



# **EDP Certification Handbook**

**Advice for Electronic Document Professional candidates**

**Appendices & forms**

Revised November 2013

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## **EDP Certification Program—Background**

Becoming an Electronic Document Professional (EDP) is an achievement. Certification is a testament to management, colleagues, and yourself that you possess the skills, knowledge, and understanding necessary to be a recognized leader in the electronic document profession. Regardless of whether your work is in the private sector or in government, in the capacity of a technology user or products and services manufacturer or supplier, the EDP designation will have a positive impact on your job performance, your self-esteem, and your employability.

The Electronic Document Professional Certification Program is sponsored and maintained by Xplor International which is a professional association for the electronic document industry. Xplor International is a not-for-profit association incorporated in the State of Illinois (USA) with its headquarters in Land O' Lakes, Florida. The mission of Xplor is to provide organizations and individuals with learning and networking opportunities that enhance the effective use of electronic document technology to achieve business objectives.

Xplor International is managed by the Association Board of Directors (ABOD) which is elected by its members.

EDP certification has been designed for persons employed in the electronic document industry and is administered by the EDP Commissioners, all of whom have successfully completed EDP certification.

Membership in Xplor is not required for certification or re-certification.

Eligibility for EDP certification is defined in the EDP APPLICATION FORM that includes a CODE OF ETHICS (see appendices) and is available on the website at [www.xplor.org/edp](http://www.xplor.org/edp).

Eligible candidates submit work examples to the team of evaluators to demonstrate the depth and breadth of their knowledge of the industry along with their professionalism. A summary of the criteria evaluated is given below in section C7.

The timetable of events is shown in the EDP SCHEDULE and the payment of all money is noted in EDP FEES (see appendices).

Successful candidates are invited to recertify, details of which are given in the EDP RECERTIFICATION FORM (see appendix) and is available on the website at [www.xplor.org/edp](http://www.xplor.org/edp)

In recent years, the EDP Commission has reviewed the fundamental question of what is an EDP, and how do we know one when we see one?

The answer to the first question really has three facets.

An EDP is:

- Someone who has considerable depth of knowledge in this industry

In other words, someone with skills and knowledge in some aspects of this business that exceed the skills and knowledge of most others.

- Someone who has considerable breadth of experience in the industry

In other words, someone with experience across a range of activities in this business so that they can position their expertise in the context of other activities and roles.

- Someone who is professional

And this is in two parts: someone who has sufficient skills to communicate well as judged by the professionalism of the portfolio they have submitted as well as demonstrating a degree of professionalism in aspects of their work described in the three case studies.

All this was summarized a few years ago by the observation that:

*“An EDP is someone I would want to have on my team.”*

And more recently by the observation that an EDP is someone:

*“... regarded by their peers as having extraordinary knowledge of the electronic document business and a marked degree of professionalism in dealing with people and projects.”*

In 2010, the EDP Commission adopted a new matrix to evaluate the depth and breadth of knowledge of candidates. These are further explained in item 7 under Advice to candidates.

- To determine the candidate’s level of skills required for recognition, a candidate must show a specific skill or level of in a specific step of the document production process that exceeds the skills and knowledge of most others. Skill levels include awareness; basic skill/knowledge; working skill/knowledge; advanced skill/knowledge; and expert skill/knowledge.
- To determine the candidate’s role and competency at any step in the document production journey, a candidate must demonstrate reasonable evidence of their experience.

## Advice for candidates

If you have reached the stage where you have applied to the EDP program, the chances are that you are EDP material. You simply have to document what you have already achieved in your career in a way that makes it clear to the evaluators that you are indeed an EDP. You have in fact already done the hard work.

### 1. What is the portfolio?

The certification portfolio is comprised of three parts:

- Your EDP Application Form, outlining your work experience and education
- The signed code of ethics, acknowledging your commitment to EDP professional moral standards
- Your portfolio of work examples, revealing mastery of specific industry skills as outlined in section 7 under Depth & breadth of knowledge and professionalism

Your work examples should illustrate your breadth and depth of knowledge in the developments and practices affecting the electronic document in all its life stages. A candidate must demonstrate a range of skills across various parts of the document journey from creation to distribution. More detail about the steps in the document's journey can be found at [www.xplor.org/edp](http://www.xplor.org/edp). Your work examples must apply to electronic document technologies.

### 2. EDP resources

Resources provided in this handbook include answers to *frequently asked questions* and sample *work examples*. Other resources may be found at [www.xplor.org/edp](http://www.xplor.org/edp).

### 3. Mentors

Probably the best advice offered to any candidate is to have a mentor assigned to help you with the whole process.

Anyone can help an EDP candidate with various aspects of their submission but clearly someone who is already an EDP, or even a Commissioner or past Commissioner, will have very relevant advice to pass on.

To obtain a mentor, candidates should contact Xplor International, EDP Administrator at +1-813-929-8100 to request a current list of available people. Good practice would be to locate mentors you know, have heard of, or who are geographically close. Xplor will assist in recommending mentors as necessary, and contact a mentor on behalf of candidates.

Creating a working relationship with the mentor becomes the candidate's responsibility.

#### **4. Advice before you start**

As with many things in life, an hour taken at the start considering what you are going to do is worth at least two hours later.

You need to compile three work examples, so think of five projects that you have undertaken in the past five years. Make bullet points of the various activities they entailed and your roles in each. Take time to review the projects in light of what the evaluators will be looking for—the depth and breadth of your knowledge and your degree of professionalism.

Review this list with your mentor and work with them to select the three work examples that are going to give you the best shot at demonstrating your abilities.

#### **5. Summary form**

The SUMMARY FORM is a worksheet to help candidates prepare each of their work examples. Prior to writing your work examples, you should make three copies of the form, one for each work example project. By first summarizing the essential points for each work example on the form, you organize and prepare to write an example that clearly and convincingly demonstrates your mastery of a body of knowledge skill. This may then serve as the basis of the detailed narrative comprising the body of each work example.

The items on the form include:

- Title of work example
- Name of your company
- Name of the company referred to in the work example (if different)
- Dates that the work example spanned
- Project summary (approximately 150 words)
- Project objective
- Role definition
- Your principal contributions to the project

When your work examples are completed, please attach each completed summary form to the related work example in your portfolio. A SUMMARY FORM is included in the appendix.

#### **6. Your work examples**

A good work example averages three to five pages in length including the Summary page plus any supporting documents that may be needed.

Projects on which work examples are based may include—but are not limited to—published articles, books, forms, presentations at industry gatherings, management documents, font

work, software programming and unique applications, proposals, hardware/software/systems-design implementation, consulting, and course development.

Work examples do not have to be “success stories.” They can be “failure stories” in which you gained valuable knowledge in the process. The key point is to include all the information about the choices you made and how you arrived at your decisions. Just tell the whole story in a clear and concise manner.

In an ever-changing environment, new skills come to the forefront while some technical approaches fall out of use. Only one work example may be based on a project completed more than five years ago but you are expected to show current relevancy in those cases.

Later in this Handbook there is checklist that you may find useful when compiling your work examples.

## **7. Depth & breadth of knowledge and professionalism**

In an attempt to quantify a person’s degree of knowledge of the electronic document industry, the evaluators will be looking for evidence of a candidate’s competence of various skills and roles throughout the document application lifecycle.

The candidate’s skills and roles are perceived to include:

- Requirements gathering
- Business analysis
- Technical analysis
- Stakeholder agreement
- Architecture
- Design
- Development
- Test and quality assurance
- Production
- Maintenance

The steps in the document production journey are equally wide ranging and relate to aspects such as:

- Data
- Document objects
- Composition

- Print streams and print stream manipulation
- Print distribution and server management
- Electronic presentation
- Archiving
- Print technology and process
- Inserting technologies
- Systematic document distribution

In addition, the evaluators will look for evidence of professionalism in respect of:

- The presentation of your portfolio
- Sufficient information and documentation to demonstrate your abilities and achievements
- Clear indication of project objectives and your role
- Evidence that objectives were achieved or not
- Thoroughness, innovativeness, ability to evaluate and deal with the unexpected
- People and communication skills
- Financial acumen
- Project management skills

## **8. Advice about writing work examples**

Remember that the evaluator, while knowledgeable in the business of electronic documents, may not be an expert in your field. So try and strike a balance between explaining it in a way that is understandable while not being patronizing.

- Too little information can leave the evaluator wondering what you actually did.
- Too much information will make the evaluator wish that she or he was reviewing someone else's portfolio!
- Write as though you were talking to someone about your work—do not make it read like a technical journal.
- If you use an abbreviation or acronym, state the name in full the first time you use it.



- Check that the information makes sense. The best way to achieve this is to give it to a colleague and ask them to read it. If they say they do not understand a passage, do not get upset—revise it so that they do—and then the evaluator probably will too.
- Check the content for grammar—remember this is being reviewed for your professionalism as well as technical knowledge.
- Keep the work example simple and to the point. Eliminate unnecessary words in your sentences.
- Organize paragraphs logically and break long paragraphs into shorter ones that will be easier for the evaluation panel to read. The easier it is for evaluators to understand your achievements, the easier it will be to award you points for them.
- It is less important whether you physically completed the project or managed those who did, or whether the project was internal or external to your company. It is more important that you clearly specify your role and for whom the project was completed.
- Make sure you attach appropriate documents that support your assertions in the work examples. They need to be relevant and you need to check that it is obvious to the evaluator what they are and their relevance. Remember that these attachments will not be returned to you—so send copies.
- Where decisions were made on any aspect of a project, describe the rationale for the chosen route.
- Where appropriate include any relevant aspects of budget and cost analysis.
- The benefits of liaising closely with your mentor on all aspects of your submission cannot be over-emphasized.
- And the best advice is this—where it is appropriate, use the words ‘I’ and ‘my’ and ‘mine.’
  - ❖ If you did something, then say *I did this ...*
  - ❖ If you supervised something, then say *I was in charge of the ...*
  - ❖ If you had financial responsibility for a project, then say *I was in charge of the money ...*
  - ❖ If it was your idea, then say *It was my idea to ...*

However, when decisions were made at a group level, show these decisions as neutral.

- ❖ The committee determined that ... or research has shown that ... are examples of wording that effectively omit you as the decision maker. Using such language

helps to stress your involvement over the groups and highlights your participation without diminishing the group's activities.

## 9. Frequently asked questions

- *Who is the EDP certification program designed for?*

The EDP certification program is designed for professionals in the electronic document industry. Both members and non-members of Xplor International are welcome to participate.

- *When will I find out whether my EDP application has been accepted or not?*

You may submit an EDP application and application fee at any time throughout a given year. Usually, you are notified of the outcome within 10 business days of application submission. The timing may fluctuate based on the EDP Registrar availability.

- *When can I submit my portfolio?*

Once your EDP application has been approved and you have been notified that you are an EDP candidate, you may submit your portfolio and portfolio submission fee at any time throughout the year up until the published deadline, usually October 1.

- *When will I find out whether I have certified?*

Candidates are usually notified of award or denial of certification by November 15 of the year in which they submit their work examples and supporting documentation. All candidates are notified at the same time so if there is a delay for one, then there is a delay for all.

- *What are the fees associated with the program used for?*

Fees help cover the costs of program administration, the development of program materials, and EDP recognition. A great deal of administrative work is also accomplished by volunteers such as Commissioners and mentors who assist to promote the long-term good of the industry.

- *What are the benefits of certification?*

The EDP program allows individuals to differentiate themselves. Certification brings recognition, financial opportunities, and personal satisfaction. In fact, according to an independent survey of program participants, the most common benefits include peer and employer recognition, improved opportunities for raises and promotions, and a sense of personal accomplishment.

- *How long does it take to complete the certification portfolio?*

Although EDP candidates have up to two years to complete their certification requirements, the actual time needed is about 40 to 60 hours.

- *How much does it cost to certify?*

After paying the USD \$50 application fee, the only other cost to candidates is the USD \$300 portfolio of work examples submission fee. There is no additional cost to reapply to the program within a two-year period from original notification of acceptance or to appeal should certification be declined.

If you are a current EDA and submit your EDP application within the five-year limit, the EDP application fee of USD \$50 is waived and you will only pay the US \$300 portfolio evaluation fee.

- *Do fees have to be paid in US dollars?*

Yes, Xplor International requires payment in US dollars. If you are unable to pay in US dollars, please contact Xplor International, EDP Administrator at +1 813 929 8100.

- *How should I submit my application and portfolio?*

Xplor International prefers to receive applications, work examples, and supporting documentation in PDF format via an email to the EDP Administrator. If you must send a CD containing the PDFS or hard copies, then please send to:

Xplor International, Attn: EDP Administrator, 4022 Land O'Lakes Boulevard,  
Suite 102, Land O'Lakes, Florida 34639 USA

- *Will I get my portfolio back?*

No, the portfolio is retained for five years and then destroyed. Please retain your own copies as needed.

- *Will my portfolio ever be displayed?*

As part of strict confidentiality policies related to portfolio evaluation, certification portfolios will not be displayed without written permission from the individuals who submitted them. All EDP mentors and evaluators are required to sign a confidentiality form by Xplor International to ensure confidentiality of information presented.

- *What happens if I do not qualify for certification?*

You may resubmit your portfolio within a two-year period from original notification of application acceptance, or contact Xplor International, EDP Administrator at +1 813 929 8100 by December 31 of the year in which your certification was declined to

request a review of your previously submitted portfolio by a certification appeal panel.

- *How do I choose a mentor?*

Contact your local Chapter or Region, other EDPs, or Xplor International, EDP Administrator at +1 813 929 8100 to request a mentor. If there is any problem with the mentor chosen, you can select a different mentor at any time.

## APPENDICES

### A.1 EDP Code of Ethics and declaration

This code of ethics is acknowledged and signed in the original application form. It is repeated at the start of the candidate's portfolio along with the candidate's declaration and signature.

#### **Code of Ethics**

As an Electronic Document Professional I will strive to maintain and improve the standards of the profession and encourage the spread of knowledge relating to the development of the industry.

I acknowledge that I have an obligation to society. Therefore I will actively co-operate with other Electronic Document Professionals to promote the understanding of the key role of electronic document systems in business and its power to help people communicate.

I recognize that as part of a worldwide fellowship I shall be loyal to my fellow Electronic Document Professionals, and willing to share my experience and participate in ways to advance the technology and our profession.

I will not use confidential information pertaining to the business of a fellow EDP to advance my own interests.

As an Electronic Document Professional I recognize the need for an open relationship among customers and suppliers. I shall therefore endeavor to be honest and fair in my commercial relationships.

I have an obligation to use electronic document systems in ways that will best meet my employer's mission and encourage other associates within the organization towards the same goals.

I acknowledge that this Code of Ethics is an integral part of the rights and responsibilities conferred upon me as an Electronic Document Professional.

#### **Candidate's declaration**

I certify that the information supplied here is true and correct. I understand that any knowingly false statement herein is grounds for this application to be rejected or the EDP designation, if granted, to be revoked.

By signing this document, you grant Xplor International the right to use your name and/or company name to promote your success in the Electronic Document Certification program. Your contact details will not be released to any third parties without prior consent.

Check the appropriate box for agreement: Yes, you can use my name:  company name:  both:

Signature ..... Date .....

## A.2 EDP fees

Note that any applications and portfolios will not be evaluated without timely and appropriate payment of fees.

The EDP Commission at their first meeting of each year shall review program fees. Proposed revisions and effective dates must be presented to and approved by the Association Board of Directors.

All fees shall be used for program administration and are not refundable.

Xplor International requires payment in US dollars. Payment can be made with a US bank check in USD (made out to Xplor International), or with an American Express, MasterCard, or Visa credit card. If you are unable to pay in US dollars or by one of the methods, please contact Xplor International, EDP Administrator at +1 813 929 8100.

Current program fees shall be published on Xplor International's website, [www.xplor.org/edp](http://www.xplor.org/edp).

- **EDP Certification fees**

USD \$50      Application for EDP certification. The application fee is waived for a current EDA if they apply within five years of receiving their EDA designation.

USD \$300      Submission of the portfolio of work examples

*Note: the same fees are applicable to Xplor and non-Xplor members.*

- **EDP Recertification fees**

USD \$25      Paid yearly or USD \$125 during the five year recertification period

*The EDP Commission agreed to these fees in February 2010.*

### A.3 EDP schedule

Note that any applications and portfolios will not be evaluated without timely and appropriate payment of fees.

*Use these dates as deadlines—working ahead of these dates will of course lessen the urgency at the end of the year.*

- |                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| <b>January/February</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Determine your eligibility</li><li>• Submit completed application for certification</li><li>• Submit application fee, if appropriate</li></ul>   |
| <b>March/April</b>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review all materials and list questions you have about the certification process and the work examples</li><li>• Select a mentor if you are so inclined</li><li>• Identify three work examples</li><li>• Write general outline, summary, and list supporting materials for each</li><li>• Discuss these with your mentor and agree suitability of your selection and content</li></ul> |
| <b>May/June</b>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Compile first work example and share it with your mentor</li><li>• Update based on critique</li></ul>  |
| <b>July/August/September</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Compile the other two work examples</li><li>• Share with your mentor</li><li>• Update based on critique</li></ul>  |
| <b>October 1</b>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Submit the completed portfolio and supporting documents</li><li>• Submit evaluation fee</li></ul>  |
| <b>October/November</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Certification Evaluation Panel evaluates portfolios</li><li>• Results are returned and compiled by EDP Administrator</li></ul>   |
| <b>November 15</b>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Candidates notified of results</li></ul>   |
| <b>December 31</b>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Deadline for receiving appeals</li></ul>   |
| <b>January</b>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Notification by Appeals Panel</li></ul>  |
| <b>March</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• EDP Plaques &amp; Certificates awarded at the Xplor Global Conference</li></ul>  |

## **A.4 EDP Certification Program Non-Disclosure Agreement**

In consideration for Xplor International appointing me as commissioner, a member of the evaluation panel, an appeals panel member, or a mentor for the Electronic Document Professional Certification Program, I accept and assume the following obligations during my term as a commissioner, a member of the evaluation panel, an appeal panel member, or a mentor for a period of five years and beyond my term in such position.

1. I will consider as confidential, and therefore not disclose, any information which I have acquired or which may be shared with me in my role about any person who is a candidate for certification or which relates to any individual, employer, company or project. As a result:

I will not divulge any information concerning, or the name of, any individual who has participated or is participating as a candidate in the certification program, including whether, or the extent to which, the individual has been successful in meeting certification criteria.

I will not disclose or use unique applications or approaches I am exposed to in the review of a candidate's portfolio. I will not disclose or refer to the identity of employers or companies whose names are associated with a candidate's portfolio.

2. I will disqualify myself from reviewing a portfolio of any candidate with whom I am personally acquainted or have knowledge of his or her activities. I will further disqualify myself from any decision related to such a person that may occur in the course of my role as commissioner or as a panel member.
3. I will evaluate portfolios assigned to me by the chairperson of the Certification Commission based on evaluation criteria and knowledge of the Electronic Document Systems Industry. I will endeavor to be unbiased in evaluating portfolios, recognizing that my personal preference and work experience may have prompted me to approach or perform the work differently.
4. I recognize that my work as commissioner, panel member, or mentor places me in a position of professional responsibility in which the reputations and careers of my fellow commissioners or panel members may be at stake. As a result, I will assume this position with a commitment to maintain as confidential the identity of all individuals who voluntarily participate in this program as a member of the evaluation panel and/or appeal panel.

I have read this agreement and agree to be bound by it.

Name, Signature, and Date



## Work Examples

These work examples are virtual and real ones and their purpose is to give you some idea of what the evaluators are looking for. While the subject matter may be very different from your own work example, you should be able to get some pointers from the kind of content, the format, and the points that are emphasized. Equally you should be able to use these examples to avoid aspects that the evaluators would consider as having little value.

Before the examples, there is a checklist that an experienced evaluator and commissioner shares with those he mentors—something you too might find useful.

### EDP case study checklist

Your work examples are your defense-of-claim that you have enough practical industry expertise to warrant Professional designation and they represent your professionalism. The evaluators will spend about one hour evaluating all three, so your examples should clearly lay out your case in the 15-20 minutes that the evaluator will typically spend on each one.

The most successful candidates will lay out their example with a strong, concise introduction, highlighting their role and the key areas of knowledge they subsequently document. They then follow the *document journey* chronology, referring to the areas of knowledge in each step. Although some of the steps may be irrelevant or not part of your area of knowledge, it is better to explain why than to ignore it (you show the evaluator that you are aware of it). Special consideration should be given examples of project leadership.

Your key back-up documentation should include, where applicable:

- An example of the final product (e.g. print sample, photo of the installation ...)
- An architectural schematic or route map of the document
- Project plan
- A functional specification or statement of work

### *Areas of knowledge*

Look at each of these aspects of document knowledge and ensure that each of your examples demonstrate expertise in at least three of them and not the same three throughout your portfolio

- Business needs knowledge
- Financial knowledge
- Research skills
- Pre-sales skills
- IT infrastructure, operating systems, networks, print-server, connectivity knowledge

- Data extraction, assembly, composition,
- Design, typography and layout experience
- Implementation, quality assurance and troubleshooting skills
- Image production, distribution, storage, retrieval
- Insertion, finishing and mailroom knowledge
- Management and training skills
- Documentation and presentation skills
- Content management knowledge
- Consumer legislation, licensing, regulations, compliance, data protection, etc.

### *Writing your work example*

Check that you have given enough attention to these few points:

- The summary is important to evaluators as it sets the picture of what is to follow and if good, will incline them toward the rest of your portfolio
- Make clear all your skills and experience that are relevant to each work example
- Always check that you have emphasized your role in the work

### *Case study structure*

Do not try to cram too much information onto the page. Remember that the easier it is for the evaluators to read, the more they will comprehend it. Five pages of well-spaced information is preferable to four pages of clutter.

Although you will never know who read your portfolio, you can assume that some of them will be ageing baby-boomers with imperfect eyesight and that these people are most comfortable with structured technical documentation.

Therefore:

- If it is a new thought, it should be a new paragraph
- A hierarchy of say three levels of heading will help considerably
- Choose an appropriate type face and font size and ensure that the leading between the lines makes for easy reading

## **#1 Sample work example – a good one**

*This is an example of a good work example and should be compared with the next, which is considered to be a poor example.*

*Note that fact that the candidate's describes his or her role, discusses the problem they are trying to solve, the situations considered, results of the decision making process, budgetary considerations, restrictions impeding the work, proof of tangible work results, and a final evaluation of the project.*

### **#1 Functional specifications for new product**

**Name** Applicant Jones  
**Company** ABC Development Co  
**Period of project** Jan 1992 - June 1992

*Description of Installation (include your printing systems, hardware, software, personnel, type of business, and how printing system supports the business):*

#### **Company background**

ABC Development Company is an Electronic Document Software vendor specializing in document assembling software in the IBM mainframe environment. The software is used to assemble documents to be printed on IBM and Xerox high quality, non-impact printing systems.

The company utilizes an IBM 4381 mainframe and associated disk drives and communications controllers. ABC uses a Xerox 4090 Laser Printing system with the high capacity feeder and stitcher/stacker option, and an IBM 3820 duplex laser printer, and a variety of local area network attached desktop laser printers. A BARR Systems printer gateway connected to a Novell network allows both PC LAN users and mainframe users to route printed output to the high speed printing systems. The high-speed printing systems are mainly used to test the development and maintain the software that ABC develops.

#### **The situation**

My company's products have traditionally been host-based running in an IBM MVS environment. I was asked to develop a functional specification for a new product line, which would help the company break into the PC software marketplace. This would expand the market base for ABC Development Company as well as add value for the existing customers who were quickly moving to a multi-platform environment.

#### **The problem**

ABC realized that there were challenges in the PC marketplace. The low number of PC document composition systems impeded their progress. Part of the problem was that the few systems available typically required a special purpose monitor or other relatively expensive peripherals that rarely supported general-purpose software, such as word processing or spreadsheet programs. Also, though the PC DOS environment was a run-away best seller, it

provided a small random access memory area and was feature-poor. I researched these marketing constraints and discussed the problem with numerous clients in my role as Senior Technical Advisor of the company.

I found that the majority of the clients were implementing Windows based systems. Working with a few clients who were using the ABC mainframe product, I prepared a functional specification for Windows Print Drivers to support both Xerox Metacode printers and IBM AFP printers. This product specification also listed two affiliated products that would work with our current offerings, and a program to simplify moving completed documents from the PC to the IBM mainframe and into the document library located on the mainframe system.

### **My role**

My role in the project was to develop the functional specifications of the new PC product. To do this, I needed to gather research with the existing client base and with prospective clients as to their environments, their problems, and their requirements for this type of a product. I also needed to formulate a business plan that included a budget for development, a proposed break-even analysis (Attachment A) for a two-year period and an internal cost structure for development and manufacturing of the product.

To manage the project, my support staff consisted of an administrative assistant, and a programmer analyst, who assisted me with the analysis. I was given six months to collect the data, query the customers, and develop a report to present my findings to senior management.

### **Project actions**

The following is a list of the various actions I undertook to complete the project:

1. Proposed and served on a Product Architecture committee to propose the new product development directions and programming platforms to encourage support of PC product development.
2. Developed an innovative pricing scheme based on the number of high-end printers, rather than the number of PCs in which the product would be installed. (See Attachment B for pricing scheme).
3. Wrote a prototype system to demonstrate the use of the document assembly product in a Windows environment. The prototype was written in Word for Windows macro language. It also demonstrated an innovative feature that made the document composer's job easier and increased accuracy.
4. Worked with several key accounts to make sure their requirements were incorporated into the features of the products to secure these clients as early product beta testers.
5. Planned and implemented a corporate PC local area network so that the programmers, testers, and client services personnel would be able to test the product and print documents directly from their PCs to the high speed printers at the company.

### **Budgetary considerations**

I was given a budget of \$20,000 to complete the specification phase of the project (Attachment C). This budget was used for the support staff (administrative and analyst), which I used on a part-time basis for the project.

### **Restrictions in project**

The company was very mainframe oriented. I became the champion of the PC-based product. My challenge was to lobby for the product, which I did with the internal staff and with the clients. I prepared a training program (Attachment D), which showed the benefits of the new product and presented this both inside the company and to the clients.

### **Proof of tangible work results**

The new product was beta tested by some of ABC's existing clients. They were very impressed and became the first purchasers of the new PC-based software. The product went into general release at the end of 1992. It has been a successful product for the company.

### **Evaluation of project**

The need for my specification study (Attachment E) and analysis became the driving factor in ABC's release of the new PC product. It took a good product design concept, research with existing and potential customers, an extensive needs analysis, and training for the personnel at ABC Development Company to bring the product to market.

### **Attachments**

- A Break Even Analysis
- B Pricing for New Product
- C Budget for Project
- D Overview of Training Program for Project
- E Report on Functional Specifications for PC Product

## #2 Sample work example #1 – rewritten as a poor one

*This is an example of the same work example but the work example has been re-written to demonstrate bad features.*

### #2 Functional specifications for new product

**Name** Applicant Jones  
**Company** ABC Development Co  
**Period of project** Jan 1992 - June 1992

#### Comments

#### Company Background

ABC Development Company is an Electronic Document Software vendor specializing in document assembling software in the IBM mainframe environment. The software is used to assemble documents to be printed on IBM and Xerox high quality, nonimpact printing systems.

*Include descriptions of your printing systems, hardware, software, personnel, type of business, and how printing system supports the business*

#### The Situation

My company's products have traditionally been host-based running in an IBM MVS environment. The company needed a new product line, which would help them break into the PC software marketplace. This would expand the market base for ABC Development Company as well as add value for the existing customers who were quickly moving to a multi-platform environment.

*No definition of specific role in the project*

ABC realized that there were challenges in the PC marketplace. The low number of PC document composition systems impeded their progress. Part of the problem was that the few systems available typically required a special purpose monitor or other relatively expensive peripherals that rarely supported general-purpose software, such as word processing or spreadsheet programs. Also, though the PC DOS environment was a runaway best seller, it provided a small random access memory area and was feature-poor. The majority of the clients were implementing Window's based systems. A functional specification for Windows Print Drivers to support both Xerox Metacode printers and IBM AFP printers was prepared. This product specification also listed two affiliated products that would work with the company's current offerings, and a program to simplify moving completed documents from the PC to the IBM mainframe and into the document library located on the mainframe system.

*Describe YOUR role in producing the Work Example. Discuss the problem you are trying to solve, the situations considered, results of the decision making process, budgetary considerations, restrictions impeding your work, proof of tangible work results, and evaluation of project*

## **Project Actions:**

The following is a list of the various actions undertaken to complete the project:

1. A Product Architecture committee proposed the new product development directions and programming platforms to encourage support of PC product development.
2. A pricing scheme was developed based on the number of high-end printers rather than the number of PCs in which the product would be installed. (See Attachment B for pricing scheme).
3. A prototype system was developed to demonstrate the use of the document assembly product in a Windows environment. The prototype was written in Word for Windows macro language. It also demonstrated an innovative feature that made the document composer's job easier and increased accuracy.
4. Several key accounts were used as beta testers.

*Good general company background, but no indication of the role that the applicant plays in the company*

## **Budgetary Considerations**

A budget of \$20,000 was authorized to complete the specification phase of the project (Attachment C). This budget was used for the support staff (administrative and analyst).

## **Proof of Tangible Work Results:**

The new product was beta tested by some of ABC's existing clients. They were very impressed and became the first purchasers of the new PC-based software. The product went into general release at the end of 1999. It has been a successful product for the company.

*The applicant relates the problem and resulting project changes well, but does not tell the evaluator the role they played and how it affected the project*

## **Evaluation of Project:**

The specification study (Attachment E) and analysis became the driving factor in ABC's release of the new PC product. It took a good product design concept, research with existing and potential customers, an extensive need analysis, and training for the personnel at ABC Development Company to bring the product to market.

**Attachments:**

- A Break Even Analysis
- B Pricing for New Product
- C Budget for Project
- D Overview of Training Program for Project
- E Report on Functional Specifications for PC Product

*Good detail in the attachments, but still no connection between the applicant and the project*



### **#3 Sample work example – a good one**

*This is an example of a good work example that illustrates a project outside the typical IT/production printing arena. The style of writing resembles the way you might describe events to someone in the room rather than that of a formal report.*

#### **#3 Designing new invoices for a utility company**

<b>Name</b>	Charlie Mutton
<b>Company</b>	Documents R Us
<b>Client</b>	Severn Trent Water Company
<b>Duration</b>	November 1996 - September 1997

#### **Client background**

Severn Trent is one of the many water supply companies that have been privatised in the past decade. As a private company they are technically in competition with other companies and they recognized that their laser documents were appalling.

Their bills that looked as though they had been printed on typewriters and their customers were beginning to realise that they deserved something better. At the same time the company was thinking of expanding, not only to provide other utilities to their customers but also to buy other utilities. Note that by the mid 90s half of the UK water suppliers were owned by the French and a third of the electricity companies owned by Americans so the need to distinguish themselves in a globally competitive market was clear.

#### **Project summary**

The brief was to redesign the range of billing Severn Trent documents so that they looked better, worked more effectively at getting payments, and improved customer satisfaction.

It also involved reshaping the company's print strategy.

#### **The situation**

Severn Trent's water bills resembled most of the utility bills that had been around for the past twenty years—Courier, upper case, fixed information, boxes, and dozens of paper stocks.

“Looking at our bills, I am surprised as many people pay us as they do.”

team member from billing

The company was investing in new print technology and considering the introduction of appropriate document composition software. At the same time they recognised the need to get more out of their database. In particular, this meant addressing the needs of small and large businesses, people that might choose alternative water supplies.

Severn Trent wanted a suite of bills that looked contemporary, had the facility to meet individual customer requirements, used graphics where appropriate, and could be printed fast. In the UK 90% of all households are not metered and the provision of water is based on an antiquarian system of rateable value.

This means that houses are billed at the beginning of the fiscal year and Severn Trent have to produce 6 million bills in two weeks in March with a further 5 million bills spread over the remainder of the year.

There were three main areas of concern:

- the cost of producing the bills,
- their effectiveness in generating revenues,
- the degree of customer satisfactory that resulted from them.

### **The solution**

I developed some ground-breaking new designs and introduced graphics that were stunning in their simplicity but we didn't anticipate the problems with their existing finishing equipment or their proposed printing systems.

### **The document design**

I developed a range of bill designs including both landscape and portrait formats, taking account of the varying degrees of complexity—from a single household with an un-metered system to factory complexes with an array of water meters, pressures, pumping stations and tariffs.

Throughout the design evolution we recognised the value of separating the narrative from the water/financial calculations and the payment information. I fitted these modules to both portrait formats as well as gatefold landscape formats. In spite of the benefits of one or other design route, the final design was determined by the printing and finishing constraints mentioned below.

The design also had to include other documents in the billing and collection process including overdue accounts, accounts in arrears, and debt collection letters. In the UK the overdue bills are traditionally 'red ones' and people who are not prompt payers actually anticipate the red ones as part of the communication process! These 'red bills' were printed on red paper stocks and Severn Trent had committed its print facility to wide-web continuous printers. Highlight colour was not considered an option.

I also had to design the reverse of the documents with a range of texts depending on the type of bill and payment methods. The reverses were laser printed and had to incorporate an area for coding throughout any subsequent scanning and archiving procedures.

One of the most interesting aspects of the design process was the discovery that when I had removed all the customer relevant information from the current bills there remained some forty

'bits' of OMR, codes, lines, letters and numbers that meant absolutely nothing to the customer. These extraneous symbols are technically referred to as noise—this was a very loud document!

“Where the hell did all that rubbish come from?”

ST project manager

I rationalized the document codes, instigated a new customer code system, and significantly reduced the number of scan related marks. The result was a significant quietening with a concomitant improvement in the related processes.

## **Printing and finishing**

The company had planned to install in imprint system on the back end of the continuous wide web printing engines. The intention was to print the corporate logo - a blue and green graphic - on each page as well as introduce coloured areas corresponding to key messages and the payment information. This was not highlight colour and consequently was not variable in content or position.

When the various configurations were examined it became apparent that we couldn't distinguish between the first and subsequent pages of a bill, nor could we mix different background washes in the same run. We had no advantage over coloured pre-printed stocks of paper which transpired turned out to be easier and more reliable operation than changing the colour print process, particularly on the 3 am shift! The process of developing the designs led the team to consider a different print strategy and hardware route than that which they had committed to beforehand.

This is a good example of a philosophy that I have been expounding at recent Xplor Global and Document Strategy conferences - namely the importance of developing a wide-reaching document strategy and then using it to shape the IT/Print Strategy.

Some of the more interesting landscape formats required elaborate folding configurations that proved to be impossible for the finishing equipment.

“This meeting appears to have moved from a print review to an origami competition!”

team member from IT

The final design was a compromise between effective design and technical practicality—a familiar pattern of events.

## **Who was involved?**

This, as some of you will know, is another aspect of document design I have discussed on a few occasions at Xplor conferences. This Severn Trent Water bill design is a good example of a complex project encompassing a wide range of people within the organisation and involving a great many external organisations - which comes as something of a shock to most clients.

The list of internal departments was fairly predictable and included Customer Service, IT, Electronic Printing, Lawyers, Accounts, Corporate Affairs and Administration.

The people I needed to involve from outside the organisation was extensive and included:

- Lloyds Bank the company's bank
- Giro Bank the bank that handles payments over the Post Office counters
- BACS the organisation that administers direct debits in the UK
- APACS the organisation responsible for payment clearing services in the UK
- OFWAT the water regulatory body
- Royal Mail postage specifications, customer bar codes & Mailsort discounts
- Consumer bodies approval from groups for elderly, disabled & visually impaired
- Customs & Excise water incurs a Tax that is administered by HM Customs & Excise

## **The results**

### Print strategy

Severn Trent have now revised their print strategy to take account of the requirements imposed by the new bill designs. In particular they have committed to monochrome printing on a variety of paper stocks instead of colour imprinting on the back end of the laser printing that turned out to be impractical.

### *The Documents*

We still have a range of pre-printed stationery but fewer than before. The technology in place prevented us moving to a cut sheet single or two stock option.

But the designs are open and the information more accessible. There is an obvious separation of the text from the tabular information, so the amount owed is clearly discernible without having to wade through a forest of numbers and calculations.

This separation is helped by the background wash that is part of the paper stock designs and has both a functional and aesthetic role.

“Even the chairman can understand the bill now!”

Customer Service Director

Some bills have incorporated a simple graphic representation of the amount of water used this quarter compared to the previous four quarters or this month compared to the previous twelve months. This device has been well received by commercial customers who understand the role and power of graphics. It also reduces queries from those customers who “think the bill is too high” but cannot recall how much they used a year ago.

### *Reduction in costs*

The new design also has an impact on costs. I significantly reduced the number of paper stocks from in excess of 20 to 4 - 2 types of regular bill, a red reminder, and a black & white stock for solicitors letters and worse. This reduction naturally has a beneficial effect on the costs of buying and storing a multiplicity of stocks. It also reduces the time required to change the paper rolls for different applications—a major down-time for continuous print processes.

The payment instructions are clearer so the response time to payment requests is shortened and there are fewer corresponding queries about the amounts payable. The result is improved cash flow with reduced administration and customer service costs.

### *Colour*

The laser printing throughout these new billing documents was monochrome. The role of colour was in the paper stock to distinguish different kinds of bill and position in the collection cycle. The colour was also positioned to help identify different parts of the page - reference information, narrative, calculations and the payment slip.

### *Specifications*

As with other major design projects, it is not enough to provide the designs - there has to be a way of implementing them. The specifications included the designs of the paper stocks, the typography, the hierarchy of information, the reverse and the detailed grids for all elements of the bills. It also included examples of all the major configurations of bill—metered and non-metered, domestic and commercial, initial and follow-up bills, bills with payment slips and by direct debit etc.

☞ *Part of the specifications and examples of the designs are attached*

### **My role**

My role as an external consultant was again broad and detailed.

I had to persuade the Directors that the idea of improving their laser documents was necessary and cost effective. It was a help having the Marketing and Customer Service departments already on our side.

I was responsible for analysing the existing documents and questioning the function of each. This led to a report detailing the recommendations of what each document comprised and the emphasis required to enable it to be effective.

Before I started on the design phase I had to manage the issue of how these documents should be printed. This was the problem of not wanting to start with the range of systems to which they were committed but getting them to think outside the square they had already defined.

I also had the usual juggler's trick to perform of managing a multidisciplinary team with different and sometimes opposed ideas of priorities. This was compounded by having to include the external people mentioned above who again had different agendas.

The design phase required that we stuck to the agreed number of drafts and revisions which in turn meant that I worked closely with a strong client project director and adhered to a system of signed acceptance forms.

The designs have been implemented and already minor revisions have been required. However, the modularity of the design and the information provided in the specifications mean that Severn Trent have been able to make these changes and implement them with very little further intervention from Cavendish.

This is a good criterion of a successful laser document design project.

## EDP Work Example Summary Form

This summary page is important for several reasons. It helps the evaluation panel select suitable people to evaluate your portfolio and enables evaluators to confirm their suitability and focus their minds on the task ahead. It can also help you to map out each example.

Consider sharing the three summary pages with your mentor before embarking on the details of the first and then the other two work examples.

Note that the greater the differences in the content of the examples, the greater the breadth of experience you will demonstrate. And say what **YOU** did rather than just what happened!

An EDP is someone regarded by their peers as *having extraordinary knowledge of the electronic document business and a marked degree of professionalism in dealing with people and projects.*

This is your chance to demonstrate these attributes.

Your name
Title of work example
Your company
The company referred to in this example ( <i>if different</i> )
Dates the work spanned ( <i>months &amp; years</i> )
Project summary ( <i>about 150 words</i> )
Project objectives
Project limitations ( <i>if any</i> )
Your role in the team & in the project
Your principal contributions to the project

EDP Application goes here













EDP Recertification Application goes here













