



Observer Standard Newspapers

Ad Finder - highly innovative e-vouchering application for a large regional newspaper group, saving thousands of pounds per year on reduced postage costs.

The Observer Standard Newspaper group (OSN) was established 15 years ago and today produces one paid-for and 13 free newspaper editions across Warwickshire, Worcestershire and the West Midlands.

As a newspaper group they generate a significant amount of their revenue through advertising, and an important part of the overall process is providing each advertiser with their 'voucher copy' which is the physical proof their advert has appeared in the correct publication and position with the right details, at the right time.

"The voucher copy system is in use throughout the newspaper publishing industry, but mailing out a copy to every single advertiser creates a very large postage bill over the course of a year," explained John Clegg, production and IT director at Observer Standard Newspapers.

In the case of OSN this came to approximately half the total annual postage budget for the entire business, so was frequently of interest for management as a target area for cost savings.

"Finding a way to replace voucher copy mailings with an electronic or web-based solution has been seen as an opportunity within the industry for some time," said Clegg.

"Various software businesses have looked into the problem, but until recently there hasn't been anything which has actually solved the key technical challenges such as image quality, download speed and search capabilities."

e-vouchering

e-vouchering was an avenue OSN were keen to explore, not only to cut the postage bill but also to integrate the vouchering with other aspects of the advertising, production and billing process that were already managed using IT systems.

"This is a difficult technical challenge, as the ideal solution needs to be able to do more than transmit page images to our advertisers – it also has to allow them to search within the newspapers for their adverts," said Clegg.

"At the time we were aware of some systems in development which were trying to manage e-vouchering by using order numbers which customers would use to look up their advert via a website. We found these didn't suit our requirements because order numbers do not necessarily locate the advert in question accurately."

OSN began working with Birmingham based Folding Space, who were able to offer expertise and product development skills across the areas of image management together with search and retrieval capabilities through their successful Content Finder technology.

OBSERVER STANDARD NEWSPAPERS

www.observerstandard.com



Observer Standard Newspapers.
Great Content.
For A Good Read... Guaranteed.





Publication	Instances	Date	Page	View PDF
Warwick Gazette	10	19-10-2004	003	
Coventry Observer	3	30-09-2004	025	
Warwick Gazette	3	09-11-2004	004	
Worcester Standard	2	09-12-2004	026	
Stafford Observer	2	25-11-2004	007	
Redditch Standard	2	05-11-2004	107	

Editorial Finder

Finding within the archives

Previously, OSN had pioneered a very successful newspaper editorial 'search & retrieval' application with Folding Space, enabling OSN staff and the public to search throughout their newspaper archives online (i.e. back issues) to find articles and features of interest.

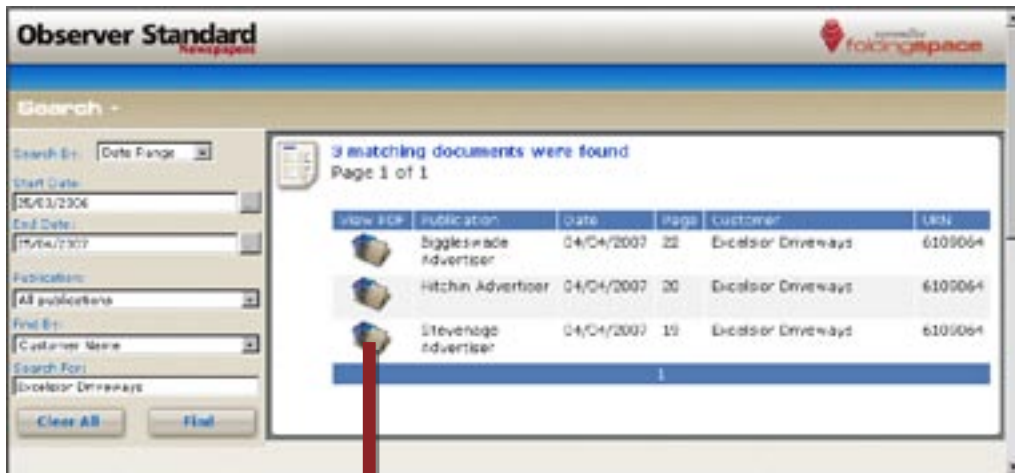
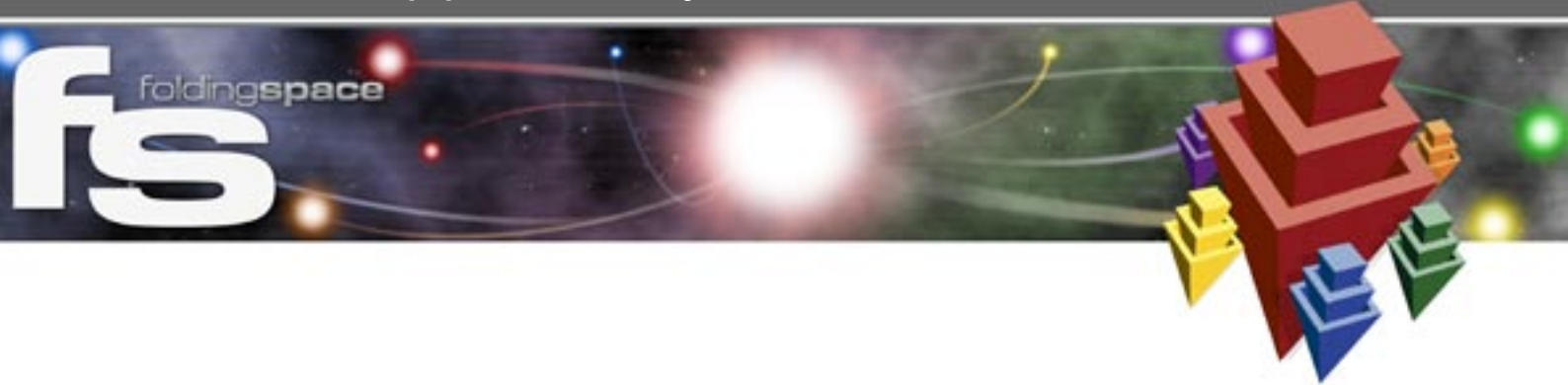
Technical achievements

In the course of project development, Folding Space were able to make a number of technical breakthroughs including the provision of optimised pdf images of newspaper pages instead of JPEGs - PDFs offering much lower file sizes and therefore easier for customers to download. This was achieved through the removal of unnecessary 'noise' data and the use of new compression techniques, and the final optimised pages suffer no reduction in visible print quality compared to the original. "Even with these efforts, some PDFs can remain up to 25 MB in size, which highlights the size of the original problem of using pdf files in their original form," explained Clegg.

OSN operates a database which records all of the relevant details about each advertisement, including date, advertiser name, publication, page position, etc. The Folding Space technology extracts key aspects of this data into a specific file format which is then used for search requests. As new pages are added to the database from each publication, another Folding Space application looks for these new files (in the form of PDF documents), compresses them and puts them aside for processing into searchable data.

Each result is displayed as a pdf.

A key aspect of the development was the search and retrieval capability, allowing users to locate their advert using relevant keywords such as customer name, the date when the advert appeared or even the order number.



Ad Finder



Each result is displayed as a pdf.

"The order number element illustrates why we also needed integration capabilities as part of the installation process in order to link systems from within the production and finance departments, where order numbers are generated and processed, and also used to complete the invoicing process with the customer," said Clegg.

The result is a rapid, accurate and extremely powerful search and retrieval interface, available via each of the individual newspaper websites. Users can search for specific keywords across individual publications or the entire group, and results are displayed immediately with a link to a PDF page of the publication in question.

"One of the most powerful features is how Folding Space can index and retrieve copy across all the different font types and styles, as well as in normal newspaper text," said Clegg. "A search for 'Excelsior Driveways', for example will take the user straight a list of all the advertisements they have placed by date and publication, with a link to each."

Since recently rolling out the new service, OSN have reported a significant reduction in their postage expenses as they replace printed voucher copies with the use of the website.

"We certainly feel we have the best page search service available," said Clegg. "It's already providing the cost savings we had anticipated and is proving such as powerful search tool that even our own journalists use it as the best way of finding articles from past issues of each publication."



Folding Space

Folding Space software technology enables users to find, identify, discover, retrieve and manage all the folders, files, programs, documents, emails, images, scans and records across their network. Also, to create, collaborate and route files, documents, records, forms and dynamic data across the network via automated workflows and business processes.

This technology is manifested in a number of complementary software products and applications which can also be treated as software 'modules' or 'aspects' that can be assembled and customized into new products, applications and niche solutions upon demand.

Folding Space has developed an 'intelligent software' technology IPR that is truly unique – **sybiotic indexing** via **distributed computing** allied to a breakthrough in the concept of **intelligent, self aware documents** and **business process automation ('sybiotic intelligence')**.

This world class technology and the resulting products and applications are demonstrably superior to anything comparable providing significant and sustainable competitive edge, both in terms of cost of purchase and cost of ownership.

Folding Space products and applications address various parallel and complementary IT areas:

- o Business process management
- o Document/Records management
- o Document & Email search & retrieval
- o Document & Email Archiving
- o Document de-duplication
- o Document scanning
- o Document workflow management
- o Enterprise-wide intra-mail
- o Forensic document & data discovery
- o Image editing & redaction
- o Intelligent Electronic Forms
- o Metadata management
- o Program asset management
- o Website construction & content management

Products:

- Search & Retrieval
 - **Content Finder**
 - **Desktop Finder**
- Email management
 - **Exchange Finder**
 - **Exchange Archive**
 - **Message & Search Manager**
- Records management
 - **Image Viewer**
 - **Scan Manager**
- Metadata management
 - **Image Tagger**
 - **Document Tagger**
 - **Metadata Manager**
 - **Taxonomy Manager**
 - **Process Manager**
- Document management
 - **Document Workflow Manager**
- Content management
 - **Site Manager**