

Large Corporate Records Department Eliminates File Rooms and Boosts Efficiency by Going Digital



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—Laurence Grigg, Records Supervisor
Apache Canada



Company: Apache Corporation
Web: www.apachecorp.com
Location: Houston, TX
Product: Recognition Server
Results: Increased productivity and efficiency, eliminated unnecessary file room.

The Client

Apache Corporation is an independent oil and gas company that explores for, develops and produces natural gas, crude oil and natural gas liquids. It has operations in the United States, Canada, Egypt, the United Kingdom North Sea, Argentina and Australia.

The Need

The Apache Records Departments in both Houston and Calgary offices were becoming overrun with paper.

“Our file rooms were filling up, and given their cost per square foot, there was a strong business need to go from paper to electronic,” said Jim Fields, Apache Corporation’s Data Quality Administrator of Corporate Records in Houston, Texas. “We also needed to secure our data better by backing it up electronically.”

Apache’s Calgary office had been filing electronically since 2005, which included hundreds of types of files from extensive facilities records to engineering drawings. The files were a mixture of both scanned files and some that had been digitized through OCR by the originating company.

Electronic filing was one thing, but the ability to search and find those files was another. One-off OCR desktop products were being used sporadically in the Houston office. A cohesive system was needed to achieve continuity and greater productivity; obtaining a server was the first step.

The ABBYY Solution

The Apache Records Departments in both Houston and Calgary installed ABBYY Recognition Server after thorough research. While Apache was impressed with ABBYY’s strong reputation, its decision was based on Recognition Server’s superior performance in comparison with other solutions, specifically with regard to OCR quality and the ability to handle multiple protocols and send results to other areas of the process. “We didn’t want a point solution,” said Fields. “We wanted a product that would meet all our needs and then some.”

“ABBYY was fantastic,” said Fields. “We were able to scan documents and have them dropped into hot folders. The server queued off the hot folder and converted the files to searchable PDF to then be picked up for indexing and filing. The process was fantastic, and we couldn’t have done it without ABBYY.”

Recognition Server’s OCR quality exceeded expectations. “It’s been unbelievable some of the documents ABBYY has been able to convert into a searchable format,” said Fields. “I wouldn’t have thought it was possible.”

Apache Case Study



Stability was another key factor. “We like how consistent ABBYY is,” said Laurence Grigg, Records Supervisor for Apache Canada. “Ours is a three-part process: paper-to-electronic conversion, indexing and filing. We can rest assured knowing that the process is very stable, making it easy to troubleshoot. It’s so robust that it has allowed us to handle any challenge that’s thrown at us.”

The company also appreciated the seamlessness of the process. “ABBYY makes the process completely transparent,” said Grigg. “People may not be aware of the technology behind it, but they know it’s the one place where all the documents go to be converted to searchable PDF. This transparency and its intuitive ease of use have made process adoption a lot easier.”

That simplicity extended to its set up and configuration as well. “I was able to set everything up, including all the folders, in one 30-minute tutorial,” said Grigg. “Our team was up and running very quickly.”

The Results

Since Apache implemented Recognition Server, an entire file room will be eliminated in the Apache Corporation Records office in Houston.

“Considering the cost of \$21 per square foot—for a total of 24 file rooms—ABBYY will save us considerable costs by methodically eliminating nearly all of our file rooms eventually,” said Fields.

Apache values most the increased efficiency and productivity of their records departments, which Recognition Server has enabled. “Our ability to easily access documents, provide greater records security as well as provide immediate company-wide access to electronic records has been tremendous,” said Grigg. “ABBYY has been the hub of this whole process.”

The overwhelming success of Recognition Server in the Records Departments has led to its future use in other areas for Apache. “It’s been a fantastic experience. All throughout, we felt ABBYY was truly invested in our success, and that means a great deal.”

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