

Leveraging Statement Processing To Improve Your Cash Flow

By Alice Witherow,
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Bill processing vendors traditionally target large multiple system cable operators, offering complex long term service contracts that take months to negotiate, program, and implement. Their services vary substantially in price but most provide significant savings over internally managed billing operations. Independent cable companies are left out if they are considered too small to fit within the vendor's financial goals.

The result is many independent operators use up valuable internal resources each month just to get their statements into subscribers' hands. MTI's unique DocuSend PDF image process offers simple bill rendering packages with straightforward implementation and no complicated contracts to worry about.

"We're addressing the concerns of cable managers who think of outsourcing as an expensive and time consuming process. They find high upfront costs and expensive service charges just plain discouraging," says Jim Stewart, CEO and Founder of MTI, a firm specializing in document management and distribution. "It just doesn't have to be that way if you use technology to take advantage of the combined buying power of independent cable providers."

"MTI's business model is not to compete with existing software systems, but to complement them. Cable software providers produce great results as a billing and communication tool, but the actual distribution of the bills can be a drain on internal resources."

"Who wants to print their own statements, fold and stuff them, or e-mail them without proper security checks in place? Small to mid-size companies distributed their payroll checks for decades before companies like Paychex came to the rescue. MTI is doing the same thing

with bill rendering: providing a simple effective way to efficiently get your statements to your clients and provide cash flow improvements going right to your bottom line."

"One of the many values the NCTC and ACA provide is pooling the resources of the independent cable providers. That allows them to compete on a platform that is fair to everyone. MTI's products and services strongly support that model."

The benefits of MTI's packages include:

No Complicated Programming

MTI's proprietary process eliminates the need for complex programming. Output to PDF, and MTI does the rest. Sensitive data remains in the billing system. The package service works with any billing system that outputs to PDF.

No Contracts to Negotiate

MTI's implementation is so simple, they don't require long-term commitments.

Set It Up Once... And Only Once

Cable operators don't have to worry about billing software version updates. When you use MTI's packaged services, software updates are not an issue for them. Customer bills continue to go out without costly programming revisions, and MTI doesn't hit you in the pocketbook.

Simple and Straightforward

MTI's package implementation is automated from sign up to transmission, production to payment. The price structure is simple because you pay one price for materials and service with no hidden extras.

MTI offers three cost-saving options

to meet cable operators' business requirements. All pricing is inclusive of postage, processing, outer and remittance envelopes, and printing of the billing statement. This allows the cable provider to select the best option for their business needs.

Choose from the DocuSend Standard Package (white paper with black ink) or Pre-print Package (2 color pre-printed form with black ink for the variable content). No contract or minimum quantity is required. These two packages include:

- **File Confirmation**
- **Material management**
- **Printing**
- **Inserting**
- **Mailing**
- **Secure email**
- **Report Portal for mail activity tracking**
- **Automated billing for services**

"The DocuSend package options offer real value to independent cable operators who otherwise might not be able to take advantage of larger volume processing and postage discounts. It's simple to implement, easy to manage and eliminates the task of internally generating customer statements. It frees up time to focus on core business priorities," says David Drum, President, MTI.

Customized Services

If cable operators needs don't fit into MTI's two standard DocuSend packages, MTI offers *customized* options. Their designers will tailor a proprietary program with almost unlimited flexibility, including these additional offerings:

One-to-one targeted bill messaging based on service level, customer type

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to provide a detailed, written notice of any claim, and imposes upper and lower limits on the size of claims.

Holdback. Often the buyer holds back a portion of the purchase price during the survival period to “back up” the seller’s reps. the buyer may hold those funds back in its accounts, or the parties may decide to use an escrow agent for this purpose. The purchase agreement specifies when and how parties or their escrow agent will disburse these funds. Generally, the buyer will use the funds to satisfy valid indemnification claims. Then, any funds remaining after the survival period are paid to the seller.

Closing and Post-Closing. Once the parties sign the purchase agreement, they start working towards closing. Generally, this involves obtaining required consents and satisfying other closing conditions. Once the parties satisfy the closing conditions, they schedule the closing.

Closing. The closing involves signing several documents to consummate

the transactions. The seller will formally transfer ownership of the seller’s assets or stock to the buyer. And the buyer will pay the seller, either through a wire transfer, execution of a promissory note, or other arrangement, and take over operation of the business. Most closings today occur remotely, with the buyer and seller exchanging signature pages via email or fax.

Post-closing. After closing, the parties will make regulatory filings or provide notices that may be made after the transaction closes. Many purchase agreements also provide for post-closing adjustments to the purchase price. For example, parties often agree to use purchase price adjustments to “true up” expenses incurred while the seller owned the company but paid by the buyer after the closing. The parties also track the holdback and release it according to the purchase agreement.

Conclusion. No transaction will go exactly as planned. But, in our experience, successful transactions start with the buyer and seller knowing what to expect in the deal process. □

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and other existing database criteria. Options include selective bill inserts and personalized advertising cover sheets.

Report Portal customized to provide data by franchise, division, core products, and more.

Customized Image Bank replaces the traditional archive and retrieval system. Statements are stored electronically for instant access, immediate reprint and distribution of customers’ invoices, reducing call handling time.

Consolidation of service descriptions into packages and ability to overwrite billing descriptions.

Geographic Locator is a database of payment centers or cable stores. Used to customize a bill message, notification or website with the closest location, eliminating unnecessary phone traffic to call centers.

A conventional contract is required for the customized option and is provided after an analysis of the operator’s needs.

Simplicity and Affordability By Design

MTI developed their service offerings through decades of creating customized programs designed to enhance existing billing systems. MTI’s agility-based development methods ensure their processes are flexible and adaptive, as well as cost efficient, even for the smallest of subscriber bases.

All of MTI’s services are designed to improve cash flow by reducing operating expenses and expediting receivable revenue. Both the DocuSend packages and the customized services are built to minimize the cable operator’s bill rendering costs, increase efficiency of receivables, and free up time to focus on growing the core business. □

About the Author

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An Associate Member of the American Cable Association, MTI is a document management and distribution solutions provider, located in Rochester, NY. Learn more by visiting www.go2mti.com.

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