

Posteitaliane

Poste Italiane

Poste Italiane is the largest logistics and technology infrastructure organization in Italy. In addition to postal services, the company provides integrated communications, logistics, financial, insurance and mobile phone services to citizens, businesses and government organizations. They are one of the largest European postal operators with a turnover of €21,693 million (about \$28 billion USD), nearly 14,000 locations throughout the country and over 5 million checking accounts. They serve over 32 million customers and have over 150,000 employees. Recently, Poste Italiane reaffirmed its position as an international model of success, recognized for the ability to diversify its business through innovation.

Dematerialization of the Front Counter: Panini and Poste Italiane

The Challenge

Over the past several years, Poste Italiane has made significant investments in technology to enhance business processes, making them more efficient and streamlined. Starting with their front counter activity, they focused on the management of postal payment slips. In 2011 Poste Italiane collected approximately 530 million payment slips putting a significant burden on the front counter to manage these payment transactions efficiently. Responding to the need to dematerialize the management of payment slips, Poste Italiane chose to modernize its infrastructure and handling procedures at the front counter. They paid particular attention to the “big remitters,” such as utility and house payments, which account for the largest percentage of incoming payment slips.

Poste Italiane wanted a standard technology solution that would allow them to eliminate the custom software currently in use. The ultimate goal was to achieve improvement in reliability and efficiency at the front counter and optimize the back office through the elimination of paper.

The Solution

In September 2011, Poste Italiane chose Panini as their technology provider for the dematerialization of payment slips. They installed over 21,600 Panini Vision X® scanners at postal locations throughout the country. The technology provided by Panini replaced the check readers previously used and allowed for the addition of new capabilities. The Panini Vision X was selected by Poste Italiane because of its market leading reliability, availability and ease of integration into existing technology systems.

The front counter dematerialization project was divided into two phases for implementation. The first phase involved pre-marked slips (type “896”), which account for about 70% of all payment slips processed. The second phase involved all remaining unmarked slips. The Panini Vision X scanner captures images of the front and back of each payment slip. The captured information is verified, the data is matched to the image, and the EPCM (Electronic Postal Certification Mark) is generated. Finally, a stamp is printed on the slip, a transaction key is generated and the transaction is completed.



Postal Office—Rome, Italy

The Solution (continued)

Once the system is fully implemented, Poste Italiane will manage over one million images per day. The payment slips will be converted to images at the front counter and the customer will retain the hard copy of the payment slips. The image will be stored as evidence of payment in the back office systems. In addition, payment of the credit collected at the counter is accelerated, generally completed within one working day from the date of collection. This is significant improvement over the current management system. Dematerialization is a major step forward in streamlining the process and represents a considerable economic advantage when considering the total number of bills processed and the amount of interest on the amounts to be credited.

Results

The project is currently in the pilot phase, so it is too early to measure the full impact of the new system. Presently Poste Italiane reports more than 95% of all slips are being dematerialized. Through the introduction of the Panini Vision X, the process of dematerialization has unified the handling of pre-marked and unmarked slips. Both payment slip types are now processed in the same way by reading the barcode and utilizing OCR (optical character recognition), reducing waste due to exceptions and non-compliant processes.

In addition to front counter improvements, Poste Italiane's back office has also undergone a modernization process. The CUAS (Centers Unified Automation and Systems) will now be involved in managing the payment slip images. The reduction of the original paper has resulted in the optimization and efficiency of the overall management process.

"We are very satisfied with the development of the payment slip dematerialization project carried out in partnership with Panini," said Francesco Imposimato, Head of Service Delivery of Poste Italiane. "The way payment slips were handled before involved substantial management costs which, thanks to the dematerialization, are now greatly reduced. At the same time, the new technology provided by Panini allows us to electronically manage all information, speed up the entire process and reduce the physical footprint associated with the management of paper both at the front counter and in the back office. This allows our postal locations to have more time and space to improve and diversify their offerings by providing new and additional services to our customers. The Panini Vision X scanner will be used by Banco Posta in the near future for the management of electronic checks in compliance with Legge 106/2011 (Check Imaging Law enacted by the Italian Government in July 2011)."



Panini Vision X®



*Francesco Imposimato
Head of Service Delivery
Poste Italiane*

Results (continued)

The new technology has received positive feedback from all of those involved in the process; operators, customers and businesses. The postal employees involved in this project were the first impacted by the process changes. After an initial period of training and adjustment, the feedback received by Poste Italiane’s front counter employees has been exceedingly positive. The new process is viewed as innovative, efficient and fast. The Vision X captures a full image of the payment slip with read rates near 100%. Poste Italiane customers also provided positive feedback. Customers have been impressed by the simplification and modernization of their experience at the front counter. Poste Italiane can also provide electronic reporting and digital images to their remitters, reducing processing times and transportation costs.

“The collaboration of Panini and Poste Italiane is particularly significant to us,” says Nicola Aliperti, CEO of Panini. “More than 30 million people will come in contact with this new technology and will witness, at Italian post offices located throughout Italy, the revolution that is happening in our country. Panini, which already holds market share between 30% and 90% in the United States, South America, the Middle East and Asia, is establishing itself as a thought leader with Italian financial institutions, while achieving success on an international level with more than 750,000 Panini capture devices installed worldwide. The achievements in collaboration with Poste Italiane over the last two years shows the principal role the company plays in its home market of Italy. We look forward to continuing and extending this role.”

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