



THE GENERAL AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE SERVICES, INC., NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

Automatic check processing
helps insurance provider
slash costs, save time and
reduce employee frustration

The General® offers a wide array of flexible payment choices. But until recently, it also made it more difficult for The General® to process customer payments at its Nashville headquarters.



“We process anywhere from 500 to 1,000 business checks and money orders every day, and processing those checks manually was expensive.”

Alan Shell, Cash Manager

The General Automobile Insurance Services, Inc. (The General®) and its affiliated insurance companies have a 50-year history of providing affordable, flexible insurance coverage to all customers – even drivers with violations or accidents, no current insurance or less-than-perfect credit.

**The challenge:
Automating money order and
business check deposits**

The General® offers a wide array of flexible payment choices that definitely make it easier for customers to obtain affordable insurance. But until recently, it also made it more difficult for The General® to process customer payments at its Nashville headquarters.

The challenge was that as many as half of its customers regularly pay their insurance premiums with money orders or business checks. And until a few months ago, The General® could not deposit those checks automatically. That’s because the company’s check processing equipment used the ACH, or Automated Clearing House, electronic payment network, which only supports personal checks.

Employees at the Nashville headquarters were forced to process all money orders and business checks manually via paper deposits – at a considerable cost to the company. The General® paid 15 cents for every paper check it deposited manually, which added up quickly. That cost doesn’t even include the extra time and manpower

that was required to support the labor-intensive manual deposit process each day.

The General® considered upgrading its current machine to support money order and business checks. But when they found out how expensive an upgrade would be – totaling over \$35,000 – it began exploring other options.

An easy way to beat the high cost of manual check processing – without breaking the bank

Fortunately, The General® asked for help from its banking partner, a large multi-national banking and financial services corporation. The bank had many customers who had successfully installed a Cummins Allison check processor to support checks that could not be read by ACH systems. And bank executives thought Cummins Allison would be a perfect option for The General®.

“When we learned that the Cummins Allison JetScan iFX® check scanner and processor could support money orders and business checks, we were thrilled,” says Shell. “The Cummins Allison equipment allows us to automatically process money orders and business checks, and I was shocked to find out that we could purchase it for just a fraction of the cost of upgrading our current check processing system. In fact, it would have cost us six times more to upgrade the existing machine than it did to buy a brand new Cummins Allison check processor.”

The Cummins Allison check processing system communicates with banks using ICL, or Image Cash Letter, or through remote deposit capture interfaces, electronic processing solutions that are not limited to personal checks. The Nashville office now uses the Cummins Allison check processing system to process its business check and money orders, and it pays just three cents for each check it deposits – compared to the 15 cents per check it paid to process them manually.

Up to \$120 in savings each business day

“We process anywhere from 500 to 1,000 business checks and money orders every day, and processing those checks manually was expensive,” says Shell. “Now for every check we process, we save 12 cents on transfer fees alone – a savings of 80%. That adds up to \$60 to \$120 in savings every business day.”

That’s not the only financial benefit The General® receives. With the new system, deposits are now posted and available within one business day. In contrast, with the manual system, it could take up to two or three days before the deposited cash became available to The General®.

“Successful businesses are always looking for ways to improve cash flow,” Shell says. “So we’re thrilled that the new system gives us access to our money 24 hours to 48 hours faster.”

“System is so fast, it’s incredible”

The Cummins Allison check processor also reduces labor costs, saves time and eliminates employee frustrations. “The new system is so fast, it’s incredible,” Shell says. “Previously, it would take employees an hour to process 400+ checks manually. But using the new automated system, employees can now easily process 400+ checks in just 10 minutes.”

No more frustrating deposit errors

One of the biggest frustrations with depositing the checks manually was the large number of discrepancies that appeared between the bank’s deposit records and The General®’s deposit records. Because employees at both the bank and The General® had to total the deposits manually, errors would inevitably result. And resolving these errors ate up valuable employee time.

Now that deposits are processed automatically, the deposit records at The General® and the bank now match perfectly – down to the penny. “We no longer have any discrepancy between the bank’s deposit



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records and ours,” Shell says. “This saves our employees a lot of time and frustration.”

Training new people to use the system is easy as well. According to Shell, it takes about five minutes to train a new employee to use the machine. That means that practically anyone can now process checks when the regular processing team is out of the office.

Can't imagine doing business without it

“I can't believe how much time and money we've already saved thanks to our new Cummins Allison check processor,” Shell

says. “Using the new equipment, we process hundreds of money orders and business checks in just minutes every day. It's hard to imagine doing business without it now.”

Cummins Allison delivers the fastest, most accurate and most reliable check scanners and currency processors in the industry. Learn how your business can benefit at: cumminsallison.com/checks

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Generations of Vision and Excellence

Cummins Allison sets the standard for accuracy and dependability.

Cummins Allison is a global leader in developing solutions that quickly and efficiently count, sort and authenticate currency, checks and coin. We also offer a complete line of full-function automated teller machines (ATMs). Our leadership in technology and product innovation spans more than 125 years. Cummins Allison serves the majority of financial institutions worldwide, as well as leading organizations in retail, gaming, law enforcement and government. Ninety-seven percent of our customers would recommend our products and services.

The company holds more than 350 patents and invests double the industry average in R&D. Our world-class sales and service network includes hundreds of local representatives in more than 50 offices in North America, wholly-owned subsidiaries in Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Ireland and Australia and is represented in more than 70 countries around the world.

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