

Council for Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE), ABBYY's Customer of Many Years, Accepts More Applications in Less Time Thanks to ABBYY Software and NETSPIDER India's End-to-End Solutions

A principal non-profit organization, armed with latest ABBYY FormReader™ version, fit to embrace technological innovations

Preface

As it is the case with almost every educational institution, examination form handling is a very important yet demanding task. If an establishment is not technically fit to process an influx of thousands of forms in a very short time, the outcomes are far from positive. ABBYY FormReader has brought many educational establishments relief in terms of cost and staff resource savings. Not only is FormReader easy to use, it is indeed a universal form-handling solution, covering all stages of the process: scanning, recognition, verification and export. The Council for Indian School Certificate Examinations has greatly benefited from powerful features of both Enterprise and Desktop editions of FormReader, as well as its seamless integration with other software. ABBYY's partner in India, NETSPIDER INDIA (NIIL), has provided an invaluable support in this project, dated in the year 2007.

CISCE and the thousands of forms it handles annually

Every year, the Council conducts 3 types of examinations, namely:

1. The Indian Certificate of Secondary Education (ICSE-Year 10). Approximately 60,000 candidates take this exam every year.
2. The Indian School Certificate Examination (ISC-Year 12). The number of candidates for ISC reaches 25,000 annually.
3. Certificate in Vocational Education (CVE-Year 12). The average number of candidates for which is around 10,000.

"Image plus text" processing - a new challenge

The Council began using ABBYY FormReader 4.1 in 2000, and for 7 years, the ABBYY solution was an indispensable part of keeping up with an ever-increasing number of examination forms and strict deadlines, albeit without NIIL's technical support. In 2007, a new form was introduced. Fields for a candidate photo and signature were added; hence, the form processing setup had to be modified to reflect the change. Photograph-handling software had to be integrated with existing form processing and database infrastructure, minding hundreds of



About CISCE

The Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE) owes its birth to the All India Certificate Examination Conference held in 1952. Since, 1958 CISCE has been catering to the school examination needs of the country. The objective of the Council is educational, and includes the promotion of science, literature, the fine arts and the diffusion of useful knowledge by conducting school examination through the medium of English. The Council exists solely for educational purposes and not for purposes of profit. More information is available at <http://www.cisce.org>.



About NETSPIDER INDIA (NIIL)

NETSPIDER INDIA specializes in ABBYY channel distribution and giving end-to-end solutions in various fields like imaging, networking, scanning, connectivity, Project consultancy, and doing developments around ABBYY technology. NETSPIDER INDIA has experienced technical skills in implementing ABBYY FineReader OCR, FormReader Enterprise, Desktop, FlexiCapture Studio and other ABBYY line of products. More information is available at <http://www.niil.in>

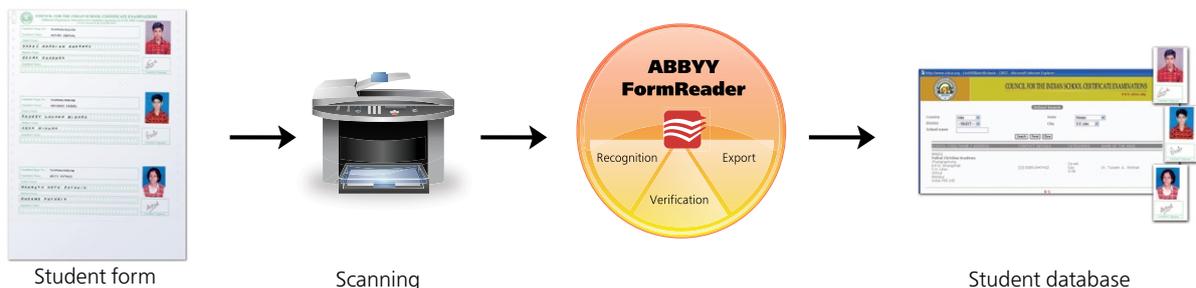
thousands of forms at stake and time sensitivity. As the Council lacked the necessary expertise, they initially outsourced this job, but after nearly 4 months, this arrangement failed. This resulted in delay; thus, jeopardizing the future of thousands of candidates. At such a crucial stage, the Council sought the guidance and help of NIIL, their mentor, who had introduced them to ABBYY seven years prior.

The project scope: Solution proposed and carried out by NETSPIDER INDIA

The proposed solution was two-tiered: to tackle the backlog of work the quickest way possible, and then, to design a brand-new form which would duly address the requirements and yet not cause hassle. ABBYY FormReader was the key piece of the puzzle.

Stage one: Integration

The first step entailed integrating ABBYY FormReader (upgraded to version 6.5) with a Visual Basic-based image processing solution, and the integration was a success. ABBYY FormReader had proved once again that it can seamlessly integrate with other programs. FormReader processed the handwritten data and exported it to an ODBC database. The photograph on each form was cropped along with the signature using a Visual Basic-based program and saved under the school code and candidate's unique number. As a result, at the end of just one month, 70,000 forms (at 3 candidate records per form, or around 210,000 records) had been processed and made up the contents of the candidate database.



Stage two: Scaling the form handling system

To achieve the ultimate optimization in its form handling, the Council has expanded the ABBYY presence to FormReader 6.5 Enterprise Edition with two verification stations and two ABBYY FormReader 6.5 Desktop Editions. The installation and training were skillfully provided by NETSPIDER INDIA (NIIL). The existing registration forms were redesigned using ABBYY FormDesigner to make them ultimately fit for quick and accurate machine reading with FormReader. In order to enhance recognition quality even further, the forms are printed in two colors, and CANON 3080 scanner is used to facilitate color dropout during scanning. Hence, an ABBYY-branded solution, handled by NIIL, delivered significant relief to CISCE in terms of the time it takes to process thousands of forms and the number of people involved in processing. The ultimate beneficiaries – the students – now only have to worry about studying for the exams, and not about whether their application will be processed on time. Going forward, ABBYY FormDesigner is also expected to design the new OMR mark sheets for the Council.

Conclusion

NETSPIDER INDIA (NIIL), with its end-to-end solutions, once again rose to the occasion and helped the Council salvage the future of thousands of candidates with ABBYY's acclaimed form processing solutions. And again, ABBYY products' compatibility with other programs manifested success.

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ABBYY LLC.: 129301, Moscow, Russia, P.O. Box #54, tel.: +7 (495) 783 3700, fax: +7 (495) 783 2663, office@abbyy.com; www.abbyy.com. Part#2630e.