

Foley & Lardner Builds Innovative Client Services on Interwoven Platform

FOLEY

11th largest law firm in United States; in 15 markets nationwide. Approximately 2,600 employees, including almost 1,000 attorneys

Industry

Legal Services

Geography

USA

Challenge

- Provide integrated document management for a growing 15-office firm with nearly 2,100 employees, including 750 attorneys; firm is at 2,600 employees today
- Extend firm's boundaries beyond brick and mortar
- Replace a document management system that lost documents on a daily basis and offered no architectural path to future growth

Benefits

- Eliminated lost document problem with firm-wide secure document repository and robust three-tiered architecture
- Enabled seamless integration between document management and other business applications



"The system is paying for itself just in terms of increased productivity."

—Doug Caddell, chief information officer

Foley & Lardner (F&L), a full-service practice, seeks to redefine the traditional role of a law firm. Their goal: to stand out from competitors by offering a broader range of innovative, customer-focused services. A high-performance document management and collaboration capability, both internally and externally, is a key part of that commitment.

But in late 1999, Foley & Lardner's existing document management solution was producing a disaster a day.

"It was quite amazing," recalls F&L chief information officer, Doug Caddell. "We were losing an average of seven documents per week." Most losses were because the previous document management system froze and documents disappeared, and there was no easy way to recover these documents in this unreliable system.

Interwoven: an easy choice

Caddell was familiar with the Interwoven WorkSite solution, formerly of iManage, and looked to its three-tiered architecture to solve his lost-documents problem.

"Our previous vendor also had a three-tiered system which we evaluated," he says, "but they could not provide us with a technical solution on how to make their work. The WorkSite solution worked right out-of-the-box."

WorkSite combines document management, collaboration, and workflow in an integrated Web-based solution. With robust desktop

functionality and the ability to leverage the Internet infrastructure for collaboration and communication, lawyers and their clients have the ability to easily share documents with this Web-centric solution.

The final decision to implement WorkSite was made in June 2000—and the firmwide rollout was scheduled for early November.

A flawless rollout

Rapid deployment was critical. "Our attorneys practice across offices," Caddell says, "so we had to have everyone on the same document management system at the same time."

"On rollout day, we started very early in the morning, going across the country from east to west," Caddell said. "We had four people in our main office coordinating. Most offices had one person. The smaller offices we did entirely by wire. We converted about 750 attorneys, 2,100 people, across all offices, on one day—November 4, 2000."

A successful collaboration solution, seamlessly implemented

F&L staff was able to start using their new WorkSite applications right away. "The basic concept was similar to our old system," Caddell says, "and the interface can be customized to any look and feel." A simple lunch-hour demonstration was all the training the attorneys required to get started.

Lost documents, Caddell says, are no longer a problem, saving the firm considerable time and money. "Increased stability from the architecture enables our attorneys and staff to be more productive in their work, rather than dealing with document management losses and system freezes. The system is paying for itself just in terms of increased productivity."

Users are also happy with WorkSite's full text indexing feature. This feature, Caddell says, "never worked properly with our other system. The ability to do full text searches and indexing is one of the great promises of document management. Our people use it every day."

Caddell especially appreciates the way the solution integrates with other business applications, including the firm's extranet solution, a new CRM solution, the Metastorm e-Work process automation solution, and a planned firm-wide record management system. "WorkSite is one of our core products, so every time we look at a product locally or firm-wide, it has to work with WorkSite," he says.

Using WorkSite in conjunction with SV Technology's LawPort portal solution, Caddell created a system of extranets that allows clients to track their cases, access time and billing data, and exchange document revisions in a secure environment through a simple interface.

Thanks to his innovative work in building a new generation of collaborative client services with WorkSite, Caddell was honored by CIO Magazine with a 2001 "CIO 100" award.

"We don't buy toys for techies, technology for technology's sake," Cadell says. "We buy and implement to improve the effective delivery of legal services, to improve the business of law and our lawyers. All our solutions must have some client drive behind them, either improving the cost effectiveness of our services, which Interwoven has done, or enabling us to deliver new types of services, which the Interwoven product line will give us the opportunity to do."

Technology

Solution Summary:

Interwoven WorkSite Server software provides an architectural framework that allows business content to be centrally managed, shared and collaborated on in a secure manner across the organization. WorkSite enables document management, collaboration, knowledge management, workflow and business process automation.

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