

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION (EEOC) USES LIVELINK AS A PLATFORM FOR AUTOMATING THE AGENCY'S WORKFLOW, CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING AND DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT

Correspondence Tracking System Project

This project won the 2003 InfoWorld 100 Award. The InfoWorld 100 Awards honor real-world IT projects that use technology in smart, innovative, creative ways to meet business and technical objectives. Every year, InfoWorld's editorial staff names 100 companies that have made the best use of technology to enhance their business.

Description of Challenge

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's (EEOC) Executive Secretariat (ES) and the Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs (OCLA) are responsible for assigning, controlling, and tracking inquiries and correspondence coming into EEOC from the public, members of Congress, White House, EEOC offices, and other government agencies. In the course of a single year, EEOC receives an average of 4000+ letters and inquiries that the EXECSEC and OCLA offices are responsible for tracking. In addition to tracking incoming correspondence, EEOC needs to track its responses.

Since the early 1980s, both EEOC's EXECSEC and OCLA offices have been using customized database-tracking systems to handle their correspondence tracking requirements. But these systems did not provide document management capabilities. As a result, all correspondence and responses have been stored in a central location, in hardcopy (paper) form.

Momentum Systems designed and implemented an integrated Correspondence Control Tracking System (CTS) in 2002 to track each and every piece of correspondence that comes in or goes out of EEOC through EXECSEC and OCLA.

This new system enables the staff to:

- Scan correspondence;
- Enter critical tracking data;
- Set a course for an appropriate response (using workflow to enforce the business process);
- Generate editable form letter replies;
- Protect data through passwords and permissions;
- Store, share, and manage critical information digitally.

Here's how the system works: Once correspondence enters the agency, each piece is scanned and logged into the system, creating a Correspondence Package. The Package is given a unique control number (based on date and sequence) and an appropriate due date (if required). Users can then access the Correspondence Package in the system in order to add, update, and review any of its documents.

After the Correspondence Package is created, a pre-defined workflow "moves" the Correspondence Package to the next assignment. For example, the system denotes which office should prepare a response, the level of the official who should sign it, and the offices that should be provided copies. The system is also capable of generating editable acknowledgement and referral letters from pre-defined

templates. Historical data about the Correspondence Package and the associated workflow can be viewed through user-friendly searches and customized reports.

All records in EEOC CTS are protected from unauthorized access through appropriate administrative, physical, and technical safeguards. These safeguards include use of passwords and group privileges to restrict access to those with a “need to know” in order to perform their duties.

For this solution, Momentum Systems initiated a lifecycle development effort in order to design and build the solution, using:

- Open Text Livelink
- Macromedia JRUN
- MS Internet Information Server
- Customized Java code base
- Windows O/S
- Oracle Database

Livelink is the underlying Electronic Document Management System (EDMS) for CTS. It facilitates the storage, sharing, and management of critical information and processes for CTS through a web-based (thin-client) interface. CTS uses a Java front-end that communicates with Livelink through Livelink’s Application Program Interface (LAPI). The scanning solution uses Kofax software for initial capture and document release to Livelink and Adobe Capture for PDF conversion. To make CTS a stand-alone solution, Momentum also migrated legacy data from two existing mainframe systems—the EXECSEC Correspondence Control Tracking System (CCTS) and AnzioLite/File-Pro database system for OCLA.

Solution Highlights

- Correspondence Control and Tracking System application integrated with Livelink COTS
- Fully leverages Livelink COTS for document management, workflow, records management, search, and security
- Full lifecycle implementation representing all phases of software design, build, test, and deployment
- Info World 100 Award winning solution for 2003
- Legacy data migration and conversion support for Livelink COTS
- Creates tracking “packages” to combine both structured and unstructured data under a single Livelink COTS graphical user interface
- Strong partnership illustrating exceptional team work between EEOC, Momentum Systems, and Open Text Corporation

Throughout the course of the EEOC project, Momentum executed a quality control initiative following the company’s Software Quality Assurance (SQA) program. The purpose of SQA is to provide management and customers with visibility into the software development process. The checks performed by SQA help ensure a high quality deliverable software and documentation solution for EEOC.

Momentum is committed to the production of high quality deliverables that accurately document the detailed functional requirements of the EEOC solution. This goal is realized by conducting peer and management reviews, as well as by evaluating each deliverable before it is released to EEOC.

The CTS solution was thoroughly evaluated and tested by the government prior to formal release in 2002. CTS met or exceeded all requirements set forth by EEOC including 508 accessibility and its objectives of compliance with the Government Paperwork Elimination Act (GPEA).

Momentum Systems provided all required professional services for this project on time with no appreciable cost variances. The EEOC CTS Project received an InfoWorld 100 Award. The InfoWorld 100 honors IT initiatives that make use of innovative technology in order to further an organization's goals.

Commissioner's Notation Voting System Project

Description of Challenge

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's Executive Secretariat (ES) is responsible for the receipt, documentation, review, coordination, and monitoring of all policy development activities and all Decision Documents flowing to and from the Offices of the Chair, the Commissioners, and other Commission offices. There were three information systems that had been employed to assist in carrying out these responsibilities. These include: the Notation Votes System (NVS), Imagelink Business System (IBS), and the Document Control System (DCS). The NVS is a database system used to track the voting records of the Commissioners on all matters directed to the Commissioners for a vote. NVS provides status information, voting histories, reporting, and generates routing sheets for the notation of votes. The third system listed, IBS, is a proprietary scanning and imaging system that indexes and converts hard copy NVS and DCS documents to electronic tagged image format files (TIFF). The converted TIFF files are transferred to and stored on CD-ROM. The DCS is also an R-Base system used to track various legal documents such as amicus curiae, subpoena determinations, policy guidance, Office of Federal Operations (OFO) decisions, Commissioners' charges and charge withdrawals.

Previously, this function had been a labor intensive, manual process that entails the ES receiving Decision Documents from various sources to compile a paper Decision Document package, data entry, and the manual input of not only data attributes but also voting statistics, and "walking" the Decision Document packages around to the Commissioners for review and voting. In an effort to automate and streamline this process, the ES and the other Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Headquarters participants require the development of a system that will enable the compilation, movement, and tracking of the Decision Documents electronically.

The Solution

In an effort to automate and streamline this process, Momentum Systems designed and implemented an integrated new Notational Votes System (NVS) in 2005 that enables the compilation, movement, voting, and tracking of the Decision Documents electronically using Livelink COTS as the primary infrastructure. This new solution leveraged EEOC's existing Livelink infrastructure for rapid and cost effective implementation. The new NVS provides for the capture and conversion of the hard copy supplemental information into a searchable image file.

Additionally, the new consolidated system enables staff to:

- Support field office and Headquarters personnel throughout their business processes.
- Provide more accurate and more flexible Decision Document development.
- Provide a tool, not just a filing cabinet.
- At a minimum, maintain current functionality of the existing system
- Modernize system with new and beneficial technologies.
- Provide flexibility to follow the business process across geographic boundaries.
- Standardize and streamline business processes across EEOC for notation vote activity.
- Improve end-user productivity.

Here's how the system works:

1. A Decision Document is received and/or created by EEOC
2. Each piece is scanned and logged into its appropriate holding bin within the system (Livelink) based on Decision Document Type.
3. Support staff personnel will then create a "Decision Document Package" by entering key fields associated with the document in an electronic form and attaching the appropriate document to the package.
4. After the Decision Document Package is created, a pre-defined Livelink workflow based on Decision Document Type advances the Package to the next assignment step.
5. Users within the ES will then add additional information to the package – such as consideration period dates, issues, basis, etc. All information added to the package is transparently stored in Livelink COTS
6. The Livelink workflow then routes the package to the Chair, Vice Chair, and Commissioner offices for voting, where voting information on issues are recorded, and overall approval status of the package is recorded.
7. After completion, acknowledgement e-mails and notifications are automatically sent using Livelink to all interested parties regarding the outcome of the package. Then, the package and associated files are write-protected, archived, and categorized for records management.

Information concerning current and historical Decision Document Packages and associated Livelink workflow viewed through user-friendly searches and customized reports. All records in EEOC NVS are protected from unauthorized access through appropriate administrative, physical, and technical safeguards using Livelink COTS permission architecture. These safeguards include use of passwords and group access privileges to restrict access to only those with a "need to know" to perform their duties; in addition to "view only" screens, fields, and reports based on Livelink workflow step assignment.