


Using AI to boost efficiency in shipping and mailing

For businesses looking to streamline and optimize their shipping and mailing operations, AI-driven technology holds the key.

On average, shipping and mailing expenses consume at least 5 percent of a company's annual revenue – and up to 20 percent* in some cases. But when it's time to hunt for cost savings, businesses tend to overlook this corner of their organization.



But with recent advancements in AI, businesses are discovering a powerful new tool for finding operational efficiencies. One recent study shows that 92 percent of companies** want to increase investments in AI to generate cost savings and improve productivity. That includes using AI to automate and simplify shipping and mailing practices, leveraging technology to reduce the human errors that commonly lead to unnecessary spending or worse—delivery or security lapses that can damage your company's reputation.

*"The cost of shipping: What customers want," PLS Logistics Services; May 24, 2022

** "Superagency in the workplace: Empowering people to unlock AI's full potential," McKinsey & Company; January 28, 2025

Table of Contents

Searching for
a simple solution
to a complex problem **03**

How AI-powered
shipping management
can make a difference **04**

Standardization **05**

Centralization **05**

Automation **06**

Optimization **06**

Searching for a simple solution to a complex problem

On the surface, shipping and mailing gives off the appearance of simplicity. Place an item in a box or a document in an envelope, seal it, address it, pay the postage, hand off to the carrier, then repeat.

But the reality is far different.

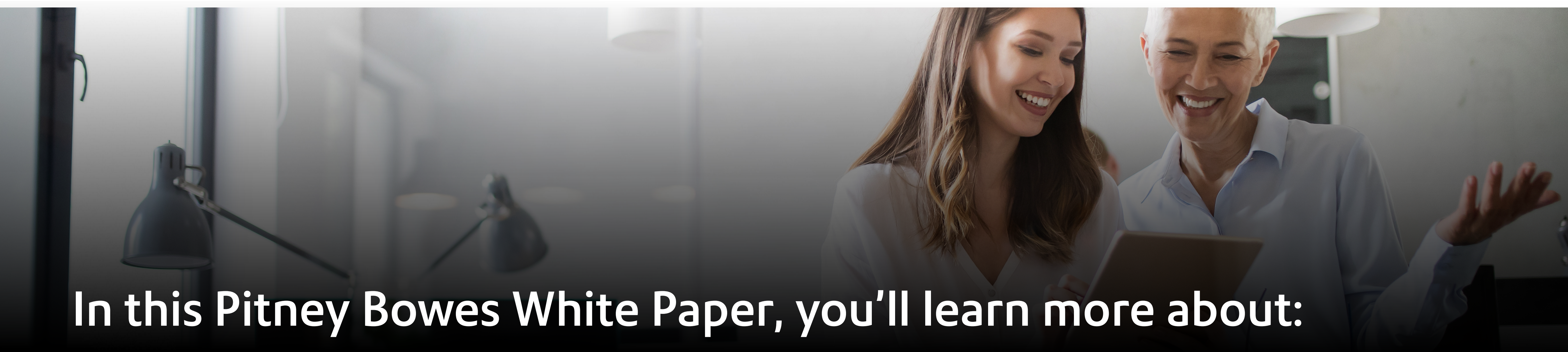
Sheer parcel volume—total deliveries in the United States are expected to surpass 28 billion by 2028*—is the first indicator of a more complicated story. Additional challenges include working with multiple carriers and contracts, meeting the needs of remote workers, reliance on error-prone manual processes, and escalating carrier rates and fees.

These factors act together to weave modern shipping and mailing into a tangled web. And for businesses (or those responsible for shipping within their organization) that get

snagged in these complexities, there are harmful consequences: overspending, security risks, and wasted time.

How do you unravel all the threads and make your shipping and mailing operation more efficient?

The way out of the web is to implement intelligent automation, so you can cut down on costly human errors and improve decision-making across your organization.



In this Pitney Bowes White Paper, you'll learn more about:



The importance of centralizing data administration and automating workflows



How AI can optimize shipping decisions and reduce risk



Examples of how businesses have used the Pitney Bowes Shipping 360® platform, powered by AI, to streamline operations and save money

*2023 Pitney Bowes Shipping Index

Complexities of modern shipping and mailing



Working with multiple carriers and contracts

Rising carrier rates and fees

Unpredictable rate changes

Meeting the needs of hybrid workers

Reliance on manual processes

Lack of ability to track parcels

How AI-powered shipping management can make a difference

As companies across industries work to address the challenges mentioned above, their attempts to solve shipping and mailing problems can actually lead to even more complications. That's because for many businesses, each issue tends to be addressed in isolation—separate IT answers that lead to separate systems and procedures.

In this common scenario, those responsible for shipping and mailing within their organization are left to cope with an array of siloed systems that are not engineered to work with each other. Each additional system is harboring data that's associated with every parcel sent or received—data such as parcel costs, delivery timing, address accuracy, and more—data that could be leveraged to help you make better decisions.

How do you retrieve that data? And once you have it, how do you make it useful? Unfortunately, carriers issue their bills in different

formats, with key information (addresses, rates, etc.) located in different columns or fields. It's a predicament that calls for a technology solution that collects the data then funnels it into a standardized format that it can be readily analyzed and inform your actions.

But how can you get your arms around all of this data and use it to make the most economical shipping and mailing decisions?

That's where an AI-driven software solution comes in.

4 ways AI can help you streamline shipping and mailing



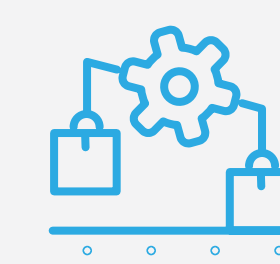
1. Standardize your data inputs



2. Centralize visibility into your data



3. Automate operational controls



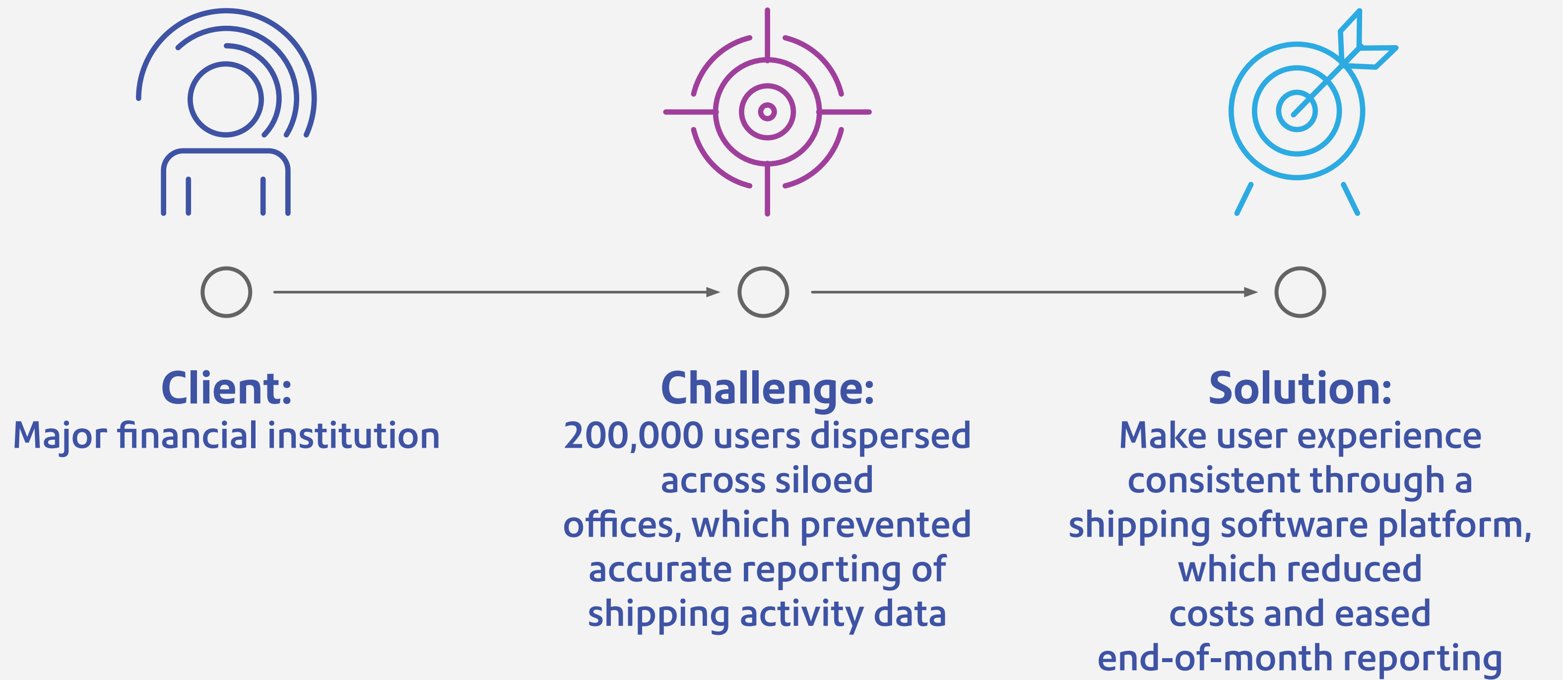
4. Optimize shipping and mailing processes

Standardization

Efficient shipping starts with where and how your employees ship and mail. Then, it empowers them to make the right decisions whenever they send a parcel. By giving your people access to one common tool with a consistent set of shipping and mailing procedures, they can avoid the mistakes that wrack up wasteful spending.

For example, what if an employee opts to send parcels overnight for 8:30 a.m. delivery when a less expensive option meets the needs of your customer? The difference, particularly if it's a pattern of poor decisions, can be costly. When you provide your people with consistent visibility to better choices, or set up rules that remove them having to make the best decision, they are less apt to make careless—and costly—decisions.

Case Study: Standardizing user experiences

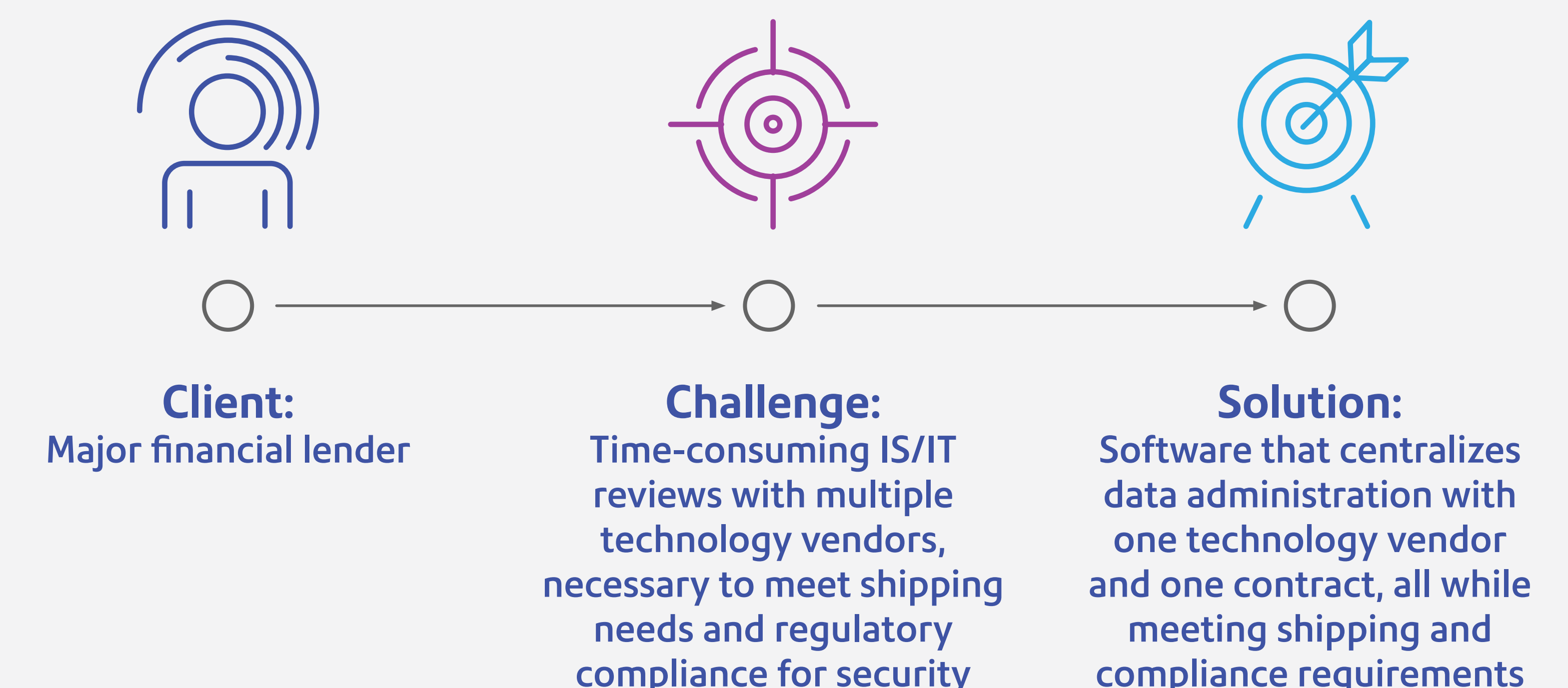


Centralization

If one of your remote employees is habitually choosing to send packages through a carrier website and putting the bill on a company credit card, how can you pin that down and correct their behavior? The answer lies in centralizing and organizing your data.

By centralizing your data, you can establish a single source of truth for your shipping and mailing operation across carriers, teams, users, and locations. With all your activity—spend, carrier selection, tracking, history, postage meter usage and more.—you can identify so-called rogue shippers and set them on the right track. Centralization also empowers you to establish enterprise rules for controlling and tailoring how certain individuals or user groups can send their parcels.

Case Study: Consolidating technology contracts



Automation

Once data is centralized, it becomes more possible to streamline the more mundane tasks associated with shipping and mailing. For example, if your organization pieces together data from different sources and formats to run regular postage reports, that can become a prolonged and tedious ritual. By pulling from a centralized and homogenized data set, you can automate the reporting process and free employees to work on other jobs that cannot be automated.

Additionally, automation allows you to efficiently meet the needs of key individuals in your organization. If they can easily access historic data necessary to make informed business decisions, such as negotiating carrier contracts, then they are not dependent on others to manually gather and format the data on their behalf. Furthermore, automation gives you the means to set up business rules for employees who ship or mail and even track notifications that are going to recipients.

Case Study: Automating the reporting process



Client:
Ivy League University



Challenge:
Spending six hours to assemble and format information from data silos to produce monthly postage reports



Solution:
AI-powered tool that cuts the reporting process down to six minutes

Optimization

Standardization, centralization, and automation pay off with optimization—the capability of using data-driven insights to make continuous improvements in your shipping and mailing operation.

One way to achieve continuous improvement is to identify spending patterns, then apply these actionable insights to help employees make better delivery selections. You can use data analytics to provide alerts if employees are selecting the wrong service options—such as overnight delivery when a less costly ground delivery option will suffice. AI-powered software can even make real-time recommendations on a

parcel-by-parcel basis to help users choose the optimal delivery option. For example, because carrier rates can change throughout the year, USPS may be the most economical option for the delivery service you need today; but tomorrow it could be UPS or FedEx.



Pitney Bowes Shipping 360®: A platform that puts AI to work for you

Pitney Bowes has harnessed AI to build an advanced software platform that measures up to modern shipping challenges, with the power to deliver data-driven insights and security features that meet regulatory standards for privacy.

The Pitney Bowes Shipping 360® solution is a modular, cloud-based, and scalable platform designed to be easily deployed across your organization. It seamlessly integrates with existing

workflows to support shipping, mailing, receiving and distribution modules, providing complete end-to-end visibility across processes.

Furthermore, Shipping 360 meets the highest standards of shipping and mailing security. It's not only VPAT compliant, but there is also a version of Shipping 360 hosted in GovCloud that is both FedRAMP and StateRAMP authorized—essential for the handling of government data.

Capabilities of the Pitney Bowes Shipping 360 platform include:

- Centralize data administration to eliminate siloed information
- Confirm package status/receipt with automatic notifications
- Establish business rules that promote accountability and curtail rogue shippers
- Postage printing, including for remote workers
- Apply advanced analytics to identify spending trends across an organization
- Provide full chain-of-custody visibility to streamline receiving of parcels
- Set distribution controls to ensure safe delivery of incoming parcels, including smart lockers
- Enable self-service that allows users to rate shop

See how you can bring a competitive edge to your shipping operation with Pitney Bowes Shipping 360.

[Learn More](#)



StateRAMP

What are FedRAMP and StateRAMP and why are they important?

FedRAMP, or the Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program, is how the U.S. government ensures that cloud services used by federal agencies are secure. StateRAMP, the US State Risk and Authorization Management Program, serves the same purpose for 32 states and thousands of related agencies.

The Pitney Bowes SendPro® 360 solution, a government version of Shipping 360, is both FedRAMP and StateRAMP certified. That means the platform meets security standards for NIST 800-53 compliance. Working with a FedRAMP-compliant or StateRAMP-compliant SaaS platform means you are equipped to protect sensitive shipping data and avoid potential legal issues related to security breaches.

Footnotes

1. "The cost of shipping: What customers want," PLS Logistics Services; May 24, 2022.
2. "Superagency in the workplace: Empowering people to unlock AI's full potential," McKinsey & Company; January 28, 2025.
3. 2023 Pitney Bowes Shipping Index

