

Law Firm Improves Efficiency and Reduces Expenses

Overview

- + Law Firm
- + 26 attorney, 6 partners
- + Specialize in trial litigation, antitrust, & government investigation

Firm Objectives

- Improve access to all files
- Reduce time spent retrieving case matter
- Contain rising costs associated with document creation and storage
- Eliminate need for Offsite storage
- Improve Client Representation and Service
- Maintain compliancy
- Eliminate manual processes subject to human error

"We are more organized and efficient than I ever thought possible. I am not tripping over files anymore."

Solution Improves client representation, reduces case research & development turnaround time for lawyers and offers immediate cash savings.

The Challenge

A law firm in Washington, DC provides focused representation in high-stakes legal proceedings. The practice concentrates on trial and appellate litigation, antitrust and government investigations as well as enforcement proceedings. A growing practice, the firm is represented by 5 partners, and a total of 28 lawyers.

Disjointed systems coupled with outdated work habits had personnel across all departments feeling frustrated with paper-based tasks. The firm possesses 20,000 files, most of which contain hundreds of hard-copy documents secured in large folders. Incoming mail, including decisions from the courts, hearing notices, and client correspondence was hand-routed from the secretary, to the administrative department, to the paralegal, where the information is then manually input into the file. Tracking and locating them in a sea of documentation was becoming increasingly difficult. Hard copies of all documents created were printed, duplicated, and placed into a file. Closed cases were kept onsite for 2 years, and then were placed into Iron Mountain boxes, bar-coded and labeled according to their contents and sent away to offsite secured storage. There were no systems in place for managing closed case backlogs, or purging historical documents; the cost of offsite storage was steadily increasing with each new box added. Tracking the paper trail was nearly impossible, and there was no control over who could access files or vital information. The firm was growing rapidly, which meant even more work for the administrator. Although they had purchased Practice Management software to create internal improvements, there was no resolve to the bigger issue at hand—the explosion of paper.

Meridian's Approach

After evaluating the law firm's environment, quantitative data and workflow observations were summarized. The findings included current spending of each process studied, opportunities for improvements, and preliminary recommendations. A phased-in implementation was recommended to ensure that all employees were proficiently tested and trained on each component before further integration. Since the networked copiers were all equipped with embedded scanners, it was agreed that onsite documents would be moved into the system on a "day-forward approach". Each time a file was accessed or retrieved from the filing cabinet, its contents were to be scanned into the database. Since each file was assigned a unique number, the system was designed to automatically route and index the documents based on this number. Bates Stamping was used to achieve this on all newly generated documents. Special bar-coded paper was implemented to quickly scan in documents, and have them automatically routed to their appropriate folder.



Hardware

Ricoh Aficio MP 8000 SP

80PPM with scan and print

Ricoh Aficio MP 2051 SP

20PPM with scan and print

Ricoh Aficio MP 3350SP

33PPM with scan and print

Ricoh Aficio SPC 411 DN

41PPM color printer

Ricoh Aficio SP 5100 DN

51PPM printer

Solutions

Fortis

Electronically captures, stores, and organizes documents and business information

Allows easy retrieval, editing, annotating, and distribution of documents

Services

Managed Print Services

Analyze and consolidate print environment

Automatically submit meters

Provide one low price for all networked output devices

Meridian Hardware Maintenance

Priority Response Time

Uptime Guarantees

Preventative Maintenance

Afterhours & On-call Service

Available

meridian

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The Solution

The staff identified immediate benefits of having the documents accessible at the click of a button, redundant office processes streamlined through automation. Now, attorneys receive updates, correspondences, and notes from paralegals straight to their smartphones or other remote means.

Meridian provided secure archiving tools and the ability to devise a complete disaster recovery plan. The firm saw a dramatic decrease in physical paper flow throughout the office. Files are scanned and archived electronically, and the need for constant printing, copying, hard-copy filing, and time consuming retrieval methods are a thing of the past. All documents are scanned into the database using OCR (optical character recognition), and become searchable by a simple word queue. Countless hours that were once spent managing documents are now re-directed towards enhancing their customer service, case research/representation, and new client intake.

Fortis' "Form It" allows them to initiate their client intake processes online, with completed new client background and consent forms automatically routed to the administrative and paralegal departments for review. Dockets are automatically routed to the administrator, and approved for accurate and expedited invoicing and billing.

With over five hours of daily personnel time saved by implementing this new process, as well as eliminating \$20,000 per year in offsite storage space, and saving thousands of dollars on paper generation, hardware costs, and maintenance, the firm has gained efficiency, and most importantly, a competitive edge. The implantation of this new plan was fast, easy to use, and provided a single solution to each of their workflow inefficiencies.

Benefits

- Quickly store, index, retrieve and transmit client communications and correspondences
- Minimize malpractice liability through proactive action
- Offsite storage no longer needed
- Immediate access to client and case files remotely or from the court room
- Improve compliance with state & federal privacy, SEC & other regulations
- Simplified document indexing with Bates Stamping for Unique Numbering
- Time and cost savings in distributing and sharing documents with outside counsel
- Increase service level, quality of representation, speed of service and billability through indexing and retrieving of all content

Meridian is a solutions-centric professional services firm headquartered in the Washington DC metro area. A leading provider of integrated document systems, Meridian works with organizations across all verticals identifying opportunities for operational improvements and efficiencies. Having long been a trusted partner in the marketplace, we take an innovative approach to document and network management.

Control and reduce costs associated with IT, multifunctional printers, document management and workflow. Find out more at whymeridian.com.