Extendable ECM System Streamlines Accounts Payable & Payroll Processes for Large, Public University

ImageSource®

> **"DEPARTMENTS ACROSS OUR CAMPUS ARE SAVING MINUTES, HOURS, AND DAYS BY HAVING DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE AT THEIR FINGERTIPS, WITHIN A FAMILIAR FRAMEWORK THAT THEY ALREADY KNOW HOW TO USE."**
> – Accounting Officer for Student Accounting & Cashiering Services

INDUSTRY
Higher Education

SOLUTION
› ECM for Accounts Payable & Payroll

CHALLENGE
› Lost or misplaced documents and untimely searches
› Storage space and security
› AP processing more than 100,000 pages per month with more than 4,000 users
› Audits were time consuming and labor intensive
› Management of document retention

KEY BENEFITS
› Interdepartmental synergies through access to common information
› Image-enabled AP benefits at disparate departments at separate locations
› Extensible to entire institution, providing connection through an enterprise-wide content manage¬ment system
› Automated data entry, including OCR, improves efficiency & accuracy
› Access to images through familiar, established user interface
› Images available to all approved personnel, on campus or remotely, in secure, non-editable format
› Record retrieval for audits more efficient & accurate
› Records Management capabilities for automated disposition of records
› Ease-of-use provided by ILINX tools
› Reduction of physical storage
› Improved compliance

One of the top public research institutions in the nation, this public university has engaged in teaching, research and public service that has helped transform the world. Located close to a state capital, the institu-tion enrolls over 30,000 students, has an annual research budget exceeding $500 million, and thirteen specialized research centers. It also includes a comprehensive health system.

The University was looking to initiate a content management solution capable of serving the entire enterprise—first introducing the system to Accounts Payable and then extending the solution university-wide over five-phases.

The initial implementation involved a partnership between the Office of Administration and the Health System, located 17 miles away. A system was needed that was robust enough to handle the physical distance, and that would allow the Health System, which has its own administrative units, to work collaboratively with Administration.

Inadequate Processes, Security, Compliance & Physical Storage
Lost or misplaced documents and un-timely searches were a daily challenge. Storage was a significant concern—Accounting & Financial Services alone had about fifteen off-site storage garages for accounting documents. Basement storage risked damage by natural disaster.

The need for tightened security around access to documents was also a driving factor. Another impetus was the need to manage documents, including automat-ed retention schedules and disposition. A public sector entity, audit burdens increased and the University required better standards for adhering to compliance laws.

"We measure our ROI by efficiencies and by our ability to satisfy compliance needs," stated an Accounting Officer. "Our goal is to provide a higher quality of service, and be more responsive to our departmental customers, by giving them the information they need to best do their jobs."

The institution sought to leverage the system they developed for AP decisions/approvals—user-friendly Cold Fusion-based decision support query tools that have a consistent look and feel. The goal was to allow users to stay in their familiar environment with access to all images in the ECM system, not appear as a separate system to the end user.

The primary business function in Accounts Payable is the processing of 100,000+ pages of AP related documents per month. Documents are accessed by more than 4,000 users from departments on campus, and from remote units as far away as 100 miles. Previously, users would call Accounts Payable, have a worker locate the desired document and physically transmit it back to the requestor. Taking as much

as three or four days to locate a particular document, audits were time consuming and labor intensive.

ImageSource Engaged to Initiate ECM

To provide more effective and efficient business processes, adhere to the many compliance standards, and to provide world class back office functions, the University turned to ImageSource to integrate their systems with an enterprise content management system, starting with their proprietary accounting software. The new system increases the control, visibility and efficiency of their document-based operations.

The AP department business objectives:

› Imaging, storage and retrieval of AP records for the main campus and the Healthcare System

› Streamline document access to increase efficiency and security

› Allow decision makers access to transactions/statuses during AP processing

› Save space & labor costs associated with manual filing

› Minimize risk of lost documents

› Improve customer service through immediate document retrieval

› Install architecture robust enough to support an enterprise-wide solution

AUDITS THAT USED TO TAKE DAYS TO COMPLETE NOW TAKE 5-10 SECONDS.

ECM Streamlines Department Processes

ImageSource integrated Oracle IPM with the AP decision support system using ILINX® Custom Web API. This system moved the University from a completely manual accounting process to an image-enabled system. All accounting documentation is now available university-wide, without ever leaving the University's AP system.

Once invoices are scanned, they are indexed using Kofax Ascent Capture Internet Server (ACIS) software. Index values are then validated through the AP system integration—database lookups automate data entry. Although the Institution has excellent connectivity between the main campus and the Health System, ACIS provides fault tolerance for the University. ACIS has the capabil-

ity, in the case of network disconnect, to store batches locally and then transmit them when network communication is restored, ensuring the integrity of data.

With the large existing investment in programming resources and training for the decision support environment, it was critical that users not be encumbered with having to master a new system.

ILINX products allow users to access AP documents with one simple click. A link allows the user to receive a PDF of a document associated with a selected transaction, without leaving the familiar interface. Hence, no training is required.

"Many users probably still are not aware they're using an EDMS, and that was the goal", the Accounting Officer observed. "They just know they now have access to their images."

Scripts using the data in Oracle IPM's audit database have enabled the University to apply retention schedules to documents. Administrators are automatically alerted when a document approaches the end of its retention period.

Once it was functional in AP, the University expanded the system to include Payroll for both the campus and the Health System. OCR technology identifies employee ID numbers from medical center records and database lookups are performed to their payroll software system. Automated indexing has resulted in improved accuracy and speed. The Medical Center Finance division was brought online after Payroll.

Multiple Benefits Result

The scalable, automated document imaging and retrieval system has brought a multitude of benefits to the entire organization. Savings in cost, labor and space, improved access, efficiency, and security have been achieved. Audits that used to take days to complete now take five to ten seconds.

Because it is an enterprise platform, many future implementations are planned. Departments to benefit from the solution next include Environmental Health & Safety Services and Student Accounting. And more are lining up to be added to the system as they see the advantages unfold.

Technology

ILINX®

ILINX EXPORT

Extract, convert and migrate data and documents from your ECM system.

ORACLE®

ORACLE® IMAGING AND PROCESS MANAGEMENT

Oracle IPM system proactively and automatically delivers critical business content where and when it is needed. By integrating transaction documents and information into common business processes and third party applications, Oracle IPM drives return on investment (ROI) organization-wide. www.oracle.com

KOFAX

KOFAX® ASCENT CAPTURE INTERNET SERVER

Ascent Capture Internet Server (ACIS) enables organizations to transfer docu¬ments and data capture branch offices to a central Ascent Capture installation via a corporate network or the Internet. By embracing distributed capture, organizations can react more quickly to incoming information, reduce costs, en¬hance security and improve productivity versus paper-based processes. www.kofax.com

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