

State of Colorado

Replacing paper and CDs with digital content management saves time and money



Business overview

As in other states in the U.S., Colorado's state government serves its constituents through agencies and departments, such as the departments of health, law enforcement, motor vehicles, natural resources, workers' compensation, and so on. To help more than ten of the state's agencies meet their myriad document processing needs, the state's Division of Central Services (DCS) operates a centralized content management system—the Electronic Data Warehouse.

Challenges

Various state agencies come to DCS with their document processing needs. DCS either provides the needed service for them, or helps them select an appropriate technology solution. In the past, DCS spent the majority of time scanning documents, downloading images to CDs, and shipping the CDs to the agencies.

High volume scanning project forces new solution

Approached with a request to scan six million documents, DCS soon realized that creating CDs wouldn't enable its customers to easily access or manage their own records. DCS began to search for an "electronic file cabinet" solution that would provide all of its customers with a direct, secure, and online method for storing, retrieving, and sharing data.

EMC solution

To effectively manage the six million documents, the state of Colorado turned to EMC® ApplicationXtender®—a software solution that electronically stores, organizes, and manages virtually any kind of business content. Now, instead of downloading information to CDs and sending them back and forth, the state DCS and agencies can access and search for information in one central, online repository.

"Ease of use and powerful functionality without complexity is what sold us on EMC ApplicationXtender," says Cindy Nardini, southern regional manager of the service bureau. "The central, easily accessible repository of digital information was a must, but the solution's e-mail, redaction, and file organization capabilities were also big pluses."

Easy-to-use, electronic system adopted quickly

"The EMC ApplicationXtender system was so easy to use and set up, and its advantages over paper and CDs were so clear, it didn't take long before we were using it for other agencies as well," says Nardini. Within a year and a half, the six million documents became 41 million documents managed by the system, and that number continues to grow daily as more documents are scanned into the system.

Today, approximately 200 users in the Colorado government access the ApplicationXtender system using a web browser and EMC WebXtender®. Users can e-mail comments and links to documents from within the system, without having to copy and paste into a new application, and they can easily search across folders and subfolders for information.

Huge time savings with digital retrieval

Before implementing EMC ApplicationXtender, retrieving a document usually meant going through a file cabinet or a box in the basement to locate the correct CD. Now the same document can be retrieved in seconds. Multiple people retrieve documents every day, which adds up to a significant time savings.

ApplicationXtender gives staff at the agency level immediate access to their own data, saving time and enabling agencies to provide a faster response to requests from citizens of Colorado. In addition, because ApplicationXtender has been able to meet the vast majority of the agency document processing needs, DCS spends much less time trying to figure out what solution might be best. They simply deploy another ApplicationXtender application.

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Improved security and fast backup

Moving paper documents to digital media has also dramatically improved the security of the state agencies’ documents. Besides eliminating the risk of physical damage in a warehouse or office file cabinet, the new system enables state personnel to share the information more easily while still protecting confidential information thanks to the redaction capability built into ApplicationXtender. “Now it is easy to redact personal information, such as social security numbers, before sharing a document,” says Nardini.

In addition, by using EMC DiskXtender® to automatically backup the content stored in ApplicationXtender to EMC Centera® network attached storage, the state has two copies of the data.

Increased efficiency with integration

To further increase efficiency for employees, the State of Colorado used the ApplicationXtender software development kit (SDK) to integrate databases in four different agencies with the ApplicationXtender system. The integration of ApplicationXtender and a peace officer training database, for instance, makes it easy for ApplicationXtender users in the law enforcement agency to check on the status of an officer’s training and view records without having to log on to a separate application.

Summary

EMC ApplicationXtender saves the state of Colorado countless hours previously spent retrieving paper documents and downloading and shipping CDs of information back and forth between the state’s DCS and agencies. Not only can state employees search for and retrieve documents within seconds, rather than minutes or hours, but the information is much more secure.



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