

Horizon Industries 'Empowers Blind Americans' with Advanced ECM Technologies, SmartSearch Used Across 95% of Departments to Simplify Daily Processes

'Empowering Blind Americans since 1976', Horizon Industries is a non-profit manufacturing company specializing in the converting of raw materials for distribution to federal agencies and military bases across the United States. The ISO-certified distributor employs a highly responsive, customer-focused workforce, with 50% of employees identified as legally blind or visually impaired. Horizon's library of products includes a collection of industrial wiping towels for equipment cleaning and spills, as well as a variety of paracord for multiple purposes in the field.

Horizon employees are accustomed to fulfilling substantially-sized orders from their massive 92,000 square foot facility. The manufacturing company has been converting paper products into industrial wipers for over 25 years and is the largest converter for the federal government. In one year's time, Horizon converted 318 tons of submarine trash disposal weights for the U.S. Navy, shipped over 23,000 miles of parachute cord and 4.9 million pounds of industrial wipers to their government customers.

Processing these bulky, paper-intensive sales orders proved extremely time-consuming for the busy facility who needed a streamlined, digital solution to improve document accessibility and organization. These areas of inefficiency needed immediate attention as Horizon Industries prepares to branch their services out to all consumers, including non-governmental commercial accounts.

Although records were stored in both paper and digital versions, Horizon struggled most with finding filed documents. Too much time was wasted searching through file cabinets and even their electronic documents were stored as non-searchable PDFs, scanned into the network via the company's copier machines.

Fortunately, the open architecture of Square 9's SmartSearch Document Management software proved the most effective solution for Horizon's storage woes. With a 20 user

Corporate Edition in place, the majority of Horizon's departments are currently using SmartSearch to simplify the scanning, indexing and collaboration of documents from Human Resources to Accounting, Purchasing, Shipping and even IT.



95%
use across
departments

Snapshot

Market:

Non-Profit Distribution Center

Departments Impacted:

Human Resources, Accounting, IT, Purchasing, Shipping & Distribution

Featured Products:

SmartSearch, Content Search, SmartCapture

Objectives:

To implement an ISO compliant document management solution that will reduce storage requirements and accelerate document retrieval by making PDF files text-searchable

Best of all, SmartSearch Corporate Edition comes standard with Square 9's Content Search, allowing the ability to add a text-searchable layer to stored documents, including PDFs. Content Search can be applied to any SmartSearch Archive so that employees can easily and immediately find the documents they need to keep business moving and customer service levels high. Now Horizon employees have the power to search beyond a document's title and locate files based on body text.



**+12 GB of
documents
stored**

With SmartSearch, Horizon has saved 12 GB of storage space and that number continues to grow at a rate of 3.33 GB per year, equaling about 10,000 documents annually. In addition, SmartSearch has streamlined workflow to save Horizon operating costs. By implementing an improved scanning process for completed orders, Horizon has drastically reduced scanning labor to repurpose about 110 work hours per year for each employee.



**+100 hours
saved yearly
per employee**

Horizon Industries, a division of East Texas Lighthouse for the Blind, was created with the mission to 'Empower Blind Americans' through rehabilitation, education, training and employment. Every product purchased helps support Horizon's mission. To learn more, please visit www.horizonind.com.

Interview: Lindsey Dengler IT Manager, Horizon Industries

Q. What challenges influenced you to explore SmartSearch document management?

Lindsey Dengler: What initially led us down the path to SmartSearch was the solution's ease of use and the ability for us to have text-searchable PDFs. Previously our documents were stored both as paper files and digitally, however they were not easily searchable. Looking through filing cabinets was inefficient and time-consuming, as was searching for a PDF scanned onto the network through our copier machines. Previously, a PO would be scanned three separate times by Purchasing, Receiving and Accounting before being filed away.

Q. How have processes changed since implementing SmartSearch?

Dengler: Almost every department is currently using SmartSearch including HR, Accounting, Shipping, IT and more. Administrative tasks are being completed at a faster rate and employee time has been repurposed beyond scanning for more useful tasks. In addition, SmartSearch has allowed us to create an improved scanning process for completed orders that saves close to a month every year in time for each employee. Our previous order scanning process took over 200 hours a year; almost 10% of the work year for an employee. The new process takes less than 90 hours a year at most, or 4% of the work year. Plus, SmartSearch has helped reduce paperwork in our Purchasing and Receiving departments, where a PO would be scanned three times previously. Now, each PO is scanned only once, allowing for much better traceability with correspondence and receiving documents, including vendor invoices.

Already we would recommend SmartSearch, especially from a customer service standpoint. The information on the Square 9 website and the support of their sales team has been great. Since the implementation of SmartSearch into our order entry and scanning process, we have saved over 12 gigabytes of storage space and are still saving space at a rate of 3.33 gigabytes per year.



“**Square 9 offers interesting and effective document management features that aren't specific to one type of organization. Any company can utilize SmartSearch and benefit from Square 9's support.**”

— Lindsey Dengler

Q. In what ways has Square 9's product suite improved business performance?

Dengler: SmartSearch has greatly improved business efficiency and has streamlined our workflow. Employees no longer need to thumb through files and look for every non-searchable PDF, saving us time, which in return, saves us money. There have been obvious improvements in ease of retrieval and document organization. Additionally, the Content Search functionality has allowed all departments that use SmartSearch to become more efficient in researching issues and questions to provide quicker responses for better internal and external customer service.

Q. Do you plan on extending your use of SmartSearch?

Dengler: We're in the very beginning of a new discovery phase, which brings us to our next steps. Three employees will be training at Square 9's headquarters in Connecticut so that we can see SmartSearch worked by the Square 9 experts and learn more about where SmartSearch can take us. We want to utilize as many features as we can! We want to see what we have, the tools in place and how we can benefit from expanding our implementation. The plan is to eventually expand our use of functionalities department-wide to be operating at 100% with the SmartSearch solution.