

# FOOD FOR THE POOR

Food For the Poor gains efficiency with Fairfax Software's Check 21 solution.

## OVERVIEW

In 2000, FFP's manual mail handling operation became overwhelmed, especially during Holidays. FFP hired temporary help, but still couldn't get the mail processed fast enough. FFP contracted with Wausau Financial Systems, Inc. to install a scanning system based on scanlines. Although FFP was happy with that System, they realized it was not meeting all of their needs.

FFP receives a wide variety of responses to its promotional mail-outs. These responses contain everything from name and address to prayer requests. (Prayer requests involve calling the requester and offering to pray with them. This is one of the unique and important services FFP performs. In addition to its importance to the donor, faithfully answering prayer requests encourages additional support in appreciation of FFP's personal service and concern.)



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United in God's Work

FFP was not able to capture the responses that accompanied checks using the Wausau system. Anything that came in with a check was stored in boxes in a warehouse. Every time FFP was audited (once a year or more), they had to sort through all the replies in the warehouse to pull the things they needed for the audit. Storing those documents and having to go through them for each audit provided the motivation to upgrade their system.

## BENEFITS AT A GLANCE

- *Donations are deposited the same day they arrive in the mail.*
- *All keying is finished before the day is done.*
- *Incoming forms are imaged instead of being stored in boxes in a warehouse.*
- *The entire solution is provided by a single vendor – no finger pointing between vendors.*
- *Audits are quick and painless with no hunting through boxes for documents.*
- *Food For the Poor (FFP) can create their own data-capture forms to support all of their promotional mail-outs.*

## SOLUTION PROCESS

All mail is opened and scanned using Opex mail openers. Images are processed through Fairfax Software's Quick Modules in a straightforward fashion. The most important data to capture is the check MICR and amount data (courtesy and legal amounts). For FFP, this must always be captured for all job profiles that contain checks.

Running on networked, clustered HP (NYSE:HPQ) servers, *Quick Modules* creates flat files in agreed-upon common directories that FFP's IBM (NYSE:IBM) iSeries system can access and read.

*Quick Modules* populates a local database with all the data and images needed to retrieve the data at any time downstream. The data include statistical and demographic, as well as amount and index values.

Prayer requests are scanned and saved during data capture. Quick Modules enables special users to retrieve these important requests on-line so that they can call the donor and offer to pray with them. A flag is cleared by the special user when a prayer request is completed to prevent duplication.

*Quick Modules* Check 21 functionality processes check images and creates a 9.37 file for Wachovia Bank (NYSE:WB). Deposits can be made several times per day when volume makes it necessary.

FFP recently added *Quick Config*, another module of *Quick Modules* that enables FFP to create their own data capture forms. These are incorporated into their promotional mail-outs.

## RESULTS

FFP (Food For The Poor) is currently in the initial stages of transitioning to a new system, and while it's too early to quantify the savings, they anticipate substantial benefits, particularly with Check 21 technology. As an increasing number of banks adopt this method, FFP recognizes its potential for long-term cost reduction. Insights gained at a recent TAWPI Conference indicate that while Check 21 may not currently be the most cost-effective check-processing method, it is projected to become increasingly economical in the not to distant future.

Already, FFP has begun to realize savings through its partnership with Wachovia, which has actively collaborated with FFP to ensure a smooth integration process. Looking ahead, FFP foresees these savings continuing to grow. By streamlining deposit processes and leveraging innovative banking solutions, FFP is poised to enhance efficiency and maximize financial returns.

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## ABOUT FAIRFAX SOFTWARE

Since its establishment in 1994, Fairfax Software has grown its footprint with offices across the Globe. At the heart of its offerings is *Quick Modules*, a proprietary processing software renowned for its excellence. This award-winning solution provides a robust platform for fax, forms, and remittance processing, catering to diverse industries.

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