



In the world of medicine, reproducing medical records is a time-consuming task. Patients who need swift medical attention often need records sent to doctors in other states or even other countries at a moment's notice. The inability to provide this service on demand can mean a possible delay in treatment.

John Smart, president and chairman of Smart Corporation, headquartered in Atlanta, Ga., founded his company on the need for medical records. In May 1976, John went to the hospital with a friend to retrieve a copy of the friend's medical records. When they were told there was a four-month backlog, John brought a copier to the hospital, copied the records himself, and Smart Corporation was born.



**John Smart, President and  
Chairman, Smart Corporation**

Medical Record Provider Finds Favor in Digital Technology

# Smart Corporation

- *Digital printing offers increased customer response time*
- *Improved efficiency and operating performance*
- *Streamlined production processes and new market opportunities*

Today, Smart's 2,500 employees provide Release of Information (ROI) services to over 5,700 hospitals, clinics, healthcare facilities, and insurance companies.

### The Digital Revolution

Smart used its early system of field reps and portable copiers for over two decades. When a medical record was requested, representatives went to the record-holding facility, copied the record, created an invoice and bill, generated a transmittal letter, and mailed the records from the post office.

"We have representatives in 46 states coast-to-coast, and records could go anywhere, even to other countries," explained Tom Brown, COO of Smart Corporation. "Many representative carried a 38-pound photocopier to each facility."

Recognizing the potential benefits of the Internet and E-business, Smart embraced new digital

technologies and began to implement a new, automated digital production process for retrieval as well as storage. If the company could capture information through a data center and then print it, medical records would be immediately available to requesters on demand. What's more, as 1800 representatives were previously calculating invoices, and billing rates independently, there was variation from state-to state. The new digital process had to reduce costs, and improve quality control and response times. It also had to open new business opportunities.

"With so many representatives photocopying records and producing invoices, we had too many independent operations out there, we had to streamline," said John Smart, president and chairman of Smart Corp. "Going digital would help us standardize what we capture in an orderly fashion."

### The Best Solution

Smart Corp. sought a digital solution that would let representatives take scanned, and encrypted images and send them to a central processing center. A centralized printing process would let Smart provide additional services to healthcare facilities, i.e., on-demand medical record storage and retrieval.

Daily print volumes were estimated at 21,000 medical-record packages per day— from four to 4,000 pages, depending on the request. Full conversion meant the production of about five tons of records daily.

The move to Internet processes and digital technology was a big change for Smart, but the company's management saw the benefits and wanted to team with a technology partner to move forward. Smart investigated several print vendors including IBM and Xerox. After an evaluation process, Smart selected Océ Printing Systems technology, "because it best met Smart's specifications and provided the productivity levels and quality we needed," said Brown. "Océ approached Smart as a real partner," he said. Océ looked at Smart's immediate needs and long-term goals and recommended the Prisma+POD pre-press print server and PageStream 744 printing system. Working in concert with processing partners, Océ coordinated a complete system with a streamlined finishing process.

"Océ knew that rapid input and output, and high-quality images were paramount. They provided the system and support we needed, including the ability to produce high-quality 240 and 300 dpi images," Brown explained. "Our machines have been running



“With Océ, we get the benefit of processing and printing information faster and more effectively than any competitor in the market.”

Tom Brown, COO of Smart Corporation



continuously, since we made the digital transition in November 1999.”

While Océ’s PageStream 744 printing technology allows for rapid output of the highest quality, the Prisma+POD digital print server lets Smart optimise their processes and shorten turnaround time, which means a more diverse product line and entrance into new target markets. Tailored to meet Smart’s specific needs, Prisma+POD’s open architecture permits changes in configuration as Smart expands its services. Open architecture means Prisma+POD can be used with other printing systems.

The new digital process also made workflow less cumbersome for Smart field representative—each person now carries a six-pound laptop and scanner in a case that opens to an instant workstation. At the end of the day, invoices are scanned, encrypted, compressed and transmitted to Smart’s data center, where they’re processed, stored and taken through the print/mail operation.

“We can capture, digitize and then undigitize images, and put them back in paper format using a system that’s been up and running perfectly since installation. Océ’s PageStream 744 roll-fed printing system offers



### **Benefits Digital Printing with Océ’s Prisma+POD software:**

- Uses Supreme RIP, the fastest high-end RIP on the market
- Dependable RIPping in a variety of page description languages
- Customization of printed output, such as personalized books and training materials
- Permits processing on standard paper sizes and signatures
- Customers can use the Internet or their intranet to go online to submit orders and initiate their own print jobs



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the best efficiencies, operating performance and specifications," Brown said. "With Prisma+POD, we can standardize the look and feel of the document as well as the production process. We get the benefit of doing it faster and more effectively than any competitor in the market."

**Down the Road**

For the future, Océ's Prisma+POD technology meshes with Smart's long-range goal—putting client's medical records in electronic retrieval format. This would

permit a complete move to digital and take release of information to a more individualized level.

"Shipping medical records electronically opens up a huge spectrum for us," added Smart. "Retention of a facility's medical records would let a designated user log on to the Web, see the records real time, download them and use them to the patient's benefit—and they'd be available to multiple users at one time. That's the benefit of going digital."



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