



Ernie Crawford
President, Crawford Technologies

Ernie's Corner

I hope this finds you all having a good start to 2011. At CrawfordTech, we've been very busy and enjoying record sales over the past six months. We are proud to announce the opening of a new office in Fort Collins, Colorado, which is the headquarters for our Archive Management Division.

This new division is focused on our PRO Archiver product, which archives output in EMC Documentum systems. We hope to see many of you at our open house celebrations on March 18. For more

information or to RSVP, please go to this link to see our media release:

<http://www.crawfordtech.com/news-events/crawfordtech-opens-new-fort-collins-office>

For a change of pace, we're focusing this issue on an area where our award-winning technology is helping organizations communicate with people who are unable to read typical communications created by today's document composition systems.

People who are print and sight disabled need to receive communication in alternate formats such as Braille, large print, e-text, audio or accessible formats compatible with screen readers, such as JAWS. In most countries, the law requires organization to offer consumer documents to your customers in these formats.

Several years ago, we noticed that many organizations were struggling to deliver accessible documents to their customers. Many were spending inordinate amounts of money to develop specialized programs and drivers to create accessible documents. Others were still having their document manually transcribed, a costly and error-prone approach to the problem. We knew we could offer a better way.

Our document re-engineering technology makes it possible to selectively convert documents from print files into all of these formats. However, in order for organizations to utilize these capabilities, a lot of specialized equipment, skills and processes must be put in place. Most organizations find this to be too much to take on.

In order to bring this capability to the market and make it cost-effective and easy to use, we launched our Document Accessibility Services (DAS) Division to help organizations address their accessibility needs in a straightforward and cost-effective manner. We offer print and mail services from high-security, state-of-the-art facilities in New York and Toronto that specialize in accessible document formats.

If you are a print service provider, you can work with our Document Accessibility Services (DAS) Division to offer these capabilities to your clients. If you have an in-house print and mail facility, you can contract us to produce and mail your statements, bills, information documents or other customer communications for you on an ongoing basis.

This issue of Crawford Courier is dedicated to accessible versions of your documents and contains articles covering all aspects of this burgeoning area. I hope you enjoy this issue, and that we can help your organization or those of your friends and associates. ♦



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Connect with us now on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#) and in return, we'll promise to keep you updated on industry news, opinion, product updates and the latest tips.

You can also scan this QR code with your smartphone (using a suitable QR code reader), where you'll find links to all three social networks.

Come and join us online now!



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Document Accessibility

A compliance issue or a business opportunity?

by Stewart Rogers

When it comes to document production, the vast majority of printed output the business world produces is not what you might expect. Sure, there are a lot of flyers, brochures, catalogues and other similar 'static content' items created, printed and distributed daily. However, the real volume of printed output is in the form of transactional customer communications, such as invoices, statements and bills¹.

This is particularly true of the financial services, utilities, insurance and telecommunications industries. Along with government organizations, these groups produce high volumes of transactional output, with individual companies often producing upwards of 400 million pieces of transactional paper a year. But not everyone is able to access the colossal amount of transactional output that is produced, month in and month out.

Within the client base of a typical Fortune 500 company, there are at least 1.5% of customers that would be considered to have some form of visual or reading impairment. Putting that into perspective, a bank that has 2 million clients who operate an average of two accounts each (checking, savings etc.) would be required to produce around 720,000 accessible statements every year.

In North America alone, there are 30 million people who have a visual or reading impairment. In Europe, there are another 30 million affected by this issue.

In North America alone, there are nearly 30 million people who are considered to have a visual or reading impairment. In Europe, there are more than 30 million affected by this issue. The vast majority of these people (74.2%) are aged between 18 and 63, a statistic that puts things into perspective.

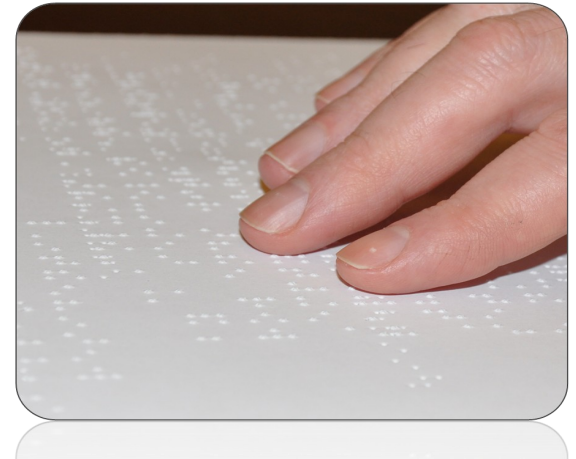
While many think of visual impairment as something that only affects senior citizens, the facts outweigh the conjecture and show that the majority of those affected are exactly the consumers businesses want to attract.

There are various regulations in place throughout the United States, Canada, UK and Europe that require businesses to offer and provide accessible documents to those affected. In the USA, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is in force, and in the UK the Disabilities Discrimination Act ensures that organizations offer alternate formats for all documentation. In Canada there are several regulations that govern the right to access for visually impaired consumers, including the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Access to Information Act.

These regulations have been regularly enforced since their inception. Notable cases, such as the National Federation for the Blind (NFB) vs. Target, have resulted in Target having to pay legal fees of \$3.7m, and establish a \$6m dollar fund for the sub-class affected by the findings. In the case of the Illinois Council for the Blind vs. TCF Bank, and with American Council for the Blind vs. LaSalle Bank, both TCF and LaSalle were ordered to produce alternate format statements in Braille, Large Print and audio formats.

Regulatory compliance is, of course, important and avoiding costly penalties is not just good from a short-term financial perspective, but the long-term reputational damage can be crippling. Ensuring you avoid these problems is paramount, but what about the business opportunity of moving towards the active promotion and production of alternate format output?

With millions of potential clients requiring Braille, large print, audio or e-text statements, what if your business was perceived to have better support for those affected than your competitors? Of course, the return on investment here is vital. The approach you take to implementing true access for all will determine whether this is seen as a cost or as a potential for profit.



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Upcoming Events

New Fort Collins Office Open House Celebration

Friday, March 18, 2011, 4 to 7 p.m.
For more details and to RSVP,
please email sales@crawfordtech.com



On Demand Conference & Expo

March 22-24, 2011
Walter E. Washington Convention Centre. Washington DC, USA
Please visit us at booth #2243
www.ondemandexpo.com



Xplor International Conference and Forum

April 5-7, 2011
TradeWinds Island Grand Hotel and Conference Center
Tampa Bay, Florida, USA
www.xplor.org



Northprint 2011

May 10-12, 2011
Harrogate International Center, Harrogate, UK
www.northprintexpo.com

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Creating alternate formats in-house is daunting. It is simply not possible to meet the varied requirements of those people that require accessible output by providing a PDF file, so any hope that you can solve the accessibility issue with electronic output alone needs to be quashed. In fact, the vast majority of people that need this kind of transactional customer communication will request and require large print, not an electronic format.

Re-programming applications to produce the likes of Braille and large print could require a six-figure budget and a full project team, and that is before you consider the hardware investment required and the specialized operations skills and processes. Fortunately, there is a reasonable solution to this.

Outsourcing your accessible document production to a reputable Document Accessibility Services provider, such as CrawfordTech's DAS division, means you don't have to pull important resources from other essential projects. You also do not have to keep up to date with – or enforce and implement - the latest regulations and standards. Through a secure connection, you can transmit statement data to the chosen provider who will then produce, verify and deliver your output for you. The costs involved in this approach are minimal in comparison to doing it yourself, and the fact that you're avoiding years of training and experience in the needs of the visually impaired is a big benefit too.

The fact is this; visual and print impairment is not a barrier for consumers. As with anyone else, people affected by blindness, eye diseases, reduced cognitive functions and dyslexia require insurance, telephones, credit cards, bank accounts and utilities like everyone else.

In fact, this group of consumers have been shown to spend more time in online forums with their peers discussing the relative benefits or pitfalls of dealing with companies like yours. Why not tap into that brand loyalty by not just doing the right thing, but by embracing the millions of people that need accessible documents?

Document accessibility, therefore, is not just about making sure you don't get fined, sued or forced into a corner by existing laws and regulations. It is also about the opportunity that exists to increase your client base with some of the most loyal and vocal consumers available. You can viably service this client base by using a third-party DAS service provider to meet all the document communication needs of that new revenue stream. ♦

1 The most recent USPS' Annual Report reveals that within 2010 more than 78 billion mail pieces were sent via First Class mail.

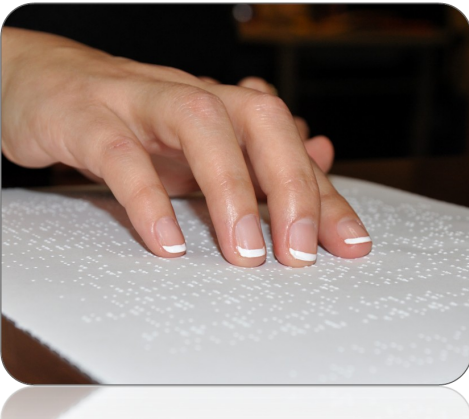
Leading telecommunications company turns to CrawfordTech for Document Accessibility Services

TELUS meeting needs of visually-impaired customers using Document Accessibility Services (DAS)



In the fiercely competitive telecommunications market, it is important for TELUS Corporation to foster customer loyalty from each of their 12 million valued subscribers. In order to achieve this, they must recognize that not all customers have the same visual reading capabilities, and alternate accessibility to this information is required by some of their clients.

Catering to customers with disabilities, such as the visually impaired, is good for business and is required by law. Providing monthly statements in Braille, e-text and large-format print using CrawfordTech's Document Accessibility Services (DAS) solution helps TELUS stay at the forefront of client communications and customer satisfaction while conforming to all applicable regulations and laws.



The Challenge

Like many corporations, TELUS recognizes that not all their customers have the same needs when receiving business communications such as invoices and statements. Their range of products, which include traditional and mobile telephone services, internet services and TV media distribution, means that TELUS offers products requiring a very diverse set of communication needs.

The company also understands the importance of communicating in a manner most appropriate to the lifestyles and needs of its millions of customers. Over the years, its customer service function has been on the forefront of many new advanced methods for distributing monthly billing statements.

Being one of the first to offer e-billing presentment in addition to traditional mailed paper statements was a way to address both their younger customers and their environmental commitments.

With this same drive and foresight, combined with a corporate responsibility to ensure they conform to national disability regulations, TELUS is ensuring that clients with any form of reading difficulty are able to receive important subscription information in a suitable and accessible format.

Why CrawfordTech?

CrawfordTech's DAS solution accepts electronic print files containing statements, invoices and other key communication documents, with complete security at their PCI-compliant facilities, and re-formats these into output for those clients that require Braille, large-format print, e-text and audio files.

Because CrawfordTech provides this as a services offering, organizations do not need to invest in IT projects, purchase or install new software, make expensive application changes or bring about adjustments to their infrastructure to meet the needs of visually impaired or print-disabled customers.

"With 12 million clients, it is important the TELUS Corporation communicate with all their valued subscribers, including customers with print disabilities or the visually impaired. Serving this group of customers is good for

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CrawfordTech's Document Accessibility Services (DAS)

Crawford Technologies DAS division specializes in helping organizations communicate with their visually and print impaired clientele in the manner they require. We specialize in delivering bills, statements and transactional documents to the visually-impaired in Braille, large print, audio, e-text and more.

Not only that, we also offer fulfilment services – or taking care of individual orders of customers on a case-by-case basis. For example, if a visually or print impaired client requests a brochure in Braille, we can take care of fully processing that order for you.

Our accessibility services are affordable and our technology is innovative and award-winning. Even better, the initial costs to set up this service is minimal in contrast to the ongoing benefits both in customer loyalty and the avoidance of non-compliance issues.

From our PCI-compliant facility, we use our award-winning technology to make the process easy. Our technology allows us to use your existing customer communications print files to produce alternate formats such as Braille (uncontracted and contracted), Large Print, Audio and e-text. In a timely, accurate and secure manner, we process and can deliver your alternate format transactional documents in English, Spanish and French.

There are 30 million visually-impaired people throughout North America. These numbers will continue to rise with the aging Baby Boomer generation and a growing rate of diabetes-related eye conditions. CrawfordTech is uniquely positioned to deliver your organization's Document Accessibility Services due to our proven expertise in the printing and mailing business, our award-winning software and our experience in alternate formats for visually impaired and print disabled customers.

For more information, contact us now and we will send you a FREE alternative format sample pack. Phone us at 1-866-679-0864 or email us at sales@crawfordtech.com. ♦



... TELUS continued from page 4

Since the DAS solution makes use of Crawford Technologies' award-winning document re-engineering software, they don't simply 'enlarge' the print – the data is re-ordered and re-flowed on the page so that it makes sense to the reader when produced and laid out in large-format.

Similarly, Braille and audio files are created in a way that makes sense to the customer. Clients like TELUS also benefit from CrawfordTech's ability to extract just those statements that require re-formatting, avoiding the need to create subsets of output on their own systems.

The software and services provided by CrawfordTech fully complies with all processes, service levels and privacy requirements required by large corporations. CrawfordTech also keeps up to date on all of the latest encoding rules, international standards and specialized accessibility knowledge, required so that their customers don't have to.

Thanks to automated document factory production facilities and the ability to provide ink address labels, barcodes and visually readable information on Braille statements, CrawfordTech's DAS was able to meet and exceed all TELUS' service, customer privacy protection and technological requirements.

Conclusion

CrawfordTech's software has the ability to process a variety of data in multiple formats without requiring manipulation by the customer. ♦

Accessibility in PDF and Elsewhere

by Dave Hook



People outside of the transactional customer communication industry often do not realize that a significant percentage of all printed pages produced every year are not books, manuals, newspapers and other such documents.

The bulk of printed output are the insurance policies, bank statements, telephone bills, invoices, statements and other documents that are sent to our homes. The quantity of these documents produced annually number in the hundreds of billions of pages. In the United States alone, over 27 billion transactional mail pieces are sent annually, each including multiple pages.

In addition to all of the other trends and pressures we face, we now must consider document accessibility. Organizations have to serve the needs of those consumers who cannot access printed or electronically presented document content.

PDF/A (PDF for Archiving) is an important part of the puzzle.

Most organizations now realize that they need to keep the transactional documents that they send to their customers in an archive format for compliance, legal, workflow, data extraction and other purposes.

As organizations contemplate the architecture and file storage formats involved, PDF/A is clearly one of the leading standards due to its fidelity, popularity and reliability.

PDF/A is becoming significantly important to the transactional customer communications document industry.

The fact that PDF/A is the defined international standard as an “electronic document file format for long-term preservation” speaks volumes.

In other words, PDF/A is becoming significantly important to the transactional customer communications document industry. PDF/A currently comes in two flavors; PDF/A-1b and PDF/A-1a.

PDF/A-1a is the full compliance level and preserves the natural reading order and content text stream. This requires significant structural tags, and provides:

- Text reflowing capabilities which are important for mobile devices such as smart phones and other mobile devices due to their small screen size. The Gartner group predicts that mobile devices will outnumber PCs as the most common Web access device by 2013, so this is an important consideration.
- Reliable extraction of text from the PDF to facilitate downstream production workflows, including integrity checking, and the additional ability to use data from within the PDF for indexing and retrieval purposes.
- Not coincidentally, it includes much of the foundation upon which to build accessible, PDF/UA (PDF for Universal Accessibility) documents.

Who needs accessible documents?

There are many reasons why individuals may request an accessible document including vision limitations due to diabetes, clinical blindness and old age or reading difficulties such as dyslexia. Finding information about how many individuals need accessible documents is a challenge itself.

Your company’s customer needs will be determined by the types of product or services you supply and the demographic of your customers. Research in CrawfordTech’s division for accessible document creation and mailing services shows the following pattern: 6% of ‘alternate format clients’ request Braille, 92% request large print, 0.5% request an e-Text document and 1.5% request an electronic audio file.

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Organizations do not really know how PDF documents are currently being used for ‘read aloud’ or text-reflowing purposes – they simply can’t tell how users are interacting with their PDFs – but due to the fact that tagged PDF is not broadly adopted, our opinion is that PDFs are not yet widely used for this purpose.

It is important to note, however, that interest in this capability has increased significantly.

Why should I take the time and effort to ensure my documents are accessible in all of the various formats?

Some organizations have taken the time and effort to make their facilities, systems and documents accessible.

In fact, some companies have provided accessible documents, such as Braille, for nearly 20 years. For them, it was always ‘the right thing to do’.

Other organizations are only now becoming interested in making their documents accessible because of lobbying and awareness efforts, new and pending legislation, customer satisfaction and the significant costs associated with class-action law suits and litigation.

As organizations continue to standardize on PDF/A, they should consider making all such documents accessible at the same time.

This then means that a single document format will serve the needs of all customers and avoids the challenges of managing multiple document formats for different customers, version management, and duplication of efforts.

The bottom line? Leading organizations are already making their transactional customer communications accessible and they are following industry trends and standards, such as the PDF /UA ISO standard for their output.

In Conclusion

PDF/UA is a welcome standard for organizations that wish to be compliant and serve all of their customers equally and fairly.

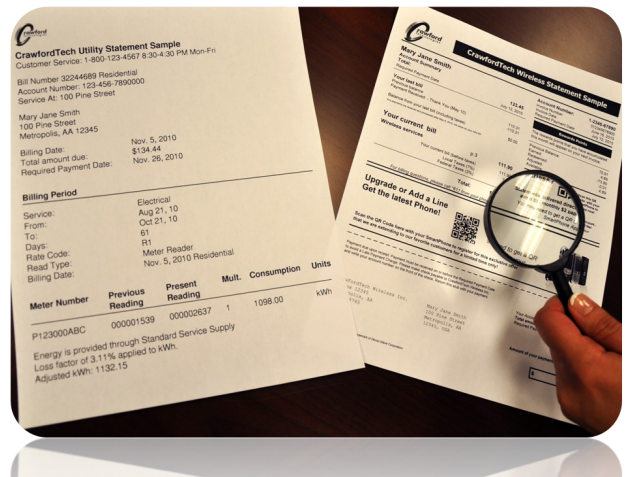
It is already a Draft International Standard and is expected to become an internationally approved standard in a few months.

As an active member of the U.S. Committee, Crawford Technologies is proud to have been a part of the development of this standard.

It is an important cornerstone for organizations that want to serve the needs of their clients and the wide variety of their accessibility needs.

It is a welcome and consistent standard for the visually disabled community, the assistive technology they use and the vendors that support them.

Crawford Technologies is committed to supporting accessible PDF, including conformance to the upcoming PDF/UA standard. You can find out more about document accessibility by visiting CrawfordTech’s Document Accessibility Services (DAS) website at www.altformats.com – just use the Contact Us options to get in touch. ♦

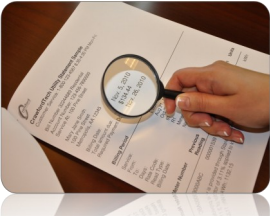


PDF/UA is a welcome standard for organizations that wish to be compliant and serve all of their customers equally and fairly.

Document Accessibility and Alternative Formats

An overview

Several 'alternative formats' of print materials are in wide use throughout Canada, United States and Europe. These formats include large print, audio files such as WAV and MP3, Braille and e-text (designed for text to speech readers such as JAWS).



Large Print

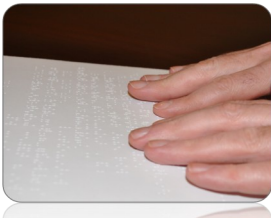
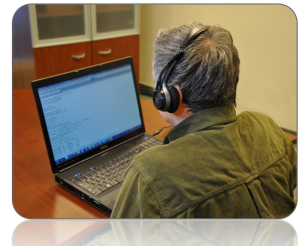
Large print is widely used to convey information to people with low vision and is the most common type of alternative format document. This is especially true when a document is already in a 'digital born' form, such as statements, invoices and bills.

The issue with simply 'enlarging' the printed output is that the transactional data and section headings in a statement can be difficult to deal with properly. Shading, bolding and images that are enlarged generate another barrier to the reader and quality of the output.

Increasing the page to extra large paper creates a new problem; it requires folding in order to insert into an envelope, and that gives creases in the paper, again creating a visual barrier to the crucial data on the page. All of these are reasons to ensure the Document Accessibility Services provider you're using is able to deal effectively with such issues. Properly formatted large print statements, regenerated on regular paper sizes, reformatted to effectively lay out the detail and proper use of white space enhances the user experience giving them access to their personal and confidential information.

Audio Files

Digital audio files can be read using a wide variety of equipment, and may be a good solution for persons unable to read regular printed text. They can be produced in several different audio formats, including mp3. Once created, these files can be played back using a computer, smartphone or MP3 player, and can be sent to consumers via e-mail if they are not too large. These files can also be burned to CDs and DVDs for easy, low-cost distribution. Audio file formats are also beneficial for individuals with disabilities who may be unable to read standard print due to a physical, learning or sensory related disability.



Braille

Since only a small percentage of people with visual impairments read Braille proficiently enough to prefer information in this format, large scale documents in Braille are generally produced only upon request. This does, however, vary by region. For example the rates of Braille usage in Europe is considerably higher than in North America.

As a rule, producing a document in Braille is more expensive than other alternative formats. Braille is an option worth considering, especially when the intended audience may include persons who are Deaf Blind, since Braille may be their only means of accessing written materials.

The Braille Authority of North America (BANA) recently announced a change in terminology to what has been traditionally known as "Grade I" and "Grade II" Braille. Grade I Braille is now known as Uncontracted Braille, and Grade II Braille is now known as Contracted Braille. This applies in the United States and Canada, but the traditional terms may still be in use in other parts of the world.

In the United States Grade II, or Contracted, Braille is the most widely accepted form. Bear in mind that when documentation is converted into Braille for International recipients' use and is in English, the Grade I, Uncontracted, Braille equivalent should be used since it is more common outside of the United States.

e-Text

e-text faces similar issues to Large Print in that it is sometimes difficult to extract the text in the correct order so that a text-to-speech reader can make sense of the data. e-Text works well for those people using computers or dedicated text-to-speech readers, and gives the same benefits as audio output with the added bonus that text files are incredibly small in comparison to the size of an equivalent mp3 file. As a result, e-Text files are completely suitable for electronic delivery via email or a web-based 'pickup' service. ♦

