FIRST DATA SIMPLIFIES OPERATIONS AND TACKLES GROWTH WITH DATACARD® DX5100™ CARD DELIVERY SYSTEMS

CHALLENGE: To increase efficiency, reduce errors and grow business in its card production facility, First Data needed an innovative technology partner to automate its time-consuming, manual card carrier sorting and vertical card affixing processes for its 3.5 million card packages per month.

SOLUTION: Entrust Datacard stood out among the field of competitors for their expertise and willingness to customize the stand-alone Datacard® DX5100™ Card Delivery System to meet First Data’s operational and business needs.

RESULTS:

• Efficient, automated card carrier sorting and vertical card affixing process that reduced labor costs by 15 percent*

• New card delivery systems run 40 percent of jobs for First Data*

Addressing Pain Points

First Data produces millions of payment cards per month for financial card issuers at its two U.S. card production facilities in Nebraska and Virginia. As an equipment and solution partner to First Data for 30 years, Entrust Datacard had a unique understanding of the pain points around its manual sorting and vertical card affixing processes.

First Data operates with a stand-alone card delivery model. The production process for 3.5 million carriers per month included three separate steps; card personalization, card carrier attachment and folding and envelope inserting. In order to maximize each step of the process, First Data production teams sorted, batched and/or segmented, starting at the vault all the way to the envelope inserting process. Employees had to manually sort or “tag” card carriers for special handling or automated inserting and then walk them to the appropriate area to fulfill that job requirement. The manual sorting process was especially time consuming.

* Results depend on many factors and may vary.
In addition, First Data experienced an increase in demand for vertical payment cards — a growing trend that helps financial issuers stand out from the traditional horizontal format. However, meeting this customer need by affixing vertical cards to card carriers created an additional manual process that added time, labor and complexity to operations.

First Data asked a variety of card production equipment providers to offer an automated solution, which led to a request for information (RFI) followed by a request for proposal (RFP). The Entrust Datacard RFP clearly stood out — offering unique customized features that would automate card carrier sorting and allow for vertical card affixing.

**Custom was Key**

As the engine for the solution, First Data purchased six stand-alone DX5100 Card Delivery Systems. First Data personalizes cards on its existing Datacard® MX Card Issuance Systems and fulfills its mailings on the DX5100 systems. To ensure card integrity, the DX5100 systems have the ability to automatically validate that the chip is operational at the beginning of the card attachment and folding process. The streamlined process allows for a single line of data for both card personalization and card delivery. It also provides continuity for data setups and file names, resulting in increased data security and reduced IT formatting moving forward.

To complement the DX systems, Entrust Datacard designed a custom card carrier sorter module and a vertical card placement feature. The card carrier sorter module automatically sorts and separates the card carriers after folding. With the system in place, First Data is able to increase the batch sizes all the way back to the vault and automate the card carrier sorting process prior to envelope insertion.

The new card carrier sorter module is comprised of four output bins per module, stacking the finished card carrier on the short edge of the fold to save valuable space. This drives larger batch sizes and higher system uptime efficiency. In addition it allows them to make rush pulls and segment-specialized carriers for manual packaging.

The new vertical card placement feature enables First Data to support the growth of vertical card designs without negatively impacting operations. With this customized full card-to-envelope solution, First Data benefits from a seamless, automated and efficient process.

After the solution was installed, Entrust Datacard provided field support services to train First Data operators to use the new card delivery systems and features. Additionally, the team conducted training to help First Data quickly address any break/fix incidents to maintain productivity levels. Entrust Datacard field technician support is always available should any issues arise.

Ken Kavalec Vice President, Plastics Operations at First Data stated, “Our operators are very happy with the design, ergonomics and features of this solution. Entrust Datacard’s dedication to making everything work in our production environment resulted in a smooth transition.”

**Equipped for the Future**

While the various card delivery production processes are still performed on stand-alone equipment at First Data, card carrier sorting and vertical card affixing are now automated and far more efficient. Labor costs are reduced by 15 percent with the elimination of manual tagging processes. First Data has been able to increase batch sizes with the new flexibility to segment and sort card carriers prior to envelope insertion — and to attach cards in either direction.

First Data currently runs approximately 40 percent of its jobs on the customized DX5100 systems. Discussions are underway to further enhance the systems to accommodate an even greater portion of First Data’s work.

**A Successful Partnership**

“Entrust Datacard provided a creative solution to our back-end card delivery issues. They were responsive, dedicated and supportive, and they have extensive experience in our business.”

Ken Kavalec
Vice President,
Plastics Operations at First Data

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**About Entrust Datacard Corporation**

Consumers, citizens and employees increasingly expect anywhere-anytime experiences — whether they are making purchases, crossing borders, accessing e-gov services or logging onto corporate networks. Entrust Datacard offers the trusted identity and secure transaction technologies that make those experiences reliable and secure. Solutions range from the physical world of financial cards, passports and ID cards to the digital realm of authentication, certificates and secure communications. With more than 2,000 Entrust Datacard colleagues around the world, and a network of strong global partners, the company serves customers in 150 countries worldwide.

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