

KAIZEN RESULTS

State printing customers will get fast and accurate billing with every print job

IN BRIEF: State government’s many agencies, boards, and commissions count on State Printing to fill their print needs. The work is done well, but the billing process had become complex and slow-going – in other words, a perfect candidate for major improvement. So a team from State Printing gathered for a five-day Kaizen event, developing a new billing process that will turn things around.

STREAMLINING: The overhauled process involves just 35 steps – an 88% improvement over the 307 steps with the old process.

REWORK REMOVED: The new process will have 5 decision points compared to the 50 decisions that used to occur in most cases – for a 90% improvement.

SMART USE OF TIME: Once all the planned improvements are implemented, some 225 hours per month will become available for mission-critical work.

Kaizen Event RESULTS SCORECARD	BASELINE	PROJECTIONS	
	Key process measures, gathered at the start of the Kaizen event	Projected measures once all improvements are in place	PROJECTED CHANGE
PROCESS STEPS	307	35	89% reduction
DECISION POINTS	50	5	90% reduction
DELAY POINTS	10	0	100% reduction
Overall Process Time	19 DAYS	9 DAYS	10 DAYS

Up to a 53% reduction in process time

DETAILS

State Printing is a big operation involving mainframe capabilities, fulfillment, document centers, cost-per-copy duplication, and business card printing. Customers includes state agencies, boards, commissions, and other entities.

Within the operation, the billing process had become a source of frustration for staff and customers alike. It was cumbersome and confusing, requiring manual intervention that caused delays.

So a team from State Printing turned to Kaizen, using the improvement methodology to study the whole billing process, pinpoint the biggest problems, streamline the flow, shorten the process time, and improve customer service.

As soon as team members created a map of their current process, they saw an excess of entry points. As one team member put it, “We had to take a four-lane highway and bring it down to a one-lane highway.”

The team found a billing process that had grown to 307 steps, 50 decision points, 27 handoffs, and 10 delays. The entire process – from when a printing order is placed by a customer to when the order is completed and the customer is billed monthly for the service – was taking an average of 19 days.

Using their detailed process map, the group identified all occurrences of waste and inefficiency. Then they brainstormed 132 improvement ideas. The highest-impact ideas were built into three draft redesigns of the process, each of which was developed by a subgroup – followed by development of a final redesign.

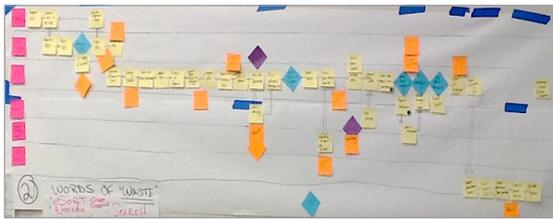
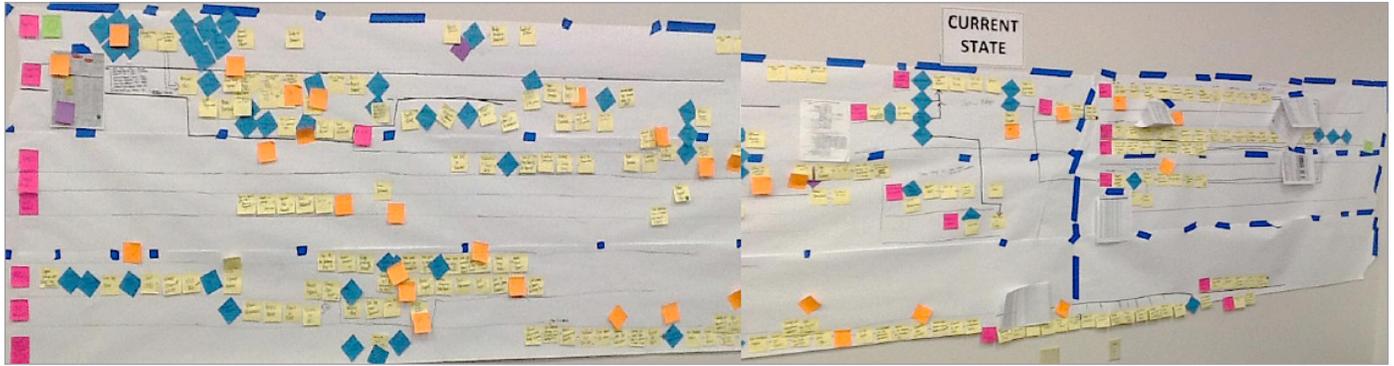
The new process is a marvel of efficiency, with only 35 steps (an 89% reduction), 5 decisions (90% reduction), 8 handoffs (70% reduction), and 0 delays (100% reduction). Once the full slate of improvements is implemented, the billing process will average 9 days, which reduces the time by 53%.

Among the improvements is a redesign of the printing request order form (PRO). The form will be made more customer friendly to ensure that the needed

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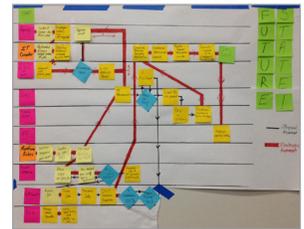
Team members: Bunnie Jones, Alice Yuhas, Erica McClue, Judy Fritzsche, Paula Kimes, Van Hylton, Mary Sen, Trisha Stephens, Carol Waugh, Eli Lamp, Diane Miller, (Ohio Department of Job and Family Services), Debbie Brown (Ohio Department of Public Safety), Amy Wobser (Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission).



TRANSFORMATION

Too many entry points at the front end of the process (above and left) was one big reason things had become so complicated. The team used Kaizen tools and methods to analyze every step, ultimately designing the far simpler process shown here.

FUTURE STATE



information is easy to provide at the start of the process.

Ultimately, customers will use an online portal to place their order. This will further automate the process while ensuring that all order information is gathered from the very start – preventing delays as the process for each customer unfolds.

These and other improvements will involve IT as well as the vendor that produces the billing software used by State Printing. Since the software ties into the various print devices, enhancements and modules will be activated to reduce manual steps and increase streamlining.

The team developed many other action steps, including: standardizing document formats, standardizing file-name conventions, getting more accounting codes so that print jobs can be categorized more accurately, and providing customers with the guidance that’s needed to submit a print order properly the first time around.

Also in development is a State Printing dashboard to track data on incoming printing request orders: how many are submitted with all the needed information, how many are lacking information or arriving with incorrect information, and where the errors are occurring. The data will provide key information to show exactly where ongoing improvement efforts should be directed.

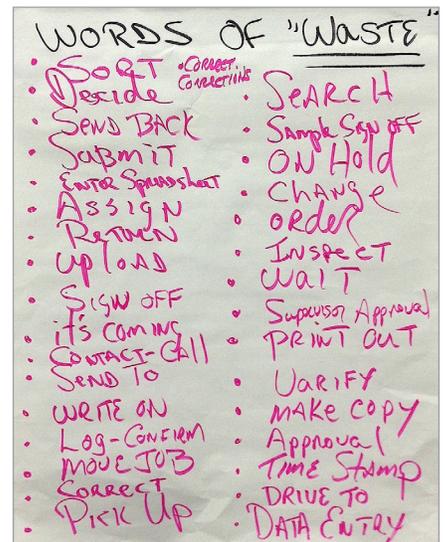
During the team’s report-out presentation, team members made clear that the Kaizen event was a high-impact week.

One person said that when they learned about the Kaizen event, “My first thought was, can I wiggle out of it?” They emerged from the experience completely supportive and happy to have been a part of it.

Another team member was so amazed by the group’s progress each day that he snapped photos with his smart phone so he could show them to his wife. “I was saying to her, ‘You’ve got to see this!’”

Team sponsor Charles Stang called the group a “team of heroes” who accomplish extraordinary work each day. “Now we start turning the handle and cranking this out,” he said. “There’s a lot here. I want the team to know they have my full support.”

As the project moves forward, IT will play a critical role. A number of the changes will be further evaluated, with some requiring feasibility studies, in order to validate their likely impact and to determine costs and benefits in greater detail. The findings will be used to make “go” decisions on specific enhancements. ●



Before seeking out all occurrences of inefficiency in their process, team members brainstormed this comprehensive list of words that often signal wasted time and effort.