



Extending the Reach of Information

PRESS RELEASE

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Esker Survey: Organisations Still Use Word Processors and Spreadsheets for Transactional Business Documents and Rely on Postal Mail for Delivery

73% of finance and billing personnel surveyed reported generating business documents with popular word processors, 82% say customers prefer receiving bills via postal mail

Derby, UK, May, 2005 – Esker Software, the leading provider of intelligently automated document delivery solutions and services, has released results of a survey of over 500 North American billing and invoicing managers regarding their organisations' practices and preferences surrounding the creation and delivery of transactional business documents.

Top-level results of the survey, released at the AIIM 2005 Annual Conference and Exposition, showed that despite the proliferation of enterprise software to manage financial transactions, organisations remain dependent on popular desktop applications like word processors (73%) and spreadsheets (45%) for generating business documents such as invoices, purchase orders, contracts, remittance documents and order confirmations. Specifically, over 76% of responses included a Microsoft Office product (Word, Excel, Access or Works) among the software identified as often used to create these documents.

In addition, despite the growing use of electronic billing and payment methods, the majority of billing managers (64%) still utilise postal mail as their primary means to deliver their invoices. 63% of organisations rank fax as their second most frequently used means for sending billings, and 56% said that they used email for delivery least often among the three transmission methods.

As far as preferences for how they receive invoices, 74% of respondents said they prefer to receive billings via postal mail and only 20% of organisations favour online or emailed invoices. However, enterprises with 15,000 or more employees are significantly more likely to prefer online invoicing (39%) than those companies with fewer than 1,000 employees (16%).

Also revealed in the survey was a general trend of self-service when it comes to document production and deployment. 73% of all respondents reported that their departments both generate and manually send invoices, purchase orders and similar documents. While enterprises with more than 15,000 employees were more likely to be able to count upon specific departments dedicated to mailing functions (41%), the findings suggest that most billing managers still spend a significant portion of their time on the administrative tasks of printing, labeling and mailing business documents.

“This survey’s results reinforce what we’re already hearing from our customers. Firstly, it’s not just the biggest companies that can save a great deal of time and money by automating document delivery,” commented Mitch Baxter, Executive Vice President of Business Development for Esker. “Second, we’re learning that even the bigger companies who rely primarily on enterprise software want to extend automation to the desktop to fill in those gaps currently handled by everyday desktop software like word processors and spreadsheets.”

While Esker Software may be best known for adding document delivery to SAP and other enterprise applications, the company has responded to this need for extension of document delivery capabilities into common desktop software, with the launch of an on-line document delivery service called Esker on Demand for Office. It enables users of the most common desktop applications to choose among physical mail, fax, e-mail and SMS as document delivery options. At the AIIM Annual Conference and Exposition, Esker demonstrated of the service and provided attendees with trial accounts that allow users to send 30 documents using the tool for free.

Media who did not attend AIIM who are interested in more detail from the Esker Software survey should contact Sam Townsend, Marketing Manager, Northern Europe. Tel: +44 (0) 1332 54 8181, email: sam.townsend@esker.co.uk.

About Esker Software

Esker is the intelligent document delivery leader. With software and hosted delivery services to automate every phase and every type of document delivery, Esker helps organisations streamline manual, paper-intensive business processes providing significant and immediate operational efficiencies, cost savings and measurable ROI in as little as three to six months.

Esker intelligent document delivery solutions include:

Esker DeliveryWare – a single and universal information exchange platform that captures, formats, converts, routes and stores documents – automatically – from any enterprise application. It features the industry's broadest range of delivery media and file format conversion options and is the only solution with the DeliveryWare Rules Engine for document processing intelligence that eliminates the need for custom programming.

Esker on Demand – document delivery services enabling physical mail, fax, email and SMS delivery from enterprise and desktop applications with no printers, mailroom equipment, fax machines, office supplies, etc. The worldwide Esker on Demand network can be accessed via Esker DeliveryWare or on-line via Esker on Demand for Office.

Founded in 1985, Esker operates globally and has over 70,000 customers and millions of licensed users worldwide. Esker has global headquarters in Lyon, France, U.S. headquarters in Madison, WI, and UK offices in Derby. For more information, visit www.esker.com.uk.

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