

ACCO Brands case study

Office products giant adds bar codes to its legacy

You may not be familiar with ACCO Brands, but you probably use the company's products at work every day. ACCO Brands is one of the world's largest suppliers of office products. Its brands include Swingline staplers, punches and shredders, Day-Timer organizers, Wilson Jones binders, Kensington mobile technology products, and many more. The company uses bar code shipping labels to get its products to you and other customers in more than 100 countries. But when ACCO Brands wanted to add bar codes to its packing slips and other documents, the company's print server-based labeling software could no longer meet all its bar code output needs.

The task of bar code enabling legacy documents fell to Samson Joy, ACCO Brands' Oracle applications database administrator. ACCO wanted to include bar codes on documents generated by the company's Oracle® 11i enterprise software applications, so full Oracle compatibility and ease of integration into the environment were major requirements. Joy also wanted a solution that wouldn't require additional hardware and could output bar codes on the company's legacy Lexmark and Xerox document printers.

It didn't take Joy long to realize Unibar was the best fit for its printing needs and IT infrastructure. And it took even less time to have Unibar's BARZ_OUT PRO installed, configured and integrated with the Oracle system to output bar codes on packing lists and other documents.

"I researched options online and went with Unibar," says Joy. "BARZ_OUT PRO was easy to configure, it's easy to use, and we didn't need any tech support."

Unibar is a leading provider of software for bar code and radio frequency identification (RFID) printing from UNIX, Linux and Oracle environments. Unibar is a member of the Oracle Partner Network, and a Star Partner in the Oracle Applications Users Group (OAUG).

BARZ_OUT PRO provides PostScript conversion so any PostScript-compatible printer can output bar codes from any version of UNIX or Linux without additional drivers, fonts, middleware or programming. BARZ_OUT PRO automatically converts text trigger sequences into PostScript-compatible bar codes. It supports the CUPS (Common UNIX Printing System) standard and the Internet Printing Protocol (IPP) to provide advanced output management, networking, printer discovery and remote configuration features.

The software also includes many other features to simplify bar code design and output. Users can add two- and five-digit supplements for U.P.C. symbols that companies to specify issue numbers and suggested retail pricing, encode UCC.EAN application identifiers, rotate bar codes, produce 2D symbologies, and use XML-style bar code triggers. The functionality is now available by subscription as software-as-a-service (SAAS) for organizations that prefer not to purchase or maintain software.

BARZ_OUT PRO met all ACCO Products' requirements for integration and output supports, and now meets the company's high expectations for convenience and dependability. ACCO Products is counting on improved supply chain operations to help it profitably grow sales and expand into new markets. Reliable bar code output through BARZ_OUT PRO is supporting these goals while requiring minimal support itself.

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