

# From 14 to One

Go paper to email with a single click

By John Capurso



*Xerox DocuMate 252*

Have you ever used a document scanner to scan a photo or piece of paper? Do any of these words describe your experience? Elegant, intuitive, simple? Probably not, unless it was a Xerox DocuMate scanner, utilizing Xerox's one-touch technology.

We have been trying to get to a less-paper office for years and a document scanner is the obvious component to get us there. But let's face it, most scanners are not as intuitive as they should be. Software that comes with most scanners is not easy to use and can be downright intimidating to the user. There are seemingly endless choices of configurations, settings, and file formats from which to choose. As a result, scanning paper becomes complicated and eventually, avoided. Once the users get through all this, they are usually left with electronic documents on their PCs but little insight or help on how to use the files with other applications such as email and word processing or device such as printers.

Most scanners are not "production" scanners, that is, backroom, high-speed devices (>80 ppm) that spend the better part of their days digitizing papers, staffed by operators whose sole jobs are to "feed" these paper-eating animals. Rather, most scanners are used by general consumers, small and home offices and corporate departments. After these users convert their paper into electronic files, they usually need to "do something with it," such as email, print, archive, OCR, or edit.

So let's take emailing a paper document as an example. The equipment is straightforward; you need a scanner, a PC, and an email client. But with a conventional scanner, there are up to 14 steps to go from paper to email:

1. Start image editing or scanning software
2. Select "Acquire Image"
3. Pre-scan page
4. Set scan area
5. Set resolution
6. Set scan mode
7. Scan page
8. Close TWAIN module
9. Save file
10. Close image editing or scanning software
11. Open email application
12. Create new message
13. Choose "Attach File"
14. Locate saved file on hard disk

Fourteen steps and some of these have multiple mouse clicks. Shouldn't it be easier to email a piece of paper? Of course it should. Xerox scanners, using one-touch technology, take all 14 steps above and accomplish them with the push of a single button. Anyone, especially someone untrained in scanner technology or software, can walk up to a Xerox scanner, insert the document and push one

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button. The next image seen is the email message with the document already attached as a PDF file, waiting for the TO: field to be completed. Soon after that, the user's beaming smile is seen by anyone nearby. Emailing paper should be this easy, but most conventional scanners, including the multi-function, all-in-one devices, require the user to muddle through these steps and seemingly endless clicks. But one-touch goes far beyond email.

One-touch scans a paper document at intelligent scan settings and sends the document to a destination. That destination can be an application such as a word processing application, email, or a device attached to the connected PC such as a printer or fax. The flagship Xerox scanner with this technology is the Xerox DocuMate 252, a fast duplex scanner (25 ppm/50 ipm) with nine pre-set one-touch destinations. The one-touch email example above is just one of the nine pre-sets on the DocuMate 252. Because the DocuMate 252 is designed for workgroup and distributed scanning environments, one job may be to email a paper document, the next may be to print (or copy) a document, and the next may be to fax a document. Minutes later, the DocuMate 252 can archive or OCR paper documents. One-touch enables the same ease of use and single button functionality by multiple users.

Aside from "transactional" scanning, that is, using the scanner as a transport to email, print, or fax, most scanning is done to reduce paper clutter, reduce storage costs, and improve search and retrieval of important information. However, many scanners use image formats such as TIFF or JPEG to store their documents electronically. When scanned documents are archived as image files, retrieval usually requires viewing the file to confirm the retrieval selection. (At that point, the user might as well be flipping through paper files to find the needed document.) This may work fine when searching among a handful of files. But people don't buy a scanner to store so few documents; they usually have hundreds or thousands of documents to manage.

PDF has become a standard file format for shared documents from disparate sources where application, platform, and font sources may not be known or available. Many scanners that offer PDF scanning support only an image of the page in a PDF "wrapper" so that it can be viewed by one of many PDF viewing software such as Adobe Acrobat.

There are several ways to create a PDF file, but for paper documents scanned for search and retrieval, searchable image PDF (sPDF) is the best format. sPDF is a scanned image of the page with an invisible layer of text behind it—the best of both worlds. Searchable image PDF preserves the integrity of the scanned image, including signatures, margin notes, general layout, graphics, photos, etc. The benefits of the invisible text layer are enormous. sPDF files are completely searchable and even selectable for copying to other applications.

sPDF is ideal for many archiving needs. Law firms have taken hundreds of contracts, scanned and stored them as sPDF and then enabled multiple attorneys and staff to search them on network file servers to instantly find the one or multiple documents that meet their particular search criteria. Municipal government offices can take thousands of documents, scan and store them in sPDF onto town-wide servers and achieve similar retrieval results. The uses seem endless.

The DocuMate 252 brings the entire document archiving process full circle. Being the fastest duplex scanner under \$1,000, the DocuMate 252 scans at 25 pages per minute in simplex (one side) scanning mode, or by simultaneously scanning both sides it achieves speeds of 50 images (or sides) per minute in duplex mode. It can scan a document to any desired file folder location, whether on a local PC or network server, using one-touch technology, and save it in a variety of file formats, including sPDF. Using the DocuMate 252, a multi-page paper document can be stored in sPDF with the touch of a button, something that would take far more than the 14 steps in the email example above using a conventional scanner. That's because the DocuMate 252 is anything but conventional.

*For more information, please visit the company's Web site at [www.visioneer.com](http://www.visioneer.com).*