THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT

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Contents

INTRODUCTION TO DMS

Whether you're a lawyer or IT professional, you have a natural understanding of the threats that surround you. Threats of competition, mistakes in compliance, potential human error, and the overall stressful nature of protecting your team and company from risk or ruin. **Perhaps the biggest threat businesses face today, however, is the possibility of a security breach.**

According to the FBI's 2019 Internet Crime Report, over 2.3 billion complaints were filed for stolen or compromised data in the past year. In fact, since 2015, the FBI has recorded over $10.2 billion in losses from cyber attacks.[1]

It's clear that if your organization is fortunate enough to not have been the target of cyber crime, it is only a matter of time. This is especially true as lawyers seek more flexible ways of accessing work to accommodate increasing demands of the workplace.

The Growing Demand for Digital Documentation

Since 2009 the amount of individuals with access to the internet has doubled worldwide.[3] Just as this increased connectivity has changed how we function in our day-to-day personal lives, it has also changed the way clients expect coworkers and businesses to communicate.

Specifically, businesses as a whole have lost patience with slow, laborious communication. Stakeholders now demand the convenience and pace of digital correspondence, requiring more insight into the services provided to the legal department.

Since many organizations do not provide remote access and document sharing capabilities, lawyers in recent years have been forced to find creative ways to serve and communicate with colleagues and peers — which, unfortunately, often results in documents being removed from the safety of a company's network.

Luckily, there are Document Management Systems (DMS) that provide the robust safety measures that lawyers require to defend against cyber-attacks while providing features they need to work effectively across the organization.

In this paper, you'll learn what a DMS is, its importance, how to select right solution for your legal team, and how to measure its success.

WHAT IS A DMS?

A DMS for legal departments has usually involved retrofitting existing technology within an organization's tech stack to provide a somewhat secure, often clunky, file structure.

Today, legal teams are turning to a cloud-based DMS to continue to provide the structure, ease of use, and security required to protect the company while maintaining flexibility and enabling remote work.

According to the Association for Intelligent Information Management, a DMS "incorporates document and content capture, workflow, document repositories, output systems, and information retrieval systems," in addition to storing, controlling, and tracking documents.[3] As comapnies seek to protect their information without impeding their team's ability to complete work, it's clear why a strong DMS is the backbone of any high-performing legal department.

A forward-looking DMS solution goes above and beyond this standard definition, expanding to provide greater collaboration and work productivity.

The Benefits of a DMS

While a seemingly straightforward piece of software, it's important to note that a DMS offers substantial benefits. Depending on the service, organizations can look forward to cost savings, increased productivity, and streamlined operations.

MANAGE INTERNAL COSTS

By digitally organizing a company's files in a single, central location, a DMS not only reduces the risk of losing information but also decreases the labor required to file and store important information.

> Depending on the service, organizations can look forward to **cost savings, increased productivity, and streamlined operations.**

A cloud-based DMS offers additional cost savings as it removes hardware needs and reduces the strain on IT resources. A cloud-based DMS also enables more flexibility in where and how people work (e.g. remote and mobile work).

INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY

A DMS makes it much easier for staff to locate and govern documents through sophisticated search, tagging, and profiling. These features dramatically decrease the time staff spend locating documents.

Robust DMS typically offer secure internal and external collaboration tools that make it easier to work on content within a company and across stakeholders.

STREAMLINE SECURITY AND COMPLIANCE OPERATIONS

As documents are organized in a single, secure location it becomes significantly easier for IT and compliance teams to protect content and mitigate internal and external risks to the business.

Storage and organization processes may also be standardized across the company, helping knowledge management teams keep files organized, including retention policies or other industry and region-specific laws or regulations.

4 Unique Benefits of a Cloud-Based DMS

While on-premises solutions have some good qualities, cloud-based solutions are becoming the increasingly preferred route as it provides greater flexibility with improved security while reducing the strain on IT resources. In fact, the 2019 ILTA survey predicts that in the next 3-5 years, cloud technology will be a driving factor in the legal profession. Below are the top four reasons why:

1. **A cloud-based DMS improves your security and compliance.** Hardware and internal networks are both costly and complex to maintain and update, and they are often not flexible enough to quickly protect against the latest threats. Cloud-based DMS can quickly pivot security measures to protect against these evolving threats without disrupting work.

2. **A cloud-based DMS reduces hardware and maintenance costs.** Without expensive equipment to maintain or experts to pay, cloud-based systems are essential to a modern IT team looking for ways to effectively transition to predictable budgeting as organizations increasingly look for them to operate within a predictable, monthly cost.

3. **A cloud-based DMS makes flexible work a reality.** With a cloud-based DMS, you open the possibility of working remotely. No longer do you have to return to the office for documents or worry about losing a key file. Many cloud-based systems offer built-in mobility which usually means there are native applications on iOS/Android to enable you and your team to work anytime, anywhere, and on any device.

4. **A cloud-based DMS increases collaboration.** A cloud-based DMS increases collaboration by nature. You can interact with documents in real-time as a team, with the ability to leave and return as needed.

To learn more about why teams everywhere are adopting cloud-based DMS, download this guide.

3 KEY IMPACTS OF A DMS ON YOUR CORPORATE LEGAL TEAM

As the backbone of any high-performing legal team, a DMS has far-reaching impacts across the business including risk management, information governance, and workflows. Below are the three key impacts.

1. **Improved risk management.** Your legal team's work product is likely buried in personal files which pose major risks to your business in cases of cyberattacks, disorganization, or unresponsive employees. A DMS creates a central access point for projects with standardized organization, reducing the risk of content being stolen, lost, or inaccessible.

2. **Enhanced information governance.** One of the most crucial functions a DMS will support is that of information governance. In fact, a recent report found that due to the costs of storage, control, and compliance, poor data management can cost a business $2.1 million each year on average.[4]

As lawyers work to involve stakeholders and increase communication, it's important to ensure that sensitive information remains safely stored and organized in secure locations to avoid exposing an organization to incredible financial risk. Consider the fees these major organizations were forced to pay after data breaches uncovered poor data management:[5]

- British Airways: $230 million
- Marriott: $124 million
- Equifax: $575 million

According to IDC, 85% of enterprise decision-makers understand how document management plays a role in company success and say they have "two years to make significant inroads into digital transformation or they will fall behind their competitors and suffer financially."[7]

Robust DMS will provide solutions for tracking, managing, and controlling both access and actions on information stored within the system, in addition to standardizing the organization and profiling of documents. These features combine to make it easier to manage information across an organization and comply with current information governance standards.

3. **Improved work flows.** As the backbone of your work, a DMS determines how efficiently your legal team can work independently or cross-functionally. This efficiency is often determined by the features available within a DMS.To have the maximum impact on efficiency, look for a DMS that provides:

- Anytime, anywhere access and mobility
- Ability to create, edit, save, and version documents
- Ability to organize documents to support legal workflows
- Easy ways to locate/search for documents
- Custom meta-data that powers search and organization
- Integration with productivity tools and applications
- Project and document access: create security groups and apply access rights (VESA)

These features will support lawyers as they strive to deliver quality services faster and more efficiently by helping them locate, re-use, and organize content quickly.

DMS SELECTION BEST PRACTICES

The best DMS will take basic document organization a step further, incorporating additional features such as email management, real-time messaging and chat solutions, document compilation and PDF conversation tools, and AI and machine learning for process automation, advanced search options, and robust security and compliance measures. Each additional feature will likely benefit a certain roles throughout the company, which is why it's important to involve key stakeholders early on and communicate to departments often.

The implementation of new system will have far-reaching impacts on every department, which is why it's essential that key players across departments and functions be involved in the selection process.

Let's take a look at this six-step process for a smooth DMS selection and implementation:

1. **Appoint a project leader.** In large companies, it's common practice for Legal Ops to spearhead the implementation of a new DMS — researching features, capabilities, and providing a clear point of contact to check in with regarding progress.

2. **Involve key stakeholders.** The implementation of new system will have impacts across multiple departments, such as IT and compliance, which is why it's essential that key players across departments and functions be involved in the selection process. Consider including representatives from impacted departments along with the legal team during the process.

3. **Determine scope.** Working with the key stakeholders, the project leader should determine which gaps and processes a new DMS could facilitate, automate, and improve across the team and business. Knowing this information will inform which key features to assess during the research and evaluation phases.

4. **Select a DMS solution.** Once initial prospecting is complete, it's crucial to dig into demos and ask detailed questions of how DMS solutions can help the company save money, increase productivity, and protect data. Companies often create a scorecard outlining their most important concerns for use during demos.

5. **System implementation.** Depending on the size of your organization and the service selected, implementing a DMS can take about six months with key phases including data mapping, in-depth training, system builds, and data migration.

6. **Hold the team accountable.** Change can be difficult, especially if your teams have a long-standing, traditional process that has been unchanged for years. Even after initial training and implementation, get ahead of lingering resistance by offering additional training sessions, scheduling frequent check-ins, and monitoring status reports to ensure the legal team is maximizing the full suite of capabilities in the DMS.

MEASURING IMPLEMENTATION SUCCESS

Implementing a new DMS is about more than simply providing a new system. Instead, success means lawyers are utilizing the system to not only complete work faster, but to also strengthen their relationships with stakeholders.

To ensure adoption and identify roadblocks of the team's new DMS, you may want to monitor a set of key performance indicators (KPIs).

Monitoring the following metrics can help you catch problem areas early and continue to train late adopters.

- **Number of active users.** This data will help you determine if there are late adopters or those refusing to utilize the new system in order to provide further training and help.
- **Increases in project completion.** This will help you determine if the legal department is still spending time on administrative tasks or can spend time on what truly matters.
- **Employee satisfaction.** It's safe to say that if your DMS is helping lawyers be more efficient, they will be able to manage their workload better, improving workplace satisfaction and avoiding burnout.
- **Compliance and security updates.** Monitor to see if it's easier for your team to stay up-to-date with compliance and security requirements since implementing your DMS.
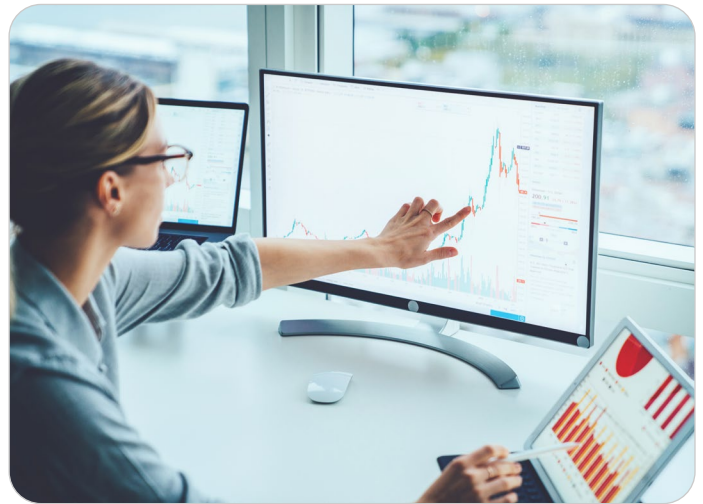
Apart from the data collected above, you can also collect opinion surveys from those who use the DMS by asking them:

- What do they think about your document management process?
- Are they happy with the collaboration features?
- Is it easy for them to use?
- In what ways would they change the system?

TAKE ACTION TODAY

The threat of a cyberattack is very real and has enormous consequences. But this does not have to cripple the team or organization with fear.

By implementing a proper DMS that's created specifically to fit the needs specifically of lawyers, you can maximize collaboration, security, productivity, and efficiency for your entire legal department.

ABOUT NETDOCUMENTS

NetDocuments is the leading cloud-based document and email management solution to securely store and organize documents on one platform. With NetDocuments, users can work securely on documents and file emails anywhere in the world on any device while collaborating with internal and external stakeholders alike—which makes it an ideal solution for remote work.

Backed by 20 years of experience in cloud innovation, over 2,750 companies worldwide trust us to secure their data while increasing productivity and team collaboration.

Make the Move to the NetDocuments cloud to get the speed, mobility, and industry-leading security companies worldwide are already taking advantage of today.

To learn more about maximizing productivity, mitigating risk, and building collaboration: Contact us at **(866) 638-3627** or visit **www.NetDocuments.com** to learn more today.

SOURCES

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