



CASE STUDY

TELUS Leverages SAP 'Backbone' with Captaris RightFax Enterprise Fax

"(RightFax and SAP Connector) has made TELUS employees more productive and efficient in internal faxing and communication." —Brian Barton, TELUS

BACKGROUND

TELUS (TSX: T, T.A; NYSE: TU; www.telus.com) is the largest telecommunications company in western Canada and the second largest in the country. It provides a full range of communications products and services for millions of Canadians at home, in their workplace and on the move. These services include data, Internet Protocol, voice and wireless services. With approximately 25,000 employees, TELUS maintains headquarters in British Columbia (BC) and offices in Alberta, Ontario and Quebec.

THE CHALLENGE

Maintaining the second largest telecommunications company in the world's second largest country is no small feat. It requires consistent communication within the organization and with thousands of customers, suppliers and other contacts.

When TELUS acquired BCTel in the 1990s, it took on the complex task of merging the two companies and their respective personnel and technology solutions. TELUS in Alberta had realized productivity gains using Captaris RightFax network faxing capabilities to send numerous faxes on a daily basis to customers, suppliers, vendors, etc. Staff in BC employed a competing fax solution to handle much of its fax load. With the merger, TELUS managers wanted to standardize all office locations and users on one electronic document delivery platform that would also leverage other existing, business-critical solutions.

Specifically, TELUS planned to integrate with its SAP Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system, a solution from the world's largest inter-enterprise software company. SAP ERP systems integrate an organization from financials and human resources to manufacturing and sales and distribution. This integration enables companies to optimize supply chains, strengthen customer relationships and make more accurate management decisions.

According to Brian Barton, a Systems Analyst with TELUS, SAP is a comprehensive application that has virtually become "the very backbone of TELUS." He explains, "Along with other departments, all of our financial and human resources professionals use SAP. We almost run the company exclusively on the solution."

For TELUS, the SAP and RightFax servers were both housed in Alberta. But the main user group that needed access and faxing was located in BC—namely, the financial department. Sending purchase orders, invoices and other time-sensitive documents via fax is a daily task for employees in the financial department. Thus TELUS felt standardizing the company on a fax server that could capture and deliver data from SAP would streamline communication while increasing the speed with which information is exchanged.

At TELUS, fax communication alone amounts to several thousand faxes, as much as 12,000 outbound faxes per month and a similar—but untracked—amount for inbound faxes.

Without a reliable, SAP-friendly enterprise solution, TELUS could face productivity and cost-efficiency challenges with a fully manual process of handling inbound and outbound faxes. For instance, to send a fax, employees would have to print the document and take it to the fax machine for transmittal. This busy work, not to mention the numerous stand-alone fax machines across an organization, can add up to wasted time and expensive machine maintenance.

THE SOLUTION

Sometimes mergers are surprisingly easy. Such was the case for TELUS as it implemented Captaris RightFax and RightFax SAP Connector. RightFax provides high-volume e-document delivery via fax, email or the Internet. SAP Connector, a RightFax Universal Information Exchange solution, offers TELUS a cost-effective, secure way to automate the exchange of information from SAP applications.

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"There are many benefits to faxing via SAP and RightFax," Barton said. "It has made TELUS employees more productive and efficient in internal faxing and communication."

He continued, "RightFax has been wonderful in certain areas, especially for employees using SAP. If the integrated solution is ever unavailable for some reason, our SAP folks are at a loss."

Although TELUS has not conducted specific productivity studies, Barton points to substantial time savings simply by comparing RightFax with the pitfalls of manual faxing: "If you don't have to get out of your chair to go to a fax machine," Barton explained, "you save the paper costs, travel time and you're less likely to be distracted. For instance, you don't see 'Mary' at the fax machine and end up staying for a chat."

While, due mainly to budgetary constraints, TELUS has focused RightFax use on internal communication and outbound faxing, it plans to utilize the power of inbound faxing and business-to-business communication. "With what I have seen from RightFax," Barton said, "I would have to believe it enhances and streamlines business-to-business communication and also positively affects the 'bottom line'."

With Barton's direction, TELUS ran a limited pilot for inbound faxing with RightFax. Barton recounted, "RightFax worked great." Users were able to receive faxes within their email programs directly at their desktops. Unfortunately, during the pilot, TELUS was hit by viruses that affected the fax server and other programs. While it would not have been difficult to reconfigure, Barton said the company decided to hold off until related programs were upgraded and a resurgence of the slow economy appeared.

"We spend a fair dollar on stand-alone, manual fax machines," Barton said. "Once in full use, RightFax should help us save close to a quarter million annually. We look forward to those type of savings."

With the help from RightFax and integrated solutions, TELUS also plans to reduce paper heavy processes. When users need to handle hard copy documents, Barton explained, they are accustomed to using manual fax machines. Since RightFax integrates with imaging and scanning solutions, he said a paperless solution should be relatively simple. In fact, TELUS has already worked up a solution that will be a priority when additional funds are available.

Even before imaging and scanning products are in place, Barton reports various TELUS employees—even those who are somewhat reticent to try newer technologies—are realizing the efficiency of RightFax. He said: "When users go to the TELUS procurement team with a request for a fax machine the procurement staff always come back and say, 'Use RightFax.'"

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Captaris Business Information Delivery solutions help organizations of all sizes automate the information and document flow throughout the information lifecycle (capture, process, archive, deliver). With a comprehensive suite of software and services, Captaris helps organizations to grow revenues and increase profits while meeting compliance goals. Through a global distribution network of leading enterprise technology partners, Captaris has installed more than 90,000 systems in 95 countries in companies of all sizes, including the entire Fortune 100. For more information, visit www.captaris.com or call 1.800.443.0806.

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