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# The Mail Outsourcing Revolution:

## Why Top SMBs are Moving to Remote Mail Delivery



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## Remote work has exacerbated the challenge of customer communications

In 2020, many small- to medium-sized businesses (SMBs) struggled to maintain business as usual. Most would agree 2020 was anything but usual as everyone tried to pivot and adapt to changing conditions. Perhaps the single most universal change in 2020 was the massive shift to remote work. While situations fluctuated in the way we worked, day-to-day operations like sending invoices needed to be maintained to keep cash flowing. SMBs who were able to press on or flourish had likely already implemented a digital document automation strategy prior to the disruption, embracing the notion that agility was an asset. But for many SMBs, reconfiguring business operations with a remote workforce was their first step toward digital transformation.

Some segments of the workforce do not plan to return to the office any time soon. McKinsey & Company reports that 34 percent of respondents from the information and technology sector said they expect to have at least one-tenth of their employees working remotely for at least two days a week.<sup>1</sup> “With the speed of change expected to continue, the need has never been greater for an operating model that can keep up.”<sup>2</sup>

While the shift to a new way of doing things may seem overwhelming it doesn't have to be. Think about it as a way of ensuring business continuity in the future. According to McKinsey, organizations that implemented agile practices before the pandemic were more prepared and were able to adjust twice as fast as organizations that did not have such tools in place.<sup>1</sup>



IN THE MIDDLE OF EVERY DIFFICULTY LIES OPPORTUNITY

~ Albert Einstein

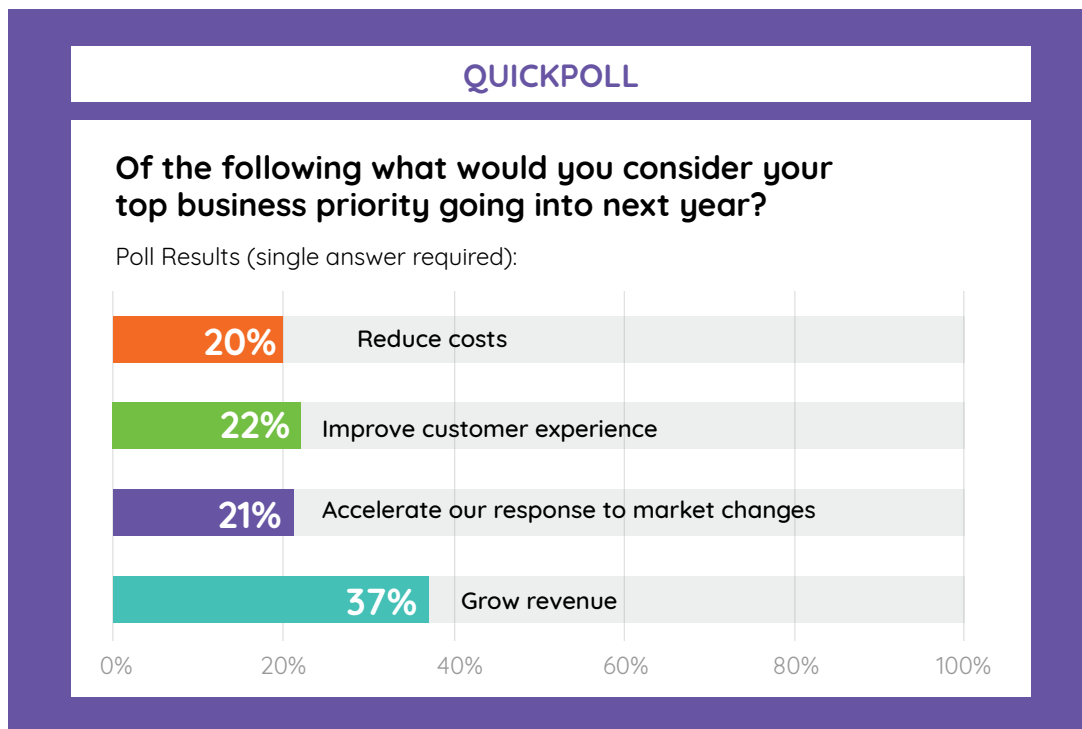


If you recognize the importance of enhancing or improving your operations with automation tools at this time, you're in good company. Economic downturns have proven to be an optimal time for innovation. Revolutionary companies like Microsoft, MTV, Uber, and Airbnb were all started during difficult recessionary periods. Microsoft's CEO famously stated in April 2020 "we've seen two years' worth of digital transformation in two months."

## Business priorities have shifted

In response to the next normal, many business priorities have shifted. According to Forrester's Business Technographics Priorities and Journey, while priorities like improving customer experience remain at the top of the list, other initiatives like "reducing costs", "accelerating our response to market changes" and "change business model" are now considered "more important" than before and will be a key focus for businesses over the next 12 months.<sup>3</sup>

Forrester's findings were echoed in a recent poll by Quadient:



Source: Quadient's Future of Mail - Print's Place in a Digital World Webinar Attendee Poll, October 2020

## Make customer communications a competitive differentiator

Customer priorities and expectations have shifted as well. That means customers are less willing to tolerate inconsistent and poorly executed communications from companies with whom they do business. Forrester's Consumer Energy Index, which captures how ready and willing consumers are to reach out to brands, shows consumer energy has fizzled when comparing attitudes from March 2018 vs. March 2020<sup>5</sup> "as consumers



continue to cope with their state of flux. Brands will have to work the hardest to dial up consumers' sense of community.”<sup>6</sup> Maintaining clear, consistent and above all compassionate communications with your customers has never been more important. Keep in mind, “it takes 5X more effort to acquire a new customer than to keep an existing one.”<sup>8</sup>

## The benefits of outsourcing mail

Now is the perfect time to outsource your mail. Solutions like Quadient Impress enable you to modernize your document process by offering multi-channel delivery, letting you communicate with customers in the way they prefer with personalized and targeted messaging. Quadient handles the processing and delivery of your customer communications, while employees manage the business rules and prep conveniently from their laptops. Employees upload invoices, statements, EOBs, etc. via a user-friendly SaaS application, and then a secure certified mail production facility handles the rest. Mail is printed, sorted, stuffed, metered, and delivered to the post office or may be delivered to customers via several digital channels.

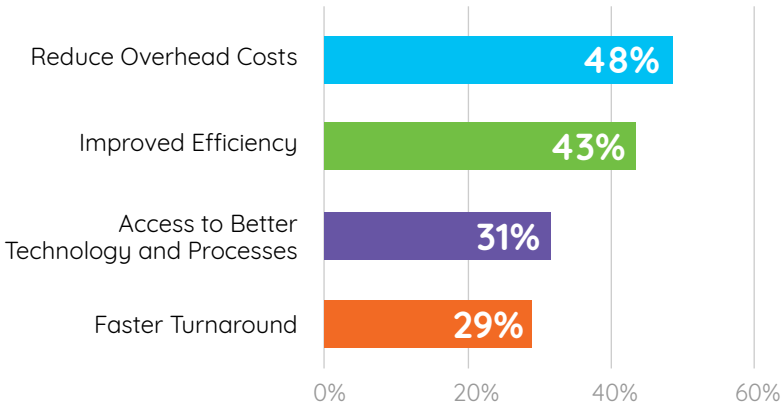
An outsourced mail model solves the conundrum of how an on-site or remote workforce can efficiently produce a mailing which in the past entailed gathering high-value employees to perform low-value manual tasks. Before mailings may have been considered too small to bother with outsourcing, but large enough to require pausing other higher-value activities to meet a communication deadline.

Among its many benefits, an outsourced mail solution enables you to:

1. Free up staff and other company resources for higher-value, revenue-generating tasks.
2. Reduce your operational inventory and production costs.
3. Accelerate customer response and payment cycles.
4. Give you the flexibility to send customer communications via multiple channels from multiple locations.
5. Improve the integrity and security of customer documents.

A digital document automation platform with modular architecture may be easily integrated into your legacy systems and allow you to evolve at your own pace. Simply put, outsourcing outbound mail processes will save time, reduce costs, and, reduce the risk of human error.

Cost-cutting and efficiency were cited as the top decision factors for outsourcing document processes in the InfoTrends Mailing Technology and E-Delivery Adoption Survey. Respondents who employ this strategy, as a part of their mailing process prior to 2020, stated the following top four reasons they decided upon this service:



Source: Mail Technology & E-Delivery Adoption Study, Keypoint Intelligence/InfoTrends, July 2018

Based on findings from the same study, of those organizations that implemented outsourced mail as part of their customer communications strategy, 76% stated they were unlikely to bring that function back in house<sup>7</sup>. Some customers who implemented this service saw a return on investment in as little as six months.

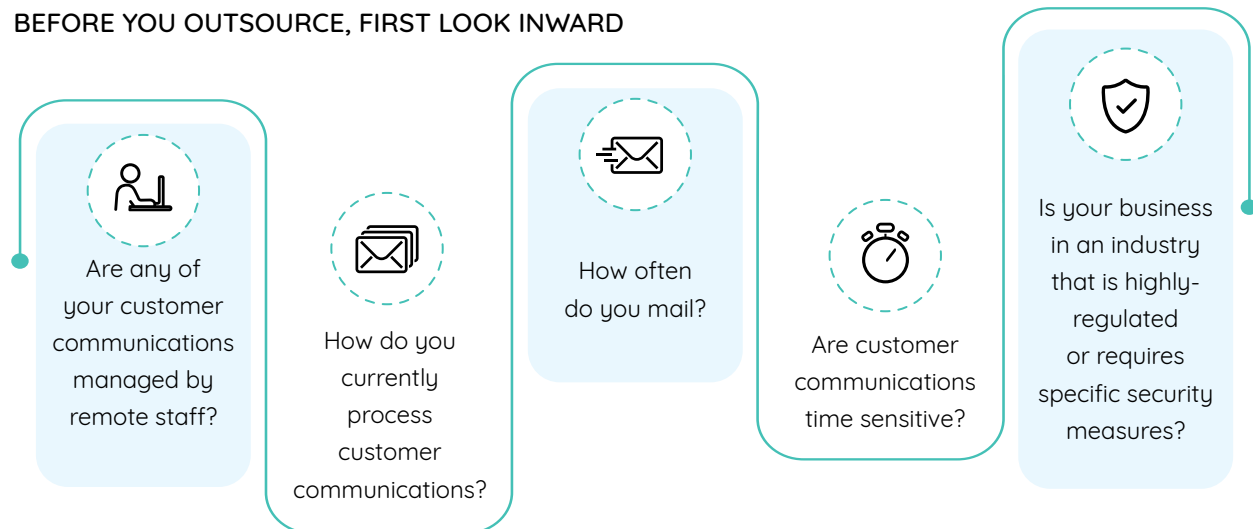
“ IN THE PAST, IT WOULD TAKE FIVE VOLUNTEERS TWO FULL DAYS TO PREPARE DIRECT MAIL TO GO TO 4,500 DONORS. NOW WE CAN PREPARE MAIL IN UNDER AN HOUR. ”

~ Irene Timmons, Head of Fundraising, Make-a-Wish Foundation

# Could your business benefit from outsourcing mailing operations?

We're not suggesting that the decision to implement remote fulfillment be made lightly. You should examine the needs of your particular business first and see if the below scenarios resonate with your current situation.

## BEFORE YOU OUTSOURCE, FIRST LOOK INWARD



### Are any of your customer communications managed by remote staff?

If your employees are or need to work remotely, it's unrealistic to think you can supply them with the necessary equipment and materials. Mailing equipment such as printers, mailing machines, folder inserters, and supplies such as paper and ink stock take up a lot of square footage and costs in terms of replenishing supplies and maintaining equipment.

**How do you currently process customer communications?** Is any part of your process automated or are mailings managed manually by your employees? If you are now operating with a leaner team, your employees likely do not have the bandwidth to complete the required tasks or are sacrificing their core duties to manage mail. Are there other higher value tasks they could be doing?

**How often do you mail?** Does your team perform several large monthly or quarterly mailings? Do they send single documents or perform large batch mailings? Do you send similar documents over and over again, with minor updates? When you understand the frequency of your mailings and business rules, such as exception documents or those that may require special attention, you are better able to estimate how much time could potentially be freed up with an outsourced mail solution. On a related note, are you able to take advantage of volume discounts for postage under your current volumes?

**Are communications time-sensitive?** Do your documents require a quick turnaround? For instance, if there is a delay in invoice processing, revenue won't come in when needed. With an outsourced mail solution, there is no need to postpone mailings until you achieve critical mass. Invoices may be sent as they are produced.

**Is your business in a highly-regulated industry or requires specific security measures?**

Documents processed by businesses in highly-regulated verticals like finance, insurance, and healthcare require extra care. What process do you have in place to track and report on mailings to ensure accuracy? Your mailing partner's document automation platform and mail production facilities should meet strict industry standards and adhere to the latest best practices for compliance, corporate, and social responsibility.

In addition to providing these security measures, a mail services provider should offer full tracking and visibility into your mailings giving you access to real-time updates.

## It doesn't have to be all or nothing

Once you have evaluated your customer communication workflow you may decide that your company would benefit from processing some of your outgoing mail off-site, and some through an outsourced provider

"That was the right approach for a customer, who provides administrative services for nursing homes at 50 different locations," says Jason Little, Major Account Executive, Quadient. The customer brings in documents from multiple locations into a single platform. With just a few clicks, the job is ready to be processed and employees move on to other higher-value tasks.



THE CUSTOMER SAW VALUE IN OUTSOURCING AND CENTRALIZING THE MAIL STREAM FOR THEIR INVOICING PROCESS WHICH IS ESSENTIAL FOR GENERATING CASH FLOW BUT RETAINED THEIR MAILING HARDWARE FOR SMALLER MAILINGS. OUR CLIENT HAS BEEN ABLE TO SAVE A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF TIME BY OUTSOURCING A PORTION OF THEIR OUTBOUND MAILING.

~ Jason Little, Major Account Executive, Quadient



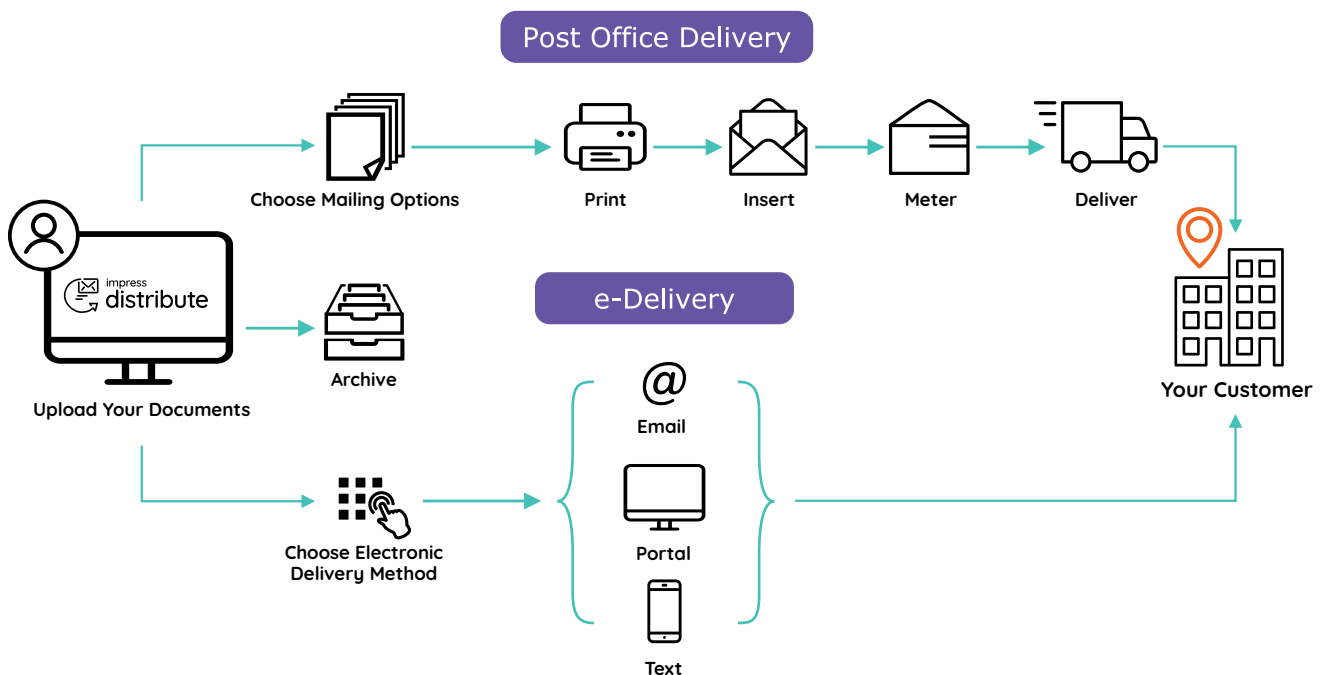
Note that the best customer communication strategy for your company can change over time, so you should revisit the subject regularly to ensure you're staying on track.



# Distribute, track and archive all print and digital communications with one application

Impress Distribute is a multi-channel outsourced mail solution. The cloud-based application reduces the preparation and delivery of your business communications to just a few clicks. Send one, ten, or thousands of documents, directly from your computer in minutes. Print, sort, stuff, meter and deliver mail to the post office without leaving your desk. Users may also select digital delivery such as a secure branded customer portal, tracked email, or SMS text.

Impress Distribute guides you through the process for both printed and digital communications. Upload documents to the user-friendly platform for Quadiant's certified production facility to handle the rest.



Impress Distribute includes powerful features that make managing jobs even easier. Assign user roles and permissions, manage cost centers, and set-up document approval requirements all within one easy-to-navigate application. Frequent mailings may also be saved as presets to save time and reduce future prep to just a few clicks.

Track distribution status and history in real-time with Impress Distribute's user-friendly dashboard and gain full visibility over your document communication process. For physical mail, track each step of the process from print to delivery to the post office. For digital communications, see when documents have been delivered and viewed. Documents are archived in a secure environment and may be stored for up to 11 years.



## The future of work is here

The way many businesses operate changed in a very short time and it looks like that model is here to stay. In this new business environment, agility is key. Consider employing a solution that provides you with the flexibility to send and prepare communications in multiple ways as well as the agility change quickly as needed. An outsourced mail services provider will combine operational expertise, knowledge of postal regulatory requirements, and innovative, efficient digital automation technology. Quadient will work with you to develop a cost-effective, flexible and scalable solution that will keep your business-critical communications flowing.

**Sources:**

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**About Quadient®**

Quadient is the driving force behind the world's most meaningful customer experiences. By focusing on three key solution areas including Intelligent Communication Automation, Parcel Locker Solutions and Mail-Related Solutions, Quadient helps simplify the connection between people and what matters. Quadient supports hundreds of thousands of customers worldwide in their quest to create relevant, personalized connections and achieve customer experience excellence. Quadient is listed in compartment B of Euronext Paris (QDT) and is part of the CAC® Mid & Small and EnterNext® Tech 40 indices.

For more information about Quadient, visit [quadient.com](https://www.quadient.com).

