

DocuWare®

APPLICATION PROFILE



American Electronic Imaging Company, Inc.

Industry:

Research services provider for the energy industry (hydro/electric/natural gas/petroleum)

Application:

Government regulations and archival records

The Problem:

Needed to extract specific nodes of information from large libraries of legal, regulatory and procedural filings

The Solution:

DocuWare document management system

The Benefit:

With DocuWare serving as the company's backbone technology, the company was able to provide new, valuable services to its customers.

American Electronic Imaging Company, Inc. (AEIC) is a member of the MacKeough Group family of companies. It was first created as an internal administrative support division of the parent company in 1994 and was subsequently incorporated as a separate business entity in 1996. AEIC's original core competence was publishing federal archival records on CD-ROM for use by participants in the North American energy industry. Today, AEIC's core competence is taking large, complex data sets and rendering them intelligent, a process they call content management. AEIC counts among its clients such companies as the Los Alamos National Labs, ENRON, Duke Energy, Piedmont Natural Gas and TransCanada Pipeline, Booz, Allen & Hamilton, among many others.

The Problem

Prior to the existence of AEIC, Patrick Keough, President of AEIC, ran another company that provided energy research to nearly 800 clients including utility companies, law firms and government agencies. "If someone needed information from the FERC (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission) or needed an energy-related document searched and retrieved, we were one of the primary companies they hired," said Keough.

To best serve his clients, Keough had a team of researchers working on-site at the FERC. "It was seven or eight years ago that the first rumors of electric deregulation were heard," says

Keough, "Normally, when a market goes from a regulated to a deregulated environment, competition enters into the equation and information becomes a commodity." Sensing the sort of opportunity that only comes around once in a lifetime, Keough put his mind to the study of how the coming deregulation would impact his information research business. "With these parameters in mind, I began to think about the types of information that would be useful to those now faced with unprotected markets."

In preparation for the coming deregulation, the FERC required all jurisdictional energy providers to file Open Access Tariffs. ▶



Keough's company collected all these documents and began to sort through them. Each tariff filing was between 2,000 to 3,000 pages long, and although they were all supposed to contain the same information, it didn't take long to realize that each company provided the required information in its own unique way. This made comparison of one company's information against another's almost impossible, or at least very difficult. If the information

in the Open Access Tariffs was to be useful, Keough knew he'd have to find some way to render "the information intelligent." With these forces in play, Keough decided he needed a new way to capture, catalog, analyze and present information to his clients. Keough, a former intelligence officer with the US Army's elite Special Operations Command, took some cues from his former employer's experiments with message traffic management and

began to study the emerging world of "information technology" in search of a commercial electronic document management solution (EDM). Although turnkey commercial EDM solutions were still pretty much in their infancy at the time, he felt this technology could be the solution he needed. So he set out to find a document management solution that could help him achieve this goal.

The DocuWare Solution

Because Keough was in the information business and not the document management business, he wanted a turnkey solution that wouldn't require too many people to implement. His search took a year. "I looked at a lot of document management platforms," said Keough, "just about all of them that were out there at the time. In the end, the solution from DocuWare Corporation was at the top. They had

the turnkey solution, the hardware, the software, the training and the product, that looked like it could do what we wanted it to do."

AEIC also liked how DocuWare was easy to understand and use. "I wanted a solution that I didn't have to spend a year learning how to use," said Keough. "More importantly, I wanted a solution that my customers could learn quickly. I wanted to give my customer a product that was intuitive, that could stand-alone out of the box and didn't rely on any other software being resident." The DocuWare solution met all of AEIC's requirements.

In early 1996, Keough contacted DocuWare Corporation and became one of their first CDSERVICE Partners, purchasing only DocuWare and the CDSERVICE module at that time. After three days of on-site training at DocuWare Corporation, Keough and his staff went back to their offices in Virginia and got to work on the stack of Open Access Tariffs. AEIC used DocuWare to organize the information contained in documents and then indexed the information in

a way that was valuable and made sense to their customers. "Based on the 30 plus years of experience that my research team had in supporting information requests, we knew what information companies wanted and how they asked for that information," said Keough. "So we indexed not just the documents themselves, but also specific and parts of documents based on how our customers request information from them."

The DocuWare CDSERVICE module is designed for the customer who wants to put documents on a CD-ROM in a way that makes them fully searchable and retrievable on any PC without need of any additional software. Every CD set that AEIC creates contains an easy-to-use retrieval module, which is installed to a customer's PC with a small utility. This allows instant access to any stored document simply by using any one or any combination of index fields and/or key words. DocuWare's results? "In just nine weeks, we took that giant data set and produced a package CD set and manual that was ready to sell," said

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Keough. "That's phenomenal!" With the success of this first product, AEIC was born.

And soon AEIC began to grow and expand. They created other energy

information products with DocuWare. Today, AEIC has a suite of five different energy-related CD products. To support the growth in products, AEIC expanded their

DocuWare system. They switched to faster scanners, moved from a single workstation to a networked environment and finally hired more employees.

DocuWare Results

Using DocuWare, Keough was able to deliver the information his customers wanted and needed in a way that made sense to them. As a result, AEIC's information products have enabled them to "become the information partner" to a number of utilities, including the FERC," said Keough. The DocuWare solution has been serving his company and their customers without fail for five years. During that time DocuWare has never caused Keough to doubt his choice. "The customers like the way DocuWare works," said Keough. "DocuWare has gotten better and stronger over the years with the addition of so many new built-in features."

Another reason AEIC has used the product so successfully is that DocuWare's architecture allowed AEIC to continuously improve their information products. "We had a lot of unknowns in the beginning," remembers Keough. "We would get feedback from our customers on new ways they wanted to retrieve information. DocuWare always allowed us to re-engineer anything that we failed to build into the initial product releases, and it allowed us to do this seamlessly without any hassles to our customers."

"Starting a new company with new technology takes commitment," remembers Keough. "Getting started with DocuWare seemed like a lot of

money to us in the beginning. But in reality, the total start-up cost was very manageable, given how easy it was to learn and how quickly we got the product out the door." AEIC achieved profitability with their information product in its first year. "After three sales of our product we were on the verge of breaking even," said Keough. "And from the fourth sale on we were making money."

But what really surprised Keough is that his involvement with DocuWare grew into a whole series of EDM-based business services. "We originally got involved with DocuWare to sell energy-related information products," said Keough. "But now we're doing full-blown service bureau work and document management consulting." Today, AEIC continues to produce and support energy-related informational products, provides electronic service bureau services to both commercial and government clients and is getting ready to launch their newest service, "Archives-on-the-Web". "It was AEIC's energy information product customers that really got the service bureau business going," says Keough. "They liked what the company did with FERC tariffs and wanted AEIC to take the same process and apply it to the archival records in their own file cabinets."

While there are other imaging service bureaus out there, Keough

thinks it's his own direct experience with DocuWare that has made him the service bureau of choice for his customers. "One of the things that sets us apart from other service bureaus and EDM consultants, is that for the past five years, we've actually been using this product" said Keough, "We've sent hundreds of thousands of complex documents through it." Keough believes that it is this experience that makes his customers confident that AEIC will be able to solve their problems. "We understand that the true measure of an EDM solution's success is on the back-end, when you're trying to get information out of the system."

Today, AEIC is the EDM company of choice for several law firms, medical offices, car dealerships, energy companies, government agencies and certain elements of the U.S. intelligence community. Although his original strategic plan for AEIC included much of what has come to pass, Keough says that he never expected DocuWare to take him as far as it has. "It has proven to be one of the best decisions I have made," says Keough of DocuWare Corporation and DocuWare as his EDM solution. "They never leave you hanging," states Keough when asked about the support provided by DocuWare Corporation.



American Electronic Imaging Company, Inc.

The Future

As DocuWare has grown and improved over the years, so have AEIC's information products. Changes to DocuWare are even allowing AEIC to change the way they deliver information in light of customer concerns. "Keeping current has become more important in the energy information business due to the de-regulation of the industry," said Keough. "Our customers are more sensitive about the timeliness of our updates." Since the inception of its information products, whenever a customer buys an information product, they also get a subscription that entitles them to updated CD sets. This business model has generally worked well but given the pace of

change in the industry Keough was searching for a new delivery method.

The answer was the DocuWare INTERNET-SERVER module. Using this module, AEIC has made all information contained on CDs available by subscription over the Internet. Customers are assigned a login name and password and they can search the specially designed Web site using any common Web browser.

AEIC is not abandoning their CD-set module. They're simply expanding the range of options available to their clients. The company now sells their information products in three ways: the standard CD set with a subscription to updates; the CD set

with limited access to updated information on AEIC's Web site; and Internet access only.

In many respects, DocuWare has become the backbone for AEIC's entire business. "Our energy information products, the service bureau, the information subscription service and our new "Archives-on-the-Web" service (www.archives-on-the-web.com) are all based on DocuWare," said Keough.

"DocuWare has been a great solution for us. It's very robust. It's never failed on us. In fact, we've never had a challenge that we couldn't find a way to implement. It's a really solid solution."

Tool Box:

COMPUTERS: Scanning and indexing stations are Pentium II MMX machines running at 200Mhz - 400Mhz, with 128 - 256 MB RAM. Servers are Pentium II machines running at 400 Mhz with 256MB RAM.

OPERATING SYSTEMS: Workstations are Windows 98; all servers run on Windows NT 4.5 with MS Back Office modules integrated as required.

SERVERS: 5 Servers: 1 x PDC w/ MS Exchange Server, 1 x SQL Server, 1 x IIS 4.0 Web Server, 1 x CD server (SciNet cluster jukebox), 1 x application/data server (also acts as the BDC). Additional data servers to be added in 200.

SOFTWARE: DocuWare 3.1L (w/ CDSERVICE 2.0, RECOGNITION 2.0 and full compliment of Partner modules). Upgrading to DocuWare 4.1 with the release of CDSERVICE 3.0 in 2001

SCANNERS: 1 x Fujitsu 3097, 2 x Fujitsu 3099, 1 VIDAR Titan TruScan Large format color scanner, 2 x HP color flatbed scanners.

LAN: Fast Ethernet

INTERNET CONNECTIVITY: Full T-1 with direct connection to Tier 1 service through PSI Net backbone at 1.54MB (up and down).

