

Electronic Documents and Workflow Improve Caseload Management at Employment Security Department



THE AUTOMATED PROCESSING OF EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS HAS ENABLED ESD TO MONITOR STAFF PRODUCTIVITY, IDENTIFY BOTTLENECKS AND DISTRIBUTE WORKLOADS. SAVINGS HAVE BEEN REALIZED IN HARDCOPY STORAGE COSTS AND REDUCED LABOR. IN ADDITION, FILES ARE NOW MORE SECURE.

ORGANIZATION

Washington State Employment Security Department

www.wa.gov/esd

INDUSTRY

State Government

SOLUTION

Imaging and Automated Workflow

CHALLENGES

- › Customers had excessive wait times while paperwork was processed
- › Transition from a manual process to workflow automation
- › Move to one centralized mail distribution TeleCenter
- › Reduce file storage
- › Improve management of case loads
- › Balance workloads for a geographically dispersed user community
- › Integrate with a complex existing line of business system

KEYBENEFITS

- › Enterprise-wide solution for content storage, retrieval, workflow routing, and records management
- › Automated management of case loads
- › Ability to monitor productivity of staff, determine bottlenecks and electronically make modifications in distribution
- › Claims are processed faster with better quality decisions
- › Reduction in labor associated with mail processing
- › Reduction in hard copy storage cost
- › Files are safer from a disaster recovery perspective

The Washington State Employment Security Department (ESD) supports workers during times of unemployment by providing a temporary source of income while seeking work. Each year over 250,000 initial applications are filed with ESD, where 150 adjudicators handle about 43,000 issues per month. Because ESD is responsible for paying unemployment insurance benefits accurately, and on time, they moved to an integrated document archive and automated workflow retrieval system to support adjudication of unemployment claims. Their goal was to improve service to employers and claimants with better access to information, quicker updates, faster processing times and higher quality decisions.

System Goes Enterprise-Wide

With having originally implemented an ImageSource® content management solution for Tax and Wage, ESD had the infrastructure for this technology initiative. Originally, ImageSource was selected based on extensive experience and solid customer references with other government related projects. Due to the success of the first ImageSource implementation in Tax and Wage, the Oracle IPM system was extended to the Unemployment Insurance Benefit side of the department for content storage, retrieval and workflow routing.

Huge Volumes Cause Storage Problems

Antiquated work processes and manual systems still being used on the benefits side of ESD slowed the process of distributing and balancing unemployment claims to adjudicators. Two separate TeleCenters, located in Seattle and

Spokane, were individually receiving and distributing mail. ESD was overwhelmed by the volume of paper it was bringing in, and also required to store for seven years. Numbered file boxes filled basements and lined the walls of the ESD office space. Searching for records required extra resources and proved cumbersome as well as time and labor intensive. Adjudicators were still completely managing their case loads through paper copies including unemployment applications and employer's reports.

Efficiencies and Automation Needed for Improved Case Load Management

Supervising the management of case loads, optimizing resources, and balancing the work load between two locations was difficult with the manual, paper-based system. If one location was extremely busy and the other slow there was no way to balance the workload and optimize resources.

The system required that hard copies of cases were sorted and distributed to adjudicator's desks, based on the last four digits of the claimants social security number. One employee could be work-



ing 30 cases while another had only five, simply because of the way the social security number came in.

Another difficulty for management was that certain claims required special expertise, such as language or a unique skill set. The process did not have an efficient method developed to correctly allocate the proper resources for specialized situations.

On top of all of these challenges, the federal government continues to reduce agency financial resources, forcing a move toward more efficient and automated methods of completing business.

“WE HAVE BENEFITED FROM THE ORACLE IPM SOLUTION FOR THE PAST SIX YEARS IN TAX AND WAGE ADMINISTRATION. IT’S EXCITING TO EXPAND THE PLATFORM TO THE BENEFIT SIDE AND SEE THE EFFICIENCIES GAINED BY STAFF AND THE BETTER SERVICES PROVIDED TO THE CLAIMANTS.”

– Craig Baldwin, Systems Administrator for ESD

Best-In-Breed Technology Comes Together

For content storage, retrieval and workflow routing, Oracle IPM was utilized. Kofax Ascent Capture for image scanning and data validation was integrated, including the Internet Server module. It enables geo-graphically dispersed operational units so that document capture could be supported remotely, and managed centrally. Captaris Rightfax supports enterprise inbound faxing requirements, while a content-addressable EMC Centera enterprise storage platform provides long-term content storage and records disposition. ImageSource ILINX® Import and Export Agents facilitate a smooth integration of all technologies.

One Centralized Mail Center

Mail is now processed from one centralized location. As mail comes in it is scanned into Kofax Ascent Capture, indexed and then enters the workflow routing through ILINX Release Script and Oracle IPM. Cases are electronically distributed to adjudicators based on work load, skills, claimant language preference, issue requirements and geographic location. Bar coded validation

fields on outgoing forms allow documents to be automatically indexed and processed, once returned by the claimant. The solution allows ESD to effectively maximize each adjudicator’s time and specialty and to manage workloads between two separate TeleCenters.

Workflow Optimizes the Claims Process

The ImageSource solution manages documents and electronic reports critical to the claim adjudication process. Electronic work packages are automatically created and routed through a workflow, based on predetermined business rules that optimize the claims process. The ImageSource ILINX Integration Suite integrates Oracle IPM with ESD’s Expert Fact Finder web-based system in order to assign cases based on a wide variety of adjudicator skills. It automatically schedules interviews based on adjudicator availability.

ILINX Seamless Integration Provides Most Current Information for Adjudicators

A unique part of this solution allows faxes to automatically enter the workflow process, providing adjudicators with the most current information for files they are processing. RightFax accepts faxes as they come in. ILINX then imports these faxes, as well as other documents, directly into Oracle IPM, which sends them to the appropriate person, based on the workflow rules. Custom interfaces keep all the claims in synch with the main-frame benefit system.

Gains Realized from Enterprise Solution

State-of-the-art technologies have been successfully implemented across The Washington State Employment Security Department. The scalable technologies encompass an enterprise-wide solution for content storage, retrieval, workflow routing, records management and related work processes throughout the department.

Supervisors now have the ability to easily monitor the productivity of their staff, determine bottlenecks and make modifications to work distribution electronically. Claims are processed much faster with higher quality decisions improving service to employers and claimants. There has been a significant reduction in labor associated with mail processing and hard copy storage cost and files are much safer from a disaster recovery perspective.

Technology



ILINX IMPORT

Inject data into capture software for processing & delivery to ECM systems.

This easy-to-use interface imports a data and documents from a variety of sources, including file systems, email and text delimited, into capture applications where they can be processed and placed into an imaging or document management system. It’s robust service-oriented architecture and logging capabilities provide mission critical performance.

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ImageSource, Inc

360.943.9273 T

360.943.4449 F

image@imagesourceinc.com

www.imagesourceinc.com

612 Fifth Avenue SW

Olympia, Washington 98501