

Oklahoma Employment Security Commission Makes Claims Process Paperless with Xerox DocuShare

The Oklahoma Employment Security Commission (OESC) strives to provide employment security and promote the economic well-being of Oklahoma. A three-fold organization dedicated to supporting both employers and residents, the OESC matches employers with job seekers; processes all unemployment insurance benefits for Oklahoma, and collects taxes from employers to fund the program. With one central office in the capital complex, two large call centers, 34 local offices, and 750 workers, the OESC was getting bogged down in paper. They decided to completely revamp their existing paper-based unemployment claim processes and move to a paperless system that provided instant access to claims information.

About OESC

Headquarters:

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Industry:

State Government

Applications:

Imaging, Document Management, Workflow

Summary:

OESC struggled to process thousands of employment insurance claims files each day. Xerox DocuShare, deployed with Xerox and Fujitsu scanning equipment, Kofax Ascent Capture and a StreamFax server, enabled OESC to take the entire claims process paperless, resulting in a 25 to 35% improvement in productivity. The solution currently houses over 2 million searchable documents.

The Challenge

Prior to installing Xerox DocuShare in July 2003, the Unemployment Insurance division of the OESC handled massive amounts of documents, stored in huge file cabinets at various locations. They were quickly running out of storage room. Moreover, claims processing was a logistical nightmare in which critical records could not always be located. "All claims were taken in Oklahoma City, where we boxed and shipped them to Tulsa for processing," explains Jerry Pectol, Division Director of Unemployment Insurance. "There was no tracking process and nobody knew where to find a file. If someone in the state office, a claimant, or even a U.S. senator called to ask a question, it could take days to find a single file—if we found it at all."

Why Xerox DocuShare?

Pectol wasn't new to DocuShare when he took over the division; he had been using it as a hosted document repository in his previous OESC role because he traveled a lot between offices and needed access to files wherever he happened to be. "We had a real need to automate our claims handling, and it was important to me that we leverage our existing investments," said Pectol. "So we turned to a DocuShare partner, WaterWare Internet Services, to help us create an end-to-end solution that incorporated DocuShare."

The OESC imports from its mainframe roughly 3,000 files and scans another 900 directly into DocuShare every day, resulting in a 25 to 35 percent productivity improvement over its previous, paper-based process. The DocuShare solution currently houses over 2 million searchable files.

This was no small undertaking. The OESC receives between 2,900 and 3,000 digital files from the mainframe every night, each containing 4 to 5 documents or more. The organization scans an additional 900 paper documents a day, adding another 2,500 pages to the process. They needed a solution capable of handling high volumes of documents and content that was also easy to learn and use. "DocuShare's ease of use made it a good choice for the OESC," explains Mark Waters, President and CEO of WaterWare, "because average-knowledge workers have to interact with the information placed into DocuShare. They aren't IT savvy, so the solution had to be straightforward."

"The Xerox DocuShare/WaterWare team enabled us to come into the 21st century. It helps us to meet performance indicators—which drives our funding—and better serve our customers. It's changed the way we do business."

—Jerry Pectol, Division Director of Unemployment Insurance, Oklahoma Employment Security Commission

The WaterWare-crafted solution initially included Xerox DocuShare, a Fujitsu scanner at each call center, Kofax middleware on a designated workstation for indexing files, and Xerox Multifunction Devices at the local offices. Recently, the OESC added a StreamFAX server to enable faxing of claims directly into DocuShare. The result was just what the OESC needed to streamline its Unemployment Insurance processes. "WaterWare's answer transformed DocuShare from being a backup to our paper files to actually becoming our claims filing system," declares Pectol.

With the new system, people file their initial claims via the Internet, fax, and a touchtone IVR process that includes phone agents to gather supplemental information such as an address. This information is stored in the OESC's mainframe/SQL server and then ported in batches to the DocuShare server, where they're put into the appropriate folders. The mainframe also automatically sends a notice to the employer when a claim is filed. When the employer responds, the documents are scanned and added to the corresponding DocuShare folder. Once the OESC is sure the paper is in the system, they destroy it—eliminating the need for paper filing systems.

For claim files that have issues, WaterWare developed an automated workflow process that integrated DocuShare with OESC's existing adjudication scheduler. Files are flagged in the mainframe according to the issue of law that's under review. Adjudicators are then automatically notified via email when new documents pertaining to their assigned files are uploaded into DocuShare, streamlining the issue-handling process.

According to Waters, the ability to customize DocuShare was a key factor in their choice to continue to use it in the OESC solution.

For more information on DocuShare, contact a Sales Representative at 1-800-735-7749, or visit us online at <http://docushare.xerox.com>.

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"DocuShare's program interfaces (API's) are very thorough and complete, allowing us to programmatically manipulate all the information in the system. What's more, the optional Archive Server module enabled us to move closed files off the main DocuShare server, which protects the files and saves computing time whenever OESC employees search for files." In total, OESC's DocuShare servers hold over 2 million files, protecting the information of over 280,000 claimants with an unlimited capacity to support future needs.

"DocuShare's open APIs enabled us to build specific applications to automate the transfer of claimant information from OESC's mainframe to the DocuShare server and ensure that the data was deposited in the correct files, preserving data integrity."

—Mark Waters, President and CEO, WaterWare Internet Services

The Results

The OESC's unemployment claims process has undergone a complete transformation since implementing DocuShare. Paper files are gone. At one point, the organization maintained 50, four-drawer lateral files; now they keep just one for supplies. And the four full-time staff that previously did nothing but build paper files are now able to focus on more constructive activities.

They aren't the only OESC employees operating at greater efficiency either. "With the paper system, adjudicators weren't assigned a file until the eighth day after a claim was filed. Now they receive it on the third or fourth day," states Pectol. "The new system increases the adjudicators'

productivity, enabling them to do things more rapidly and effectively."

The OESC was previously required to mail or fax claims back and forth between its local offices—now it's a virtual process that saves time, postage, and handling. "We have limited timeframe in which to complete a file," explains Pectol. "Any file that's unprocessed beyond that point is considered untimely. We routinely had 300 – 400 untimely files, sometimes as many as 800, at any one time. Just the other day, we had only 36."

This increased productivity enables the OESC to better serve its constituents. Instead of days to find a file, now it takes minutes, which makes it easier to handle inquiries. Call center operators can look into DocuShare and see the current status of a file so they are able to ask for any missing information, or route the call to the appropriate adjudicator.

The Future

Currently, the OESC is conducting a business process review examining the benefits side of the division and all its call centers, with the goal of eliminating all redundant processes. Once that's complete, the OESC will pursue a totally integrated workflow and document-scanning package.

The OESC is currently installing a disaster recovery configuration with DocuShare. The organization wants to limit its risk and implement a redundant system to protect processes during system interruptions.

Pectol has expressed a lot of faith in the support and services provided by both Xerox onsite support and WaterWare, and looks forward to seeing how they can help the OESC advance its DocuShare solution in the future. "Xerox and WaterWare enabled us to come into the 21st century with a solution that allows us meet performance mandates and better serve our customers. It's changed the way we do business!"

About Xerox DocuShare

Addressing both the basic and complex requirements of Enterprise Content Management (ECM), the Xerox DocuShare family of products offers an innovative solution: two focused ECM applications built on one common platform. Xerox DocuShare enables document management collaboration, review and approval, and Web publishing to support information sharing at all points in the enterprise by every knowledge worker. Xerox DocuShare CPX offers the advanced ECM functionality required for integrating and automating content, sophisticated collaboration, and business process management around specific operational tasks. And all Xerox DocuShare products are built on the DocuShare Enterprise Content Platform, recognized for its ease of installation, administration, and use. This shared platform simplifies deployments and reduces IT complexity, despite the typically heterogeneous mix of databases, servers, directory services, and storage systems found in today's enterprise.