



## Case Study: The San Diego Union-Tribune

The Union-Tribune is a daily newspaper published in San Diego that has won numerous awards over the years, including several Pulitzer Prizes. It is the oldest business in the San Diego county and also the oldest newspaper in Southern California. The San Diego Union-Tribune processes payments for subscriptions, advertisements, and merchandise.

### The Situation

Like many others around the country, the original remittance operation included 2 NCR transports to scan checks and stubs. These transports created files were loaded to A/R. The physical checks had to be balanced and the staff manually created deposit slips. An armored courier would then transport the checks each day to the newspaper's bank for deposit.

The process was extremely manual. It required 10-12 full-time staff members who were forced to work a day behind due to the volume of mail received. Processed payments that arrived in the mail had been opened the previous day. They also received numerous phone calls about payment statuses. A/R also required a lot of paper work. According to a member of the staff, "Things were convoluted with lots of busy work." Because of this lengthy process, misplaced checks became a concern.

### The Solution

The San Diego Union-Tribune wanted a better, more efficient way to process received payments. Unlike everybody else, they did not go to the conventional route of upgrading their system. They conducted an extensive evaluation of options and decided not to upgrade to the latest model of stand-up transport, install the news version of check-centric software, or implement traditionally licensed, in-house software.

The San Diego Union-Tribune ended up selecting Clearingworks from US Dataworks. As the most trusted cloud payment provider in the United States, this program enabled a more efficiently scanning environment, consolidated paper and electronic payments. Since US Dataworks hosts the application, there was also a reduction in maintenance costs.

### The Benefits

#### Optimizes Costs

Consolidating web and telephone transactions on the same platform as check transactions saves money with no service impact. For web payments, the credit card processor was charging an authorization fee in addition to a deposit fee. Clearingworks was able to cut transaction costs in half. The use of this application also requires no changes on The San Diego Union-Tribune's end; there was no formatting, no extra information to transmit, and no job changes.

#### Technological Organization

Streamlined paper-based processing automates the processing and application of tips and donations on customer remittance stubs. Mark sense technology is used to detect the payments and totals are loaded into our A/R system for application. This process also automatically determines subscription length. Also, streamlined processing of check-only transaction and checks applied to multiple accounts are enabled.

#### Improves User Experience

Since US Dataworks hosts the application for The San Diego Union-Tribune, capture and correlation is completely done in the city of San Diego rather than remote locations. It also saves the publication significant up-front capital expenses for in-house servers. This also includes streamlines ongoing system maintenance and upgrade costs. Fees are paid per transaction process.

### **Increases Return on Investment**

Overall, the company had significant labor savings. It used to take 10-12 employees an entire to process payments and today, 5 people are able to complete the work in 1-2 hours with 1 person scanning documents and 4 people balancing transactions. There were also significantly reduced courier costs and lower bank deposit fees. Additionally, the company is able to respond more quickly to customer inquiries. The staff can instantly retrieve images and data. Expanding search capabilities to customer service staff and all other items are archived by US Dataworks.

### **For More Information**

For more information about US Dataworks products and services, visit our website at [www.usdataworks.com](http://www.usdataworks.com) or contact us by email at [info@usdataworks.com](mailto:info@usdataworks.com) or by phone at 888-254-8821.

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