takes two colleagues half a day to complete.”

Jeanette Askin, Head of Customer Service, Damart

Additionally, reliance on paper-based processes made it difficult for teams to locate information and respond to customer requests in a timely manner.

“If a customer called with a query about their payment, our teams often could not give them an immediate answer,” Askin said. “A colleague would have to retrieve the related paper remittances from our archives to find the necessary information, and then get back to the customer at a later date. We knew there had to be a way to improve customer satisfaction and speed up processing.”

Solution

With its high volume of repetitive, manual tasks, cheque processing was the perfect candidate for an automated, fully digital approach. Following a comprehensive review of market offerings, Damart partnered with Ricoh to deploy an integrated suite of Kofax solutions.

Today, all incoming cheques and corresponding remittance slips are scanned in batches of 50 and converted into digital images, using a combination of Ricoh production scanners and Kofax Capture™ software. Damartex takes advantage of Kofax Virtual ReScan® Elite to enhance the quality of scanned images, helping to reduce the need for rescanning and ensuring that images are legible for archive and audit purposes.

Once each batch has been processed, the individual document images are classified and key data is extracted, using Kofax Transformation™. This data is then verified and each cheque is automatically cross-referenced against its corresponding remittance slip. To store the newly digitised content, Damart established a centralised document repository, which is integrated with accounting and order processing systems.

Results

By automating previously manual tasks—such as cross-referencing, data entry and transferring files—the new Kofax solutions allow teams to process cheques faster than ever before.

“We have cut time spent on the cheque validation process from 25 hours per week to just over six hours – a 75% reduction,” Askin said. “And while in the past, four colleagues spent most of their day processing cheques and reconciling bank statements, the same task now takes two colleagues half a day to complete. It’s all done and dusted by lunchtime, which frees up teams for more value-added work.”

By removing many of the manual steps that were previously involved in cheque processing, Damart has substantially reduced the risk of error. And now that contact centre teams have full visibility of cheque payments that have been scanned, it is much easier to track down and correct any errors that might occur. This has helped to improve first-time call resolution.

When errors do occur, they are much easier to track down and correct as contact centre teams have visibility of cheque payments which have been scanned.

Customer Service All Sewed Up

The new approach to cheque processing helps Damart deliver faster, more effective service to customers. Empowering teams with easier access to information and releasing them from routine tasks means that staff can be more proactive in answering customer questions, greatly boosting satisfaction.

“Colleagues have more time to dedicate to handling customer orders and enquiries; overall we spend much more time investing in quality tasks now,” Askin said. “We’ve also noticed a reduction in the number of customer calls we receive concerning cheque payments, and there is less follow-up correspondence. What’s more, when a customer does contact us with a question, our colleagues can look up the relevant information in a few mouse clicks and give them a right first time answer.”

“Following the change, the Kofax solutions have transformed the way we work,” Askin said. “They have been a great addition for our team, our wider business and our customers.”

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