CDW PEOPLE WHO GET IT™

LEGAL EASE: ELECTRONIC–DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT

With the right technology, law firms can seize control of their case documentation, increase data security and staff productivity and reduce costs.

Executive Summary

Lawyers create a lot of content. Along with documents — both the paper and electronic varieties — things like scans, e-mail, photos and faxes clog attorney hard drives.

The significance of this content (client intake forms, witness statements, pleadings, depositions, case settlements and more) is paramount. It represents chains of evidence, paper trails and billable hours, after all, and must be handled with care.

Still, many law firms handle content using a manual system, storing it in boxes and file cabinets. This can result in missing, misnamed and misplaced materials. What's more, recalling a print document years after it was created can take hours, if not days. And making sure it's the most recent version can be a further drain on productivity.

Electronic–document management helps law firms of all sizes create an all–digital workflow. Besides making the storing, retrieving, tracking and destroying of documents easier, EDM boosts a firm's productivity and helps it comply with applicable legal and regulatory requirements.

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Document Management– Challenges and Solutions

In 2011, Jim S. Adler & Associates, a personal–injury law firm with four offices in Texas, deployed an EDM solution to tackle a growing mountain of paper files and improve existing processes.

A significant factor in the law firm's decision to use EMC's software and hardware solution, which includes EMC Documentum, Captiva, ScanPlus and IndexPlus, was the ease with which the firm could integrate the system with its established software.

A year into the deployment, the number of electronic pages the firm generates has jumped from 3 million to 5 million pages. While the number of employees needed to index electronic documents has been reduced by 75 percent, according to Director of Information Technology Dustin Engle.

But not all firms have adopted this approach. Relying on word processors, e–mail and other forms of electronic communication — without a strategy for managing the documents they generate — creates its own set of issues.

Establishing a repeatable workflow can increase productivity and ultimately reduce the costs associated with managing the litany of materials that every case generates. EDM solutions are especially helpful to firms striving to ensure or preserve:

- **Security:** Even documents that aren't regulated by legal or governmental authorities may adhere to other confidentiality standards. In general, electronic content can be secured more easily than paper files and documents. And lawyers can use EDM to define the types of documents that must remain confidential.

- **Compliance:** Regulations ranging from confidentiality to record retention are pervasive. Flexible, customizable EDM solutions allow firms to specify what it means to be in compliance and see when documents have been handled inappropriately.

- **Access:** Compliance and confidentiality requirements often dictate that certain documents are accessible only to select people inside or outside the firm. Controlling that access and being able to account for who has seen or worked on a document are critical functions of an EDM system.

- **Version Control:** If multiple people have modified a document, it's important to know at a glance which version is which, and whether the most current version includes all approved changes. EDM provides the paper trail necessary to show how documents have been handled and modified.

- **Cost:** Handling and storing massive amounts of paper–based documents isn't cheap. Paying couriers for offsite storage and junior staff to enter or find materials adds up. With EDM, firms can take advantage of the enormous

Manual Document Indexing — Good Enough?

A large number of law firms still operate under a default directory set up in Microsoft Word to \server\clientdocs. Staff is advised to store documents under the system calling out the client name, material, document type, date, etc. Limitations of such systems make it difficult to store all types of electronic data properly, employ comprehensive search capabilities and rely on personnel to devotedly follow the process. These restraints can be costly — especially in today's economy.

efficiencies of today's storage technologies to centralize terabytes of electronic data and make it available over high–speed networks.

- **Disaster Recovery:** Natural and man–made disasters plus other misfortune affecting law firms does happen. With EDM, it's easy to store multiple copies of documents on inexpensive, redundant disk drives so authorized employees can access them and remain productive even when the unexpected occurs.

- **Lifecycle Management:** When hundreds of thousands of documents live in boxes and file cabinets, it can be hard to know when some of those documents can (or must) be destroyed. Employing the electronic retention scheduling function of an EDM system can ease that burden.

Many firms employ case management software to track cases from start to finish, but a case's journey through the system often is tied to or requires actions pertaining to specific documents. If the documents are paper–based, information must be entered manually (and correctly) into the case management system.

Today's EDM systems can integrate with a firm's case management system so that, for example, when action has been taken on an electronic document, the case management system sends triggers or alerts to signify that the case has entered the next phase in the process.

Many EDM systems also align well with other IT initiatives. For example, if a firm's IT department is virtualizing its data centers, it can virtualize its document management system.

An EDM Blueprint

An end–to–end EDM system comprises several hardware and software systems that handle documents throughout their lifecycle. In general, their responsibilities encompass:

Document Imaging and Indexing: Paper isn't going away just yet. In fact, most firms still have legacy paper documents that they'd like to store in an EDM system, and they will continue to receive certain case documents in paper form for now.

The first step is to convert those paper documents into an electronic format using an enterprise scanner, multifunction printer or copier. For firms that already have this hardware in place, the primary need is document capture software, which turns paper documents into digital files and presents them to employees for indexing.

Indexing helps identify the document, often by case or client, so it's easy to find later. Optical character recognition software unlocks the words inside a scanned document and turns them into data so that the information is searchable.

For documents that originate in the digital realm, such as Microsoft Office files and e-mail messages, EDM software can integrate with a law firm's productivity applications. When this happens, personnel can pull up the indexing application, apply the proper metadata and effectively "file away" the Word document or e-mail message as an electronic document associated with a case or client simply by clicking an icon or choosing a menu command.

Search and Retrieval: Once documents have been ingested by the EDM system, software makes them searchable. Employees can search for documents based on the information or metadata introduced during indexing, but a more comprehensive EDM solution allows for full-text searching. From a web browser or client application, staff can enter search terms or text strings and pull up relevant documents.

In addition, many EDM solutions now support e-discovery. This process, by which legal parties share electronic information, often pertains to a system's ability to find relevant information in large e-mail archives and then export it in a standard e-discovery format, such as the Electronic Discovery Reference Model (EDRM) for use in other applications.

Document Management: The heart of an EDM solution is the software that allows a firm to monitor and manage a document through its useful life. A robust system allows employees to compare documents to identify differences, tracks changes during serial and parallel document reviews, ensures that the latest version of a document is the one under review (not a prior version), and provides an audit trail of document changes, among other things.

Document management software also may provide security features, depending on attorney needs and policies. The software can control who has access to certain documents, based on roles and responsibilities and can ensure that documents won't be edited or changed, if appropriate. With the right security software add-ons, the document management system can encrypt files when they must be distributed on removable media or via e-mail.

Workflow Integration: Most firms, even if they don't currently use EDM, already have case management systems and other IT-based business processes in place. Software that integrates EDM with legacy systems is crucial to realizing productivity benefits. At the most basic level, EDM software can give

users of other enterprise applications, such as Microsoft SharePoint, access to the firm's documents from within a common interface.

At a higher level of integration, workflow management software helps firms build logical business processes. For example, after an initial client interview, an intake form entered into the EDM system can trigger an alert that tells the appropriate parties to review the document to determine whether a law firm will take the case. If the firm accepts the case, a case folder can be created in the EDM system to house all related documents.

From there, an integrated workflow would push the case forward. For instance, once specific required documents are collected and entered into the EDM system, the case management system can trigger the delivery of demand letters or other correspondence.

Archival and Document Retention: Throughout the process, a firm's documents should be stored on highly available storage systems for rapid access from virtually anywhere. But when cases close, an archival system can automate the process of moving case files off production systems and onto network-attached storage (NAS) devices, storage area networks (SANs) or other storage solutions. These archives are still accessible via the EDM system, should staff need to search and retrieve information from prior cases.

Return on EDM Investment

One reason for not installing an electronic-document management system is that the dollar amount of losses in time, productivity and peripheral costs is less than the price of implementing an EDM. Consider an attorney billing $250 an hour and losing an hour a week due to document inefficiencies. This costs the firm about $13,000 a year. Installing a DMS might, at most, cost $1,000 to $1,500 per user. For some firms, this could result in an ROI in less than one year.

Large-Firm Solution: EMC Documentum

The EMC Documentum family of products offers large law firms (and small firms interested in building an EDM solution that is scalable and can grow as they do) a comprehensive, interoperable platform.

Firms can start out with EMC ApplicationXtender, which supports small offices with just a few software licenses or those with thousands of users. The software can be set up quickly out of the box to capture, organize and route electronic documents and images.

It offers law firms the ability to search, store and retrieve documents using their existing IT infrastructures and integrates seamlessly with Microsoft Office 2010 and

SharePoint 2010. ApplicationXtender also includes automated tracking and reporting via customizable templates, along with features that allow geographically dispersed firms to collaborate on large, complex cases.

ApplicationXtender's module–based approach allows firms to add workflow management functionality using a Process Builder feature. The information rights management or IRM Services for ApplicationXtender add–on protects sensitive documents by assigning them protection policies. That way, if an employee checks out a document and saves it to his notebook computer, the document remains secure.

EMC also offers Captiva software, which works with EMC's (and other providers') document management systems to convert paper, faxes, e–mail and forms into application–ready information. Captiva Intelligent Enterprise Capture solutions can automatically connect information in electronic documents to a firm's case management and other business systems so it becomes part of the workflow.

Products in the EMC Documentum family closely integrate with other enterprise software platforms. These include VMware, RSA, the security division of EMC, along with EMC storage and Data Domain deduplication solutions. For example, firms that have virtualized server resources, using VMware, can easily virtualize their Documentum solutions.

Small–Firm Solution: Informa Software

Informa Software's ImageQuest family of document management solutions offers small firms an economical way of getting documents under control. IQmfp integrates with HP LaserJet multifunction printers and Scanjet scanners to turn those devices into electronic–filing and indexing systems.

The software stores electronic documents as full–text, searchable PDF files and tags them for easy retrieval. It allows attorneys to index, store and retrieve Microsoft Office documents, e–mail and other Windows–compatible files.

Firms that want a broader EDM solution can deploy IQforms, which automates the process of entering information from paper–based forms. The software extracts information automatically from any document type, including semi–structured and unstructured documents such as contracts and police reports. It can read some forms of handwriting, machine print, bar codes, signatures and more.

Informa also offers its IQworkflow product. The software is designed to allow users to create document workflows and audit trails, in turn fostering accountability and compliance.

Benefits of an Electronic–Document Management System

An EDM system offers a number of tangible and intangible benefits including:

Instant Access: Retrieve materials anytime from a computer.

Reduced Storage: Paper document storage takes up space and can be expensive.

Electronic Workflow: A more efficient workflow offers greater productivity.

Search and Retrieval Capabilities: Having files in one place can be a huge time saver.

Application Integration: Smaller firms can glean efficiencies once reserved for large practices.

Disaster Recovery: Electronic files offer the opportunity for enhanced business continuity.

CDW: A Document Management Partner That Gets IT

When your law firm is ready to implement an EDM system, CDW has the experts and resources to get it up and running fast.

We have established strong partnerships with many of the leading vendors of document management solutions in the industry. We've done the research and built a comprehensive lineup of tested, best–of–breed solutions. This allows us to design custom solutions to address your unique document management challenges — at a price point that fits your budget.

Your dedicated CDW account manager and solution architects will identify a variety of products that can fulfill a law firm's EDM needs and make recommendations based on a manufacturer–neutral strategy. Our approach includes:

- Onsite assessment and workflow analysis
- Solutions design
- Vendor evaluation and recommendations
- Product demonstrations
- Detailed price proposals
- Proofs of concept / product evaluations
- Solutions implementation, training and ongoing support

To learn more about CDW electronic–document management solutions, contact your CDW legal sales account manager, call 888.631.4239 or visit CDW.com/legal

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