

## Driving the higher costs out of list processing

BY BRIAN EUCLIDE

Simply selecting the correct software, automating the process flow, and enhancing the off the shelf tools, can reduce a company's total list processing cost by 50% or more. Over the past decade, the basic process of processing mailing lists has been commoditized by software manufacturers and end users alike.



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Cheaper and simpler “department store” software packages allow end users to perform simple functions that may meet the basic standards of a USPS qualified mailing, but do not possess the capabilities to do much more.

More elaborate software packages support modules which provide tools to convert many different types of input files, CASS, eliminate duplicate records, presort to all classes of mail, and provide an output file

that will integrate with either a laser printer or an inkjet device. Often each manufacturer has a specific specialty. Therefore, it is essential for a company to understand its specific needs and select the correct software package. Cheaper is not always better.

It is critical to automate the process flow. Unfortunately, most of the software products available have each module as a silo and not necessarily integrated with each of the others. A significant time and cost savings can be gained by integrating these products into a single “stringed” series of transactions. Building tools to join processes together has resulted in time and costs savings greater than 60% in many different business environments.

Most list processing software packages perform very minimal quality control functionality. The addition of custom quality control testing applications is the second greatest cost savings opportunity for a list processing operation. If a company is processing more than one single list from a single source, there are incredible risks associated with incorrectly identifying data elements required in downstream processes.

Ultimately, it is essential for list processing operations to understand the tools which they are using to produce the mailing event. However, more importantly, it is critical to enhance those tools to provide greater efficiencies and quality control.

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