



Case Study Facts:

CLIENT: Terrus Real Estate Group

DIGITECH SYSTEMS RESELLER: Imagetek

PROBLEM: Paper invoices and multiple copies of leases slowed processes for the accounting department

SOLUTION: ImageSilo®, PaperVision Enterprise WorkFlow and PaperFlow™

RECOGNIZED BENEFIT: Streamlined invoice and lease processing and enhanced productivity for the accounting department, management and other employees

Terrus Real Estate Group Streamlines Invoice Approval Processes with PaperVision® Enterprise WorkFlow

As tenants of Terrus Real Estate Group, many companies in large commercial buildings rely on Terrus to keep the electricity buzzing and water flowing. Phil Akason, CFO at Terrus, knows that paying for city services means the accounts payable department has to process invoices in a timely manner. When Akason realized that their existing document management system was hindering productivity, he knew it was time for a solution.

After implementing a complete Enterprise Content Management (ECM) system from Digitech Systems, Terrus saves time and money by improving accounting processes.

The Situation

Terrus Real Estate Group (www.terrus.com) offers a full range of commercial real estate services for clients throughout the United States. Terrus was founded in 2000 and is located in Des Moines, IA. From strategic real estate planning and real estate brokerage to commercial construction and property management, Terrus is experienced in all aspects of the real estate life cycle.

Before implementing the new ECM system, the accounting department was burdened by paper processes. They received 20,000 invoices each year. Most documents were manually processed because their existing document management system didn't have the integration features and functionality they needed. It required employees to enter invoice information twice—once into the accounting software, Sage Timberline Office, and once into the document management system.

Terrus manages 700 leases and supporting documentation. Multiple copies of leases in filing cabinets on- and off-site were impossible to keep up-to-date. Each time lease revisions were made, employees spent hours making copies for tenants and employees, who kept duplicates.

With the paper-based process, management spent as much as five minutes verifying and approving each invoice. Many times they had to search for support documents. Staff members sent so many invoices through the approval process that sometimes they fell into "the black hole." When vendors called asking about unpaid invoices, staff members had to start an investigation to find out who had the invoice and why the approval was delayed. To add to the challenge, some Terrus customers were calling and asking for online access to leases and other documents.

The Solution

Akason and Jim Struve, CTO at Terrus, began searching for technology that would allow Terrus to easily track and manage leases and invoices. They wanted an ECM system that would enable them to route invoices through standard processes and expedite approvals, but they also needed a system that would integrate with their Timberline accounting software. Akason contacted Imagetek, a Digitech Systems reseller, and was impressed with both Digitech Systems' complete ECM suite and Imagetek's scanning services. Ultimately, they chose the on-demand ECM service, ImageSilo, because it offered online access to

Key Benefits

- Gained 1,000 hours of productivity a year from management
- Saved \$50,000 a year in productivity from accounts payable employees
- Shortened invoice processing time by at least two days
- Reduced data entry by integrating the ECM system with their accounting software

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documents, rapid implementation, seamless integration and add-on workflow capabilities to automatically route invoices.

Imagetek scanned and indexed 21,000 pages of lease documents and then implemented, tested and launched the new system in December 2006. Today Terrus scans incoming documents internally using PaperFlow. Then documents are automatically uploaded to ImageSilo. From there the workflow engine automatically identifies and sends invoices through defined approval steps.

Recognized Benefits

With Digitech Systems' ECM technology, Terrus customized a system that meets their unique needs and streamlined the accounting department. Now 75 employees—roughly half of all their staff—use the ECM system to avoid duplicate data entry, process documents faster, improve customer service and enhance collaboration.

Although the original leases are still kept in paper format per contract requirements, staff and off-site property managers no longer keep lease copies on their desks. Instead they log into ImageSilo and securely retrieve electronic documents online.

"Approving invoices is a lot more enjoyable with PaperVision Enterprise WorkFlow. I open the email and have all the supporting documents and accounting codes I need to verify and approve invoices. I don't have to go back to the accounting system to search for information. I just click OK and the invoice is routed to the next step in the process. It couldn't be easier."

-Phil Akason, CFO

Invoices and accounting records are also managed electronically, and PaperVision Enterprise WorkFlow automatically initiates the approval process and reports on progress. Therefore, invoices pending approval no longer fall into the black hole.

In fact, managers can use the annotation feature or a textual note index field to leave comments regarding an invoice and to explain any reasons for delay. Since the new system was put in place, invoices are entered and approved at least two days faster than before, and management saves 1,000 hours of productivity each year in approval processes.

Integration between Timberline and the ECM system makes double entry a thing of the past. "With the integration capabilities, we do the work once, not twice," said Akason. Plus, staff can be working in the Timberline software, select a keyboard shortcut and easily retrieve documents from the ECM system. Since implementation, accounts payable employees have experienced a 25% productivity gain, saving Terrus \$50,000 each year.

With information at their fingertips, the accounting department is retrieving and sending information quickly, which improves customer service. During the 2008 Midwest floods, Terrus was able to provide clients and insurance agencies with more than 20 leases in less than five minutes.

Now, when clients ask for electronic access to documents, Terrus can serve their needs. Terrus provided clients with login information and secure access to their appropriate documents on ImageSilo. Today tenants are enhancing disaster preparedness by sharing building floor plans with employees and emergency responders. Struve likes ImageSilo because tenants don't need a user license or special software to view documents. "No one else we know offers customers online document access, so ImageSilo also provides a real competitive advantage," he said.