Overview of Paperless Office Concepts

Using Time Matters as the lynchpin of a paperless office

Lexis® Front Office
powered by Time Matters® 9.0

LexisNexis®

White Paper

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Executive Summary

Paperless offices have in the past been difficult or impossible to achieve. New advances in software have made a less paper-dependent office possible. Good management and organization are the keys to success in implementing a paperless office where document structuring is on a voluntary basis. Lexis Front Office powered by Time Matters has increased its document management capabilities in recent years, adding many features that have now made it possible to use Front Office as a central focus for a paperless office. This white paper focuses on the theoretical ideas behind the use of Front Office as a lynchpin for a paperless office.

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Overview of Paperless Office Concepts

A Paperless Vision

It has long been a dream of attorneys to have a "paperless" office – an office released from the weight of paper. The reality is that no law office will ever be truly paperless. The real goal is to be "paper-lessened" or "less papered." Paper will always play an important role in law offices; however the goal is not to become a slave of paper - searching for it, filing it, storing it and losing it at inconvenient times - but rather to handle paper electronically to lower its intrinsic administrative cost. The benefits of being less papered are indeed impressive when evaluated:

PAPER: ***vs.*** ***PAPERLESS***

Routing and Storage Costs

	Expensive to file and store. An employee must look at a document (usually more than once) and decide where it needs to go. Over time, the document must be routed to various people and eventually into storage. Storage costs vary but one must also factor in the energy and time of the employees to maintain lists of stored documents and the time it takes to retrieve stored documents.
	Much easier to file since electronic documents need to be saved only once and can be stored on high-capacity media for archiving.

Locating Lost Documents

	Employees must spend time to locate lost documents (sometimes hours or even days); if a document has been filed in the wrong client folder, it may never be located.
	Easier to locate using document search index software (like the search index feature built into Front Office).

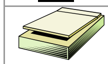
Sharing and Collaborating

	Employees must spend time to copy and distribute the documents. Redlines and notations are compiled and redrafted – communication can be slow and duplicative.
	Easily distributed with each reviewer working on the same document. Messages and communication can be easily compiled and centralized.

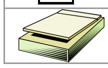
Remote Access

	Must be copied and shipped to remote locations – more energy is expended to file the copy at the remote location. Traveling employees do not have access to documents unless the documents were copied ahead of time.
	Available to all users with proper security across the Internet. Documents can be e-mailed, reducing the expense of faxing.

Backup / Disaster Recovery

	Can be destroyed by fire, theft, water, and other natural disasters – once destroyed the documents are impossible to restore without a copy.
	Can be easily backed up, copied, archived and transported off-site. Electronic copies take up little physical space and can be restored in little time.

Reusing Past Work (Brief Banking)

	All documents must be searched tediously to find the document with the needed language.
	Can be quickly searched to locate a specific phrase in the needed document.

Paperless Past

With such benefits it is no wonder that some attorneys tried to go paperless in the early to mid nineties when desktop computers became commonplace in most law offices. However, many soon discovered that going paperless was a very costly endeavor, fraught with traps and pitfalls. The required hardware systems (scanners and computers) were still very slow and expensive and the software was proprietary and unstable. Most attorneys who tried to go paperless during this time gave up after buying expensive scanners that processed too slowly and created proprietary image files that were too large to store in great number on the limited server hard drives. Many concluded that a paperless office was a technological myth made up by money-grubbing software and hardware vendors who were selling them a bill of goods. It is from this time that many of the horror stories came that sometime circulate around the legal community about the unobtainable goal of being paperless.

Second Coming

Over the past few years, however, there have been great advances in scanning, optical character recognition (OCR), image processing/storage, as well as indexing/searching software. These software programs have progressed silently apart from one another over the last few years but are now converging to form the perfect conditions for paperless offices. At the same time, prices for hardware – scanners, hard drives for storage, CD-ROM burners for archiving have fallen dramatically and are now within reach of most offices. These advances have now reached a point where, by using common hardware and software packages, most law offices can attain the paperless office that they previously gave up on.

The first principle to learn about a paperless office is that ***creating a paperless office is no longer a technological issue – it is an organizational issue***. The technology has long since caught up – in fact many of the needed technologies are built right into Front Office at no extra cost. Adobe Acrobat (the gold standard in image storage for administrative purposes) is built into Front Office for scanning purposes; search-indexing is built into Front Office at no additional cost. ***What is not always available is the discipline to set up and maintain a paperless system.***

Entropy

Organization itself is an expensive endeavor. If you have ever tried to organize your closet, garage or attic, arrange a junk drawer, or clean a child's room, you have quickly learned that things left to themselves will not be organized and tend to fall into disarray despite our best efforts to keep them straight. There is actually a scientific principle in play: the second law of thermodynamics states that closed systems will always become more disorganized over time unless you invest more energy to maintain the order. This principle, know as entropy applies to document storage and organization as well as junk drawers and is one of the largest stumbling blocks to a paperless office.

Electronic documents – word processing, spreadsheets, scans, etc. – are stored within Microsoft Windows folders on a hard drive of either a server or a workstation. The initial problem of a paperless office is that many law offices have great difficulty maintaining order in their document folders that store ***only their own production***. Folders are often scattered over many different drives with many complicated and confusing sub-layers. Documents are frequently lost and new employees are difficult to train on the ins-and-outs of the system.

Scanning outside documents would only increase the volume of documents many times – thus increasing the already difficult process of storing and locating electronic documents. This poor organization of document folders for document storage has many hidden costs in wasted administrative efforts and inefficient methods:

Bad Folder Organization vs. Good Folder Organization

Backups

	Files are spread throughout many directories without a cogent system. Backup systems must be programmed to locate the files that are needed and avoid large files that are unnecessary for the backup or risk overflowing the capacity of the system – the consequence: often backups are not done or do not contain the correct data.
	Files are organized in such a manner that whole drives or main directories can be easily backed up without wasting space and time on large extraneous files.

Databases and Program Files

	Large program databases (like Front Office, Back Office powered by Billing Matters, QuickBooks) are mixed in with documents – the consequence: searching and indexing are slowed and databases are at higher risk since they can be inadvertently archived or deleted.
	Databases are stored parallel to documents thus facilitating backups, and making administration easier.

Indexing documents

	Mixtures of large program files and databases make document text indexing run slowly – the consequence: document index program goes unused and its value is lost.
	Documents are easy to index and search.

Locating Documents

	Multiple folders exist for each client matter; usually stored under a folder for each attorney working on that case – the consequence: end users have to hunt in an illogical pattern to locate files for a case, wasting time and frequently duplicating efforts.
	One folder exists for each case. This facilitates documents locating.

Training new staff

	Confusing folder structures increase amount of time needed to bring new employees up to speed – the consequence: more errors during the training stage for new employees.
	New employees are easily trained and quickly pick up the folder structure without making as many errors during the learning process.

Archiving Document – Updating pointers in DMS

	Open document management systems (DMS) retain pointers to locate stored documents. When the folder structure for archived documents is greatly different from the folder structure for active documents, the pointers in the DMS must be repositioned with great effort – the consequence: archiving is not done or the pointers are not updated in the DMS when archiving is done thus effectively losing the documents from the system.
	Pointers are easily updated to reflect archiving.

Number of Folders / Depth of Structures

	Shallow file structures with many tens of thousands of sub-folders inside can often cause long delays in open dialogs – the consequence: wasted time waiting for screens to resolve and employee frustration.
	Deeper folder structures and good archiving systems lower the number of sub-folders which speeds opening.

Paperless Office

	Lack of organization creates great difficulties in saving, storing, archiving, locating and using electronic documents. This prevents the office from using a paperless system – the consequence: firm lacks flexibility to go paperless when competitors are moving that way.
	Lays the foundation for an easy transition to a paperless office.

Getting Off on the Wrong Foot

Why do so many law offices have difficulty storing and managing their own document production - preventing them from taking on the increase of documents that a paperless office would cause? The main reason for poor document storage structures is that document management was not a priority at the inception of the law firm. As previously mentioned, the second law of thermodynamics states that things left to themselves will become disorganized. When most small to medium sized law firms start out, they are comprised of one to five attorneys who are working hard just to bring business in the door and make payroll. Document management is not a high priority and secretaries and paralegals simply take it upon themselves to put documents where they can find them later. Over time, the support staff changes and these new staff members store documents in different places using various schemes and systems. After a few years, documents are stored in so many different places that no one can easily locate older files. Document storage begins to take on a life of its own; and like a garden that hasn't been cared for, it organically grows into a wild tangle of unmanageable weeds and bushes. The goal of proper document management is to cultivate document storage like one tends a garden; weeding out the things that do not belong and organizing and shaping those that do.

Document Management Software

Document Management Software (DMS) helps in this endeavor by assisting in the structuring of document storage at the time the documents are saved so that the documents are categorized and placed in the proper spot. Document management software also helps locate documents when they need to be retrieved. There are two general classes of document management software: open and closed. Both types do basically the same things - especially in terms of locating documents after they have been saved. Where they differ is in how they save documents. Open systems facilitate saving documents in structures ***but do not force those structures*** – closed systems override the normal Microsoft Windows save dialog box and force saving the documents in the correct structures. WORLDOX, Interwoven and DOCS Open are some well-known closed document management systems. Front Office's document management features on the other hand are an open system. This means that the choice of where and how to structure documents in the windows file structure is left up to the user. Open systems like Front Office require staff participation and thus can be easily undermined by many factors such as fear, apathy and confusion. One of the keys to helping users accept and utilize an open system (where active user participation is mandatory in order for it to work) is to have a well-planned document tree structure. Well-planned structures can be easily conveyed to the staff in training. This reduces the amount of confusion and fear. If users understand the system clearly they will no longer fear being reprimanded for putting something in the wrong place and will also no longer fear losing documents. By showing enthusiasm and interest in the process of document reorganization as well as soliciting staff participation, management can counter end-user apathy.

The elements of good folder structures can be remembered using the acronym ***"CATS"***:

- **Central** - All documents should be stored in a central location. It is best to create a shared directory for only documents and to make a distinct mapping with the same letter on all stations for just documents. All documents for a single case should be in the same folder.
- **Archivable** - Folders for archived documents should run parallel to the active documents. Folder structures are the same under the closed folders to facilitate moving DMS pointers and staff training.
- **Transparent / Logical** - Directory structures should make sense and match the kinds of documents that the firm has. Document divisions should follow logical patterns.
- **Separate -** Documents should be separate from databases, applications large graphics and media files (as opposed to normal scans of documents and pictures). Documents should also have their own mapped drive letter to facilitate access.

Good folder structures are imperative in an open document management system since bad structure will lower the willingness of users to participate and undermine the process. What does a poorly organized and a well organized folder structure look like? The following are examples of both bad and good document organization:

Bad Document Structure

X:

- **WPDOCS**
  - **{ATTORNEY NAME}**
    - **CLIENTS**
      - **{CLIENT NAME – MATTER NAME}**
  - **CLOSED**
  - **FORMS**
  - **ARCHIVED DOCS**
  - **ADMIN**
    - **CLIENT DEVELOPMENT**
    - **ADVERTISING**
- **SPREADSHEETS**
  - **CLIENTS**
    - **{CLIENT NAME – MATTER NAME}**
  - **FORMS**
  - **ADMIN SPREADSHEETS**
  - **ARCHIVED DOCS**
- **SCANS**
  - **CLIENTS**
    - **{CLIENT NAME – MATTER NAME}**
  - **ARCHIVED DOCS**
- **LETTERHEAD**
- **HUMAN RESOURCES**
- **VENDORS**
  - **ARCHIVED DOCS**

Analysis

1. Different document types (word processing, spreadsheets, scans) for the same case are stored in different folders
2. Word processing documents are stored under attorney names first. This means that on cases involving more than one attorney, there will be confusion as to where to store the documents
3. Form Documents are split between various sub-folders making locating the proper form difficult
4. Administrative documents are also split into different folders. Some administrative documents (like letterhead and human resource are not under the Admin folders)
5. Archived Documents are stored under Active documents making backups and indexing difficult. Also DMS pointers cannot be easily updated

Good Document Structure

X:\

- **ACTIVE**
  - **CASE DOCS**
    - **{CLIENT NAME or NUMBER}**
      - [MATTER NAME or NUMBER]
        - (Type of Document – *IF NEEDED*)
  - **LEGAL FORMS**
    - **{TYPES OF LAW}**
      - [SUB-TYPE OF LAW]
  - **OFFICE ADMIN**
    - **LETTERHEAD & FIRM LOGOS**
    - **HUMAN RESOURCE** ***(Limited Access)***
      - RESUMES
      - EMPLOYEES (HR Documents)
        - {NAME OF EMPLOYEE}
      - RECRUITING
      - 401k
    - **CLIENT DEVELOPMENT**
      - ADVERTISING
      - Marketing - Networking
    - **LIBRARY**
    - **CONSULTANTS & EXPERTS**
    - **VENDORS**
    - **FINANCIAL** ***(Limited Access)***
      - Reports
      - Fee Schedules
      - Payroll Info
    - **CLE**
  - **RESEARCH**
    - **{TYPES OF LAW}**
      - [SUB-TYPE OF LAW]
  - **USERS**
    - **{NAME OF EMPLOYEE}**
- **CLOSED**
  - ***{EXACT SAME FOLDER STRUCTURES AS UNDER ACTIVE}***

Analysis

1. First layer of folders separates all documents into either ACTIVE or CLOSED. Having exact same folder structure under each of these two main folders ensure true separation of archived documents and makes it easy to store and locate archived documents. DMS pointers can also be easily updated since only the word “ACTIVE” or “CLOSED” is changed in the document path

2. All Documents for a particular case are stored under the folder for that case for all attorneys – no separation of documents makes for easier saving and clearer organization

3. Legal Forms are organized together under one folder. Ensures quickly locating proper form

4. Administrative documents are separated from the client documents

What Needs To Be Done Before I Go Paperless?

Make the Commitment

The first step is to become committed to the process. As stated before, going paperless has all the allure of organizing your attic; but with dedication and perseverance, good organization will pay for itself many times over.

Research Rules Regarding Document Retention

Depending on your geographic area and your area of practice, rules for document retention can vary. You may be able to modify your client contracts to make the client the custodians of all documents. When documents come in, they are scanned and the originals are sent to the client. The client is then responsible for maintaining the originals. This greatly reduces storage costs. Also learn how long you must maintain originals to satisfy requirements and make a system to dispose and destroy out-dated documents.

Ensure Hardware Meets Specifications

When using a paperless office, it is imperative to have good hardware since all work processes flow through the computer. All computers must be higher-end business machines with good-sized monitors. Many users find using a dual monitor system very useful in a paperless environment. There should be at least one very fast scanner (minimum 15 ppm) with an auto-document feeder as well as desktop scanners on the desks of users who have high paper-producing tasks.

The server where the documents are stored must have sufficient hard drive capacity to grow to store many years worth of scanned files (1 to 5 GB per attorney per year!) Methods for archiving and transporting large numbers of files (CD-Burners, removable hard drives, etc.) should be included. Backup systems are ***critical*** since all firm information is electronic.

Become Serious About Getting Folder Structures under Control

As stated before, using an open document system (where the users willingly participate and are not forced to save documents in certain locations) requires well-structured document folders. Getting all document folder structures under control before attempting a paperless office is the most important step before undertaking a paperless office with an open document management system such as Front Office.

Plan, Plan, Plan

The most common reason for failure in the implementation of a paperless office is a lack of adequate planning. The enthusiasm to "just go paperless" often prompts rash execution of poorly thought-out systems. It is far better to spend weeks or months planning and testing than have to spend months re-doing large portions of the system for lack of a clear plan.

Separate Administrative Documents from Legal Production Documents

Not all case-specific documents need to be saved into Front Office - just as not all case-specific documents get put in the physical case folder. In high-volume discovery cases, many documents reside in banker's boxes in a "war room" and never get added to the client's physical folder. In such cases, usually only the administrative documents (i.e. the ones that would normally get put into the client's physical folder) get scanned and put into Front Office. This often requires that a distinction be made between the administrative "vehicles" of the discovery process such as Interrogatories and Request for Production and the actual products of the discovery. Products of the discovery ***can*** be scanned and put into Front Office, but if the volume is large, it is often better to administer such documents in litigation management software such as Lexis Concordance.

Decide which administrative documents should be scanned

As stated, not all documents need to be scanned into Front Office. However, even within the category of administrative documents some decisions must be made as to what is included. Most offices agree that junk mail does not need to be scanned but many differ on the depth of admin documents that do need to be scanned. Do client payments get scanned? What about credit card bills? There are no right answers to these questions, but the answers should be decided and policies established before going paperless.

Designate a "Librarian"

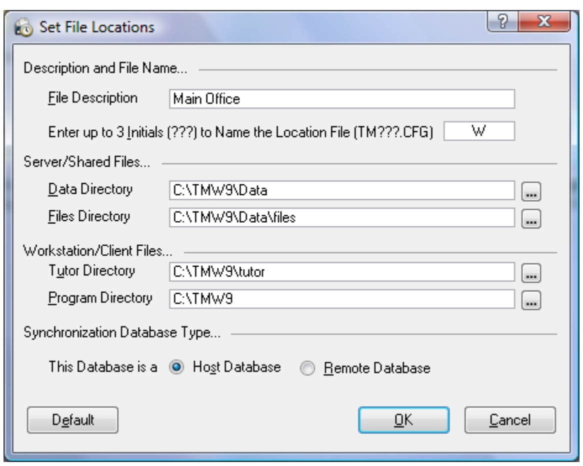
As discussed earlier in this paper, Front Office uses a voluntary document management approach. This means that end-users can circumvent the organization through intention or negligence. Designating a librarian or data manager to keep the documents organized and to take responsibility for catching and correcting mistakes can prevent erosion of good document and data organization over time.

The Lynchpin - How does it all work together?

A paperless office is based on good management. Front Office is an excellent management tool and can help facilitate a paperless office. Below are the main features of Front Office that can be used to help create a paperless office:

Setting the Default Document Folder (Files Directory)

Using the Front Office DMS to manage all documents (including scans) to make a paperless office requires that some of the basic document settings be more closely observed. The Files Directory setting in the Set Files Locations dialog specifies where the program looks by default for documents. Front Office defaults to this setting to "T:\tmw9\data\files" (where T is equal to the directory where the central database resides).



This default is based on the Front Office data folder which changes with each version installed (T:\tmw5, T:\tmw6, etc.) and therefore can present a hindrance to a smooth conversion. For this reason, many firms find it useful to change the default Files Directory to something more centralized such as the directory structures detailed earlier in this document.

If a centralized directory structure is used, then the default directory path should be updated on all stations whenever a new version is installed to reflect the correct path.

It is important to note that both the *Templates* folder (which holds the PowerViews) and the *Bills* folder (which holds bill copies for the Billing Matters add-on) reside in the path specified in the File Directory field. If a new path is specified, those folders should be moved into the path to ensure proper functioning of the program.

"&" Notation

In a Windows network it is possible for different workstations to look at the same network resource with a different mapping. This can affect how documents are retrieved. For example, if one station sees the shared document folder of the server as X:\DOCS and another station sees the same documents under Z:\CLIENTS\DOCS, then any absolute file paths stored in the central Front Office database will not be able to locate the documents for both stations – one will work and the other will receive an error message.

To combat this problem, Front Office supports a neutral pathing known as the ampersand notation. The ampersand symbol (&) is inserted in the file location path to represent the base path to documents that is reflected in the File Directory of the Set Folders Locations dialog (see above) that is set individually on each station.

The ampersand substitutes for the entry in the Files Directory. For example, if you set up your Files and Documents directories on the server under the Front Office Files Directory (F:\TMW7\DATA\FILES), one character - the ampersand (&) - can be substituted for the path specified in the File Locations files for the Files Directory. One advantage to this approach is that if the Files Directory ever changes (such as switched to another server with a different drive and directory path or due to an upgrade), the change in the File Location file will automatically apply to files listed in Front Office using the "&" character in their Path. Since the ampersand stands for whatever is in the Files Directory which is set individually for each station, this notation can solve the issue of different paths from different stations. Also, ampersand notation is required if you want to synchronize an actual document within the Front Office synchronization as well as accessing documents using the Front Office World Server product.

Auto-Naming

One of the most useful and time-saving features in the Front Office DMS is Auto-Naming. When a document needs to be saved, it is given a name under which it is saved to the server's hard drive. When not using a DMS, the naming convention is often left up to the one drafting the document. The author makes up a name for the document and decides in which folder to save the document. As we have already learned, this is one of the weakest links in managing documents. Different users can have differing opinions on where documents should be stored and how they should be named. Having cogent folder structures helps reduce the confusion, but Auto-Naming makes it even easier. Front Office Auto-Naming takes fields from the document record to create the folder and naming structures for saving the document. Users simply fill in the document record in Front Office (or TM Save) and the name and location to save the document are automatically determined. Certain fields in the Front Office document record can be required to ensure uniformity.

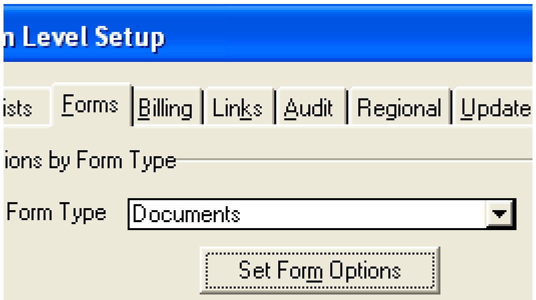
TIP

Almost any field in the document record can be used as part of the auto-naming scheme. Ideas for field customizations to better profile and track documents can be found in Appendix A.

Set up Auto-Naming:

FILE ▸ SETUP ▸ GENERAL ▸ PROGRAM LEVEL

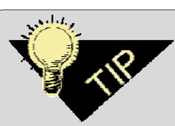
1. Click on the **FORMS** tab
2. From the "Select Form Type" drop-down menu Choose "Documents"
3. Click the **SET FORM OPTIONS** Button



4. Click on the **AutoName** tab
5. Select the appropriate options
6. Select which fields create the folder name
7. Select which fields create the file name

Legacy Document Structures

It is very important to try to harmonize the document naming in Front Office with your existing document structures. If you set up auto-naming to create folders with {FirstName} {LastName} and all existing folders are {LastName},{FirstName} the new folders created with auto-naming will create new folders for the same client under a different structure. This effectively creates duplicates of existing folders and defeats the purpose of making document management more simple and transparent. Often you must rename existing folders to match the new structure that will be created and enforced by Auto-Naming. This can be a very daunting task if the folder structure have never been cleaned before and many years of documents have built up. It is usually useful to first divide the documents into active and closed folders. Those in the closed folder are usually not attached into Front Office, reducing the amount of folder cleanup needed.



See Appendix B for suggestions on third-party software packages that can assist with the process of document folder migration

Name Change Considerations

Since certain elements of a client's names and the matter reference field of matters are frequently used as part of the folder naming scheme, changes in the names of client or matters can adversely affect document paths by creating multiple folders. It is therefore a good idea to limit name changes to a narrow group of users or perhaps limit it to the "librarian" altogether in order to ensure data and document path integrity.

Name changes can be controlled and locked down by using the security settings in Front Office. In Version 9 of Front Office, field level security exceptions can be added to security profiles for users blocking the ability to change name fields that are used in the auto-naming.

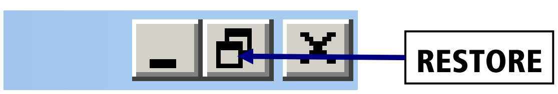
Importing all Existing Documents

Front Office has the ability to import existing documents and attach them to a designated matter and/or contact. This feature can be used to link all existing documents in batches to the corresponding matter and client.

Only attach documents to matters / contacts after document folders have been organized as per the paragraphs above. If you adjust the folder structure later, you will have to re-import the documents or mass updates all document records.

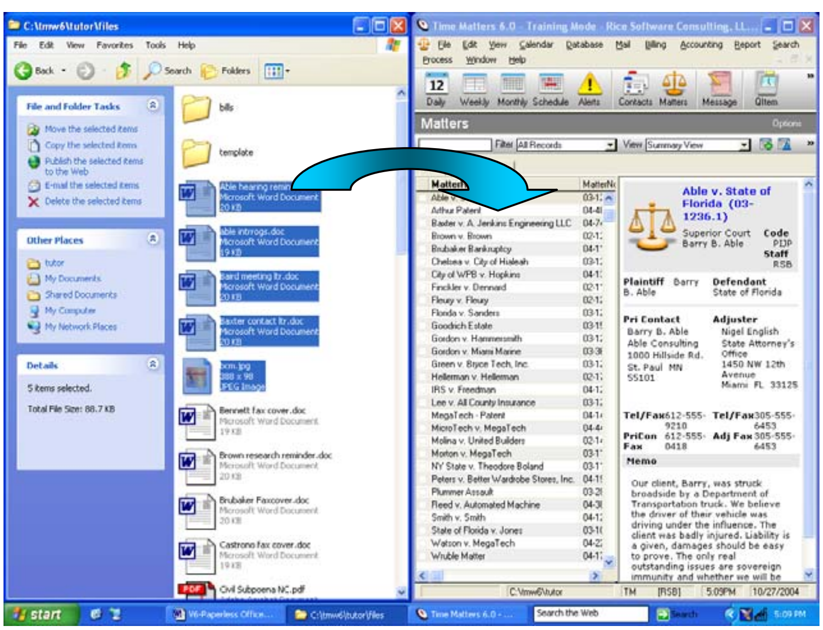
To batch import existing documents – Drag & Drop Method:

1. Open Windows Explorer to the client directory
2. Open Front Office to the Matter/Case list
3. Make sure both Windows are set to normal size (not minimized or maximized) – this can be accomplished by clicking on the "Restore" button in the upper right corner of the Window



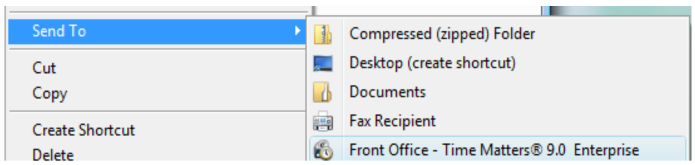
4. Right Click on the Windows Task Bar and choose the "Tile Windows Vertically" – this will arrange the Explorer windows and the Front Office Matter list side by side.

5. Highlight the desired document(s) and drag them to the Matter and release. Be sure to place the tip of the cursor on the matter to which you wish to link.

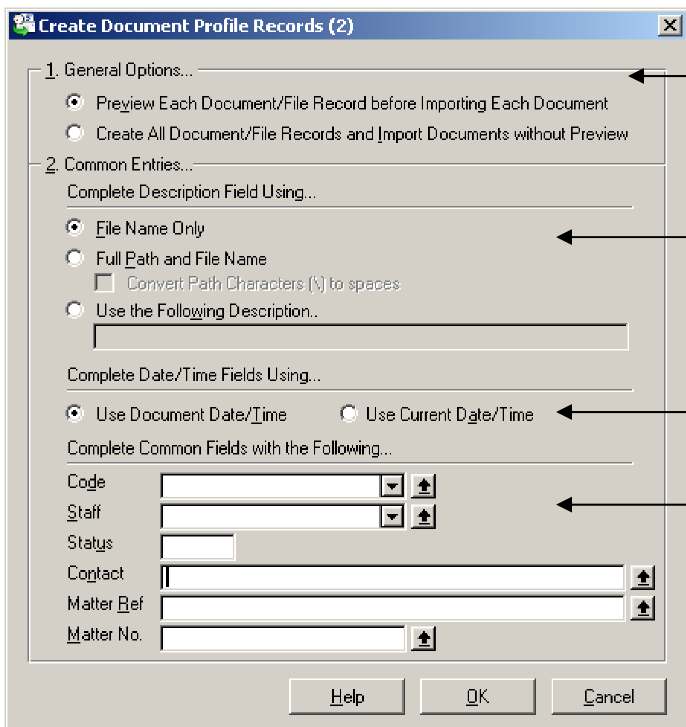


To batch import existing documents – Right Click Method:

1. Open Windows Explorer to the client directory
2. Highlight the desired document(s) and then right click
3. Choose "Front Office – Time Matters 9 from the menu



When using either the drag-and-drop or right click method, the following dialog will appear:



Choose whether you want to preview each document as it is imported (Usually should be set to import without preview)

Choose how the Description field of the document records will be filled in. (Usually set with the file name if descriptive files names have been used previously)

Choose where the TM Document Record will take its date

Choose default for the Document Records. If you know what type of document is being imported, it is often helpful to choose the code or staff. Contact and Matters should be automatically filled in due to the drag and drop operation

Attaching New Document Production

Once existing documents have been attached to Front Office, the task becomes attaching all new, on-going document production. This can be done on a continuing basis using the TM Save function that that appears in WordPerfect, Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Adobe Acrobat, as well as the TM Save Attachment in Microsoft Outlook and the Front Office Inbox. TM Save appears as an additional SAVE button on the toolbar in these programs. When clicked, the TM Save function calls up a Front Office Document record rather than the standard Windows save dialog box. From here the document is saved to both the hard drive and is also attached to the Front Office client and/or matter. TM Save should be used only the first time the document is saved (i.e. when the document is given its name.) The normal save function of the word processor can be used for subsequent saves. Auto-naming can be used in conjunction with TM Save to enhance the speed and consistency of saving documents.

For more details about the TM Save functions. See the Front Office help file.

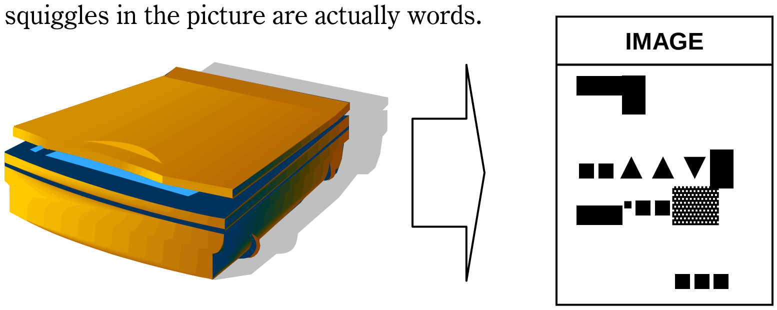
Scanning

Scanning is the process of converting paper into digital documents. For this, one must have a scanner. The most important elements of the scanner are the scanner speed, resolution and automatic document feeding. Scanners should have sufficient speed – a minimum for most small law firms is 15 pages per minute. Large volumes of paper demand faster scanning speeds. It is not necessary to have high resolution scanning if you are only scanning text documents. Normally an upper-level resolution of 600 is enough. Most users find a setting of 200 – 300 dpi resolution suffices for document scanning. Remember that higher resolutions scans take up more hard drive space than lower resolution scans and require more time to scan each page.

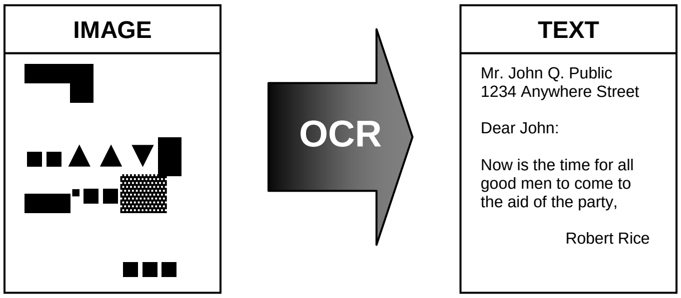
An automatic document feeder (ADF) is a tray that allows laying multiple pages on the scanner. This allows the users to work on other things while the scanning of large document stacks is occurring. An ADF that loads 50 pages is considered by most to be a minimum.

Paperless offices are based on the concept that everything your office produces is already in electronic format (Word, WordPerfect, Excel, etc.) and is stored in a system of folders on the server. Most of these documents are text-based. To this is added all external documents in the form of scanned files. The scanned files can be stored in various formats: Image, Text, or a blend of Image upon Text.

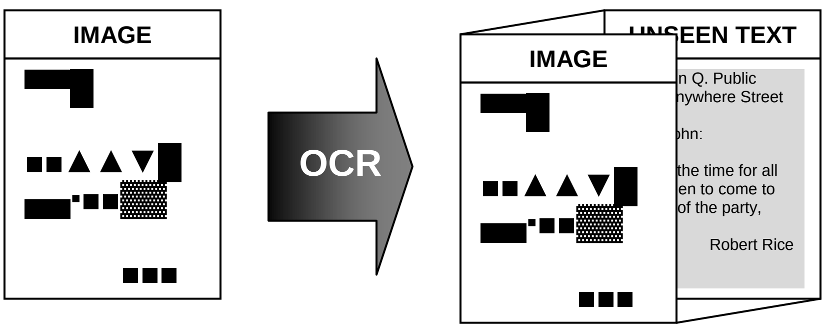
When a scanner processes a document, the file produced is initially an image – a picture or snapshot. One can think of it as an electronic photocopy of the document. This picture looks exactly like the original, but the computer is not able to understand that the black and white squiggles in the picture are actually words.



There is a class of software known as Optical Character Recognition (OCR) software that reads the scanned image converting the black and white squiggles into normal ASCII text. The OCR process has the effect, however, of ruining the exact photocopy that was created at the time of scanning by converting it to text. Many attorneys mistakenly believe that they must convert all images of documents to editable text using OCR software. It is true that some legal documents must be OCR'ed in order to properly process them; however most do not need to be converted to text.



Some programs such as Adobe Acrobat have the ability to scan a document as an image and then OCR the document – placing the OCR'ed text **invisibly behind the image.** This allows the document to be searched (using the document search index of Front Office which is discussed later) **without changing the original scanned image**. This blended approach is the best for most law offices. This keeps the image as an exact photocopy of the original, but allows for full text searching of the document. Front Office has the built-in feature of scanning documents into Adobe as well as a link to the popular PaperPort software. For the exact steps for scanning in either PDF or PaperPort format, please refer to the user's manual for instructions on scanning as the possibilities are too numerous to list in this white paper.



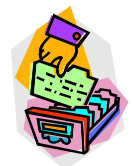
Also there are new scanners, such as the Fujitsu ScanSnap that scan directly into Adobe Acrobat at the touch of a button. The new TM Save function in Acrobat can then be used to attach the scan directly into Front Office thus greatly reducing the number of steps needed in the workflow to scan.

Document Search Index

One of the most important components of a paperless office is the document search engine. A document search engine allows rapid searching of documents using the content of the documents. Because all documents are electronic in a paperless office and the volume can conceivably be very large, it is critical for each user to be able to rapidly locate documents. Searching large volumes of files can be very slow even with the fastest computer since each document must be "read" by the computer in a non-indexed search. Indexed searches are much faster since the documents are not searched, but rather the index (which is highly organized for searching) is searched. This document index must first be created and maintained to gain the benefit of rapid searching.

A useful analogy is a library:
In order to find one specific book on a subject, you could look for hours on each and every book shelf in the library or you could look up the topic or author in the card catalog. The card catalog is an index of all the books. Using this index, one can quickly locate information in a library without having to look at each shelf.

VS.



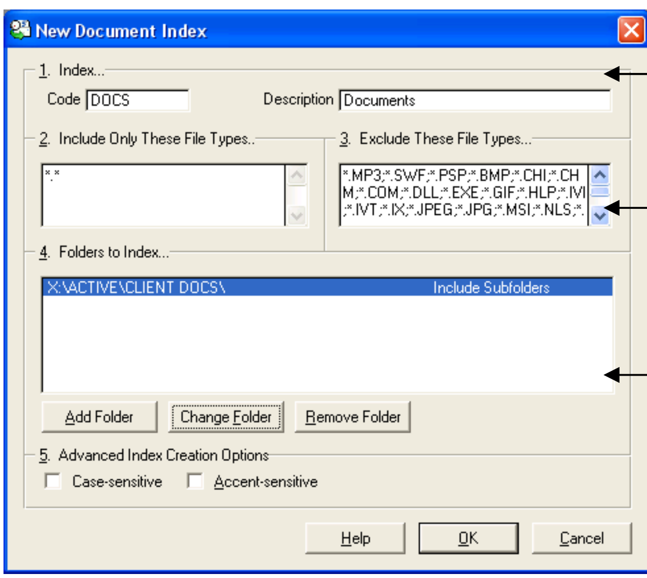
Some uses of document search indexes in a paperless office are:

- Locating lost documents
- Brief banking/Repurposing (reusing past documents as forms for current ones)
- Conflict of Interest (checking all past documents for client's names)

Creating a Document Search Index:

Before documents can be searched using the document search function of Front Office, a search index must be created. This is done under:
FILE ▸ UTILITIES ▸ DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT ▸ DOCUMENT INDEX MANAGER

The Document Index Manager opens. Click on the  Add button
The following dialog appears:



Name the document index. There can be many indexes – one for active, another for closed, etc.

Enter extensions of files that need to be excluded – usually due to size or lack of text content

Enter path to documents. Multiple paths can be entered. Please use UNC naming if not all stations point to the documents with the same mapped drive letter

The document indexer can be set to run a reindex on a set schedule so as to assimilate any new documents or changes to existing ones. This is normally done on a nightly schedule for commonly used documents, and weekly for lesser used ones.

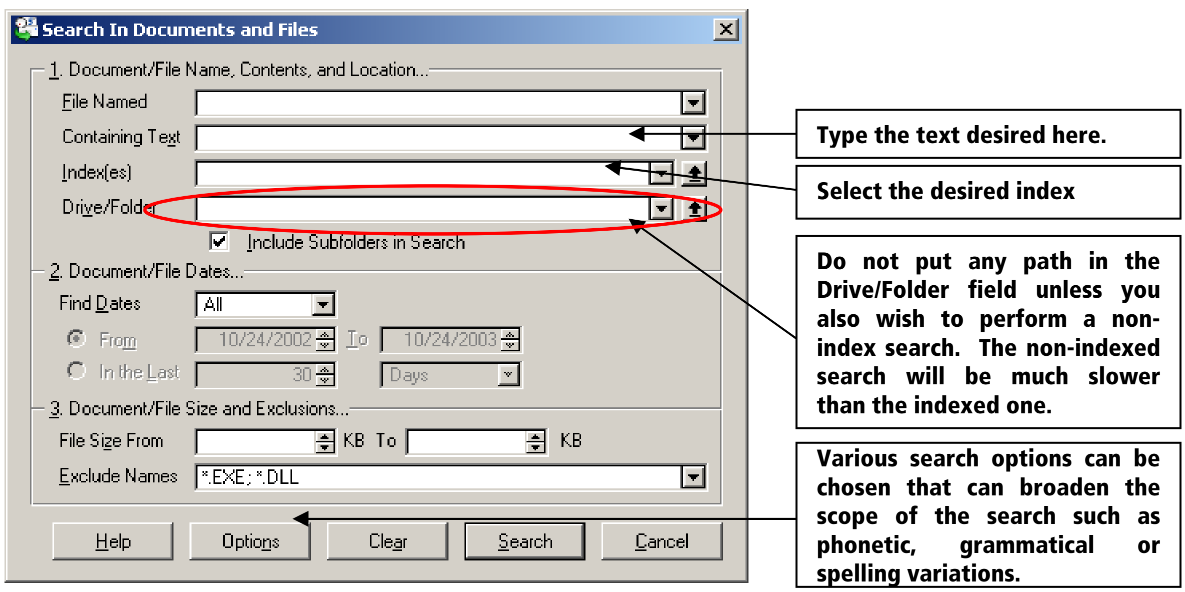
It is often useful to run a **Microsoft Windows** Search on the root folder that is to be indexed before the initial index is created. This Windows Search would look only for files larger than a certain size (2MB for example). This ensures that there are no unknown, large files that would hinder the progress of the indexer and potentially crash the system. Not all large files are bad, but if excessively large media, program or database files that do not contain useable text are discovered, they can be excluded from the index (see above)

To Use Windows Search to find larger files to potentially exclude:

1. Click on the Windows Start button
2. Click on Search (or Find on some versions of Windows)
3. Choose the Advanced options and only look for larger files
4. After the Search is complete, sort by file type and exclude any unnecessary files from the Front Office Document Search Index

Searching Documents:

To search documents click on: **SEARCH ▸ DOCUMENT SEARCH**
The following dialog appears:



The document search feature is independent from the Front Office DMS. A document *DOES NOT* have to be attached in Front Office to be searched. It simply needs to be included in the search index.
Only text is searched. Scanned documents must be OCR'ed to be converted to a text document or to include searchable text in the file in order to be searched.

Processing Incoming Documents

One of the major benefits of a paperless office is electronic document distribution. If paper is scanned but still distributed manually, then the full benefit of the paperless office is not realized.

In paper-driven workflows, physical paper arrives at an office and is manually distributed to the intended recipient. In some offices multiple copies of each document are made and then multiple recipients are given copies of the documents. Paperless offices need analogous systems of distribution to work properly.

The goal of paperless distribution is to reduce the amount of paper being shuffled from one desk to another and in and out of the filing cabinets. Paper should be scanned when it comes in the door and is then immediately filed. The electronic copy of the document is subsequently distributed to the intended recipient(s) without cluttering desktops and without needing to be collected and filed at a future date. Paperless distribution also lowers the incidence of lost documents. Attorney desktops can become "black holes" for documents and client files. Paperless distribution re-routes the flow of paper directly into the filing cabinets lowering the overall cost of filing, un-filing, re-filing and searching for misplaced documents.

Many users initially feel that scanned documents should be sent via email. Ideally paperless distribution ***does not use email***. No one in a modern law office needs more email in their Inbox. Most users are completely overwhelmed by the current volume of emails in their Inbox and adding paperless document distribution would only increase the burden. Also, large graphical attachments are a main cause of email bloat. Email attachments can also causes different copies to float around in different Inboxes as the sender and all recipients have a different electronic copy of the same document in their respective In/Outboxes.

Front Office can use various features such as the document list or the Review features to distribute documents without paper and without resorting to email. To better understand how document should be distributed using Front Office, it is instructive to analyze incoming documents as a whole.

The mains points of entry for documents in a law firm are:

- **Mail**
  The U.S. Postal Service delivers once daily. Support staff member(s) open and separate the mail. Documents are copied and hand-delivered to each desk. Documents are later collected to be filed.
- **Fax**
  Faxes arrive at irregular intervals throughout the day. In most offices, there is a central "inbox" of faxes which is processed and distributed by a responsible support staff member. Faxes are later collected and filed.
- **Email**
  Emails with case-specific attachments arrive throughout the day in various formats. Some users save the attachments into the client's folder but most users simply leave the attachments on the email
- **Delivery/Courier**
  Deliveries arrive a few times throughout the day. Support staff members(s) open and distribute the deliveries. Paper is later collected and filed.
- **Banker's Boxes**
  Large deliveries of boxes are usually related to the discovery/production phase of litigation or to large transactional or IP cases. Boxes are brought in and set up in a "war room" to plan the case.

In a paperless office the ideal systems for each of these entry points would be:

Mail
Each piece of case-relevant mail is scanned, profiled in the Front Office DMS by using the TMSave features in Adobe Acrobat and paperlessly distributed to the intended recipient(s). Originals are immediately filed.

Fax
Faxes can either be scanned in PDF format after arriving using a scanner in a similar system to mail, or an Internet Fax provider can be used. Internet Fax services are subscription services that provide a fax number. All faxes received at that number are converted into an electronic format (preferably Adobe PDF) and emailed to a pre-selected email address - thus removing the need for the scanning step.

Email
Documents attached to emails received are immediately saved into the client's folder and profiled in the Front Office DMS using the TMSave feature.

Delivery/Courier
(Similar to Mail) Each case-relevant document delivered is scanned upon receipt, profiled in the Front Office DMS by using the TMSave features in Adobe Acrobat and paperlessly distributed to the intended recipient(s). Originals are immediately filed.

Banker's Boxes
Usually theses are not scanned into Front Office but rather a specialized litigation support database handles these documents.

Paperless Document Distribution

Once the documents are received and converted into an electronic format, they need to be distributed to their intended recipient(s).

The two main methods of document distribution are:

- **One recipient responsible for the document**
- **Multiple recipients responsible for the document**

One recipient responsible "Hot Potato"
This is the simpler system. Each scanned document is assigned to one staff member who is responsible for taking care of the document and performing any action items stemming from the document. If the recipient is unable to complete the work or is not the correct recipient for the work, they reassign the document to another staff member who then becomes responsible for the document. The audit feature of Front Office tracks the staff assignments and re-assignments. This method is sometimes likened to the child's game of "hot potato" since any document can be passed to another staff member who then becomes responsible for it. QuickTabs on the document list are used for this method.

Multiple recipients responsible "Shotgun"
In this more complicated method, each document record is assigned to one ***or more*** staff members by way of the Review feature in Front Office. Each staff member "signs off" as they complete any action for which they might be responsible. When all staff has marked the record as fully reviewed the document review is completed. This spreads the responsibility to multiple staff members like scattershot from a shotgun, but can also cloud the lines of ultimate responsibility.

One Recipient - QuickTabs for Document Distribution

Front Office QuickTabs can be used for single-recipient document distribution. Create a filter on the list using QuickTabs on the main Document list that only shows the incoming documents for a particular staff member. The QuickTabs are usually set to filter either by date or by whether the record is marked “Done.” It is often advisable to set up the tabs on the Program level and use the {STAFF} token in order to speed setup and reduce later administrative overhead.

TIP

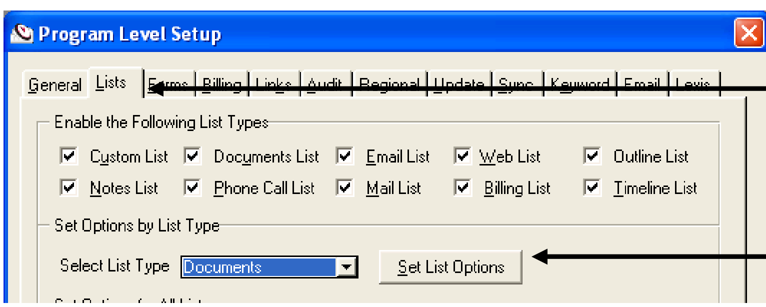
Review the Front Office help file for more details about QuickTabs, Advanced Filtering and the {STAFF} token. Many different types of QuickTabs can be created to view the list of incoming scans from different perspectives.

To create QuickTabs for scanned document distribution you must first add Classification Codes that facilitate filtering:

1. Add Classification codes for incoming documents – e.g. “IN” (**FILE ▸ SETUP ▸ CODES ▸ CLASSIFICATION CODES)**
2. Add the incoming code to all incoming documents when scanning ***in addition to*** the regular classification code for the type of document (e.g. Discovery, Pleading, Correspondence, etc.)
3. Create QuickTabs that filter based on the incoming code” (e.g. “IN”)

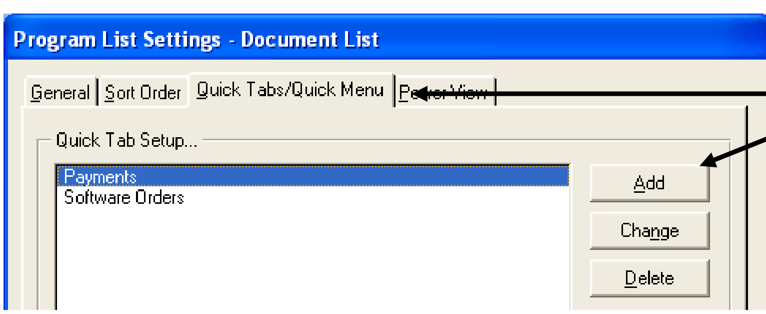
To set up Mail/Fax/Delivery QuickTabs:

1. **FILE ▸ SETUP ▸ GENERAL ▸ PROGRAM LEVEL**



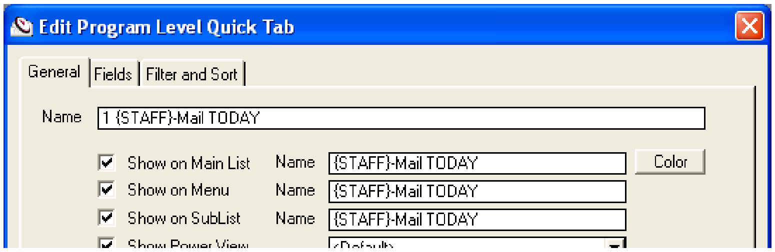
Click on the Lists tab

Select Documents as the List Type and press the “Set Lists Options” button

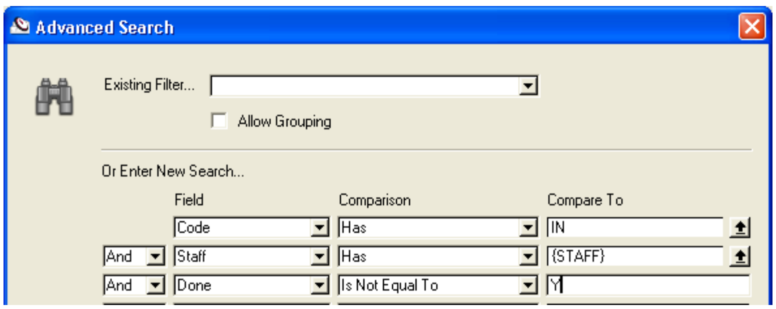


Click on the QuickTab / QuickMenu tab and press the “Add” button

On the General Tab give the new QuickTab a name. Remember you can use the relative {STAFF} token to represent whichever staff member is logged in. Choose appropriate fields from the Fields tab. On the Filter and Sort tab, choose the setting to create an Advanced Filter.



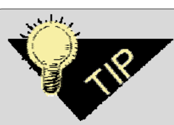
Create a filter that limited the records by staff, code, date and/or completion status.



Resulting QuickTabs might look like this:

Multiple Recipients - Document Record Review

The Front Office record review feature is used to distribute a document record to multiple recipients. Each recipient must mark the record review as "complete" to sign off that they are finished reviewing that particular document record.

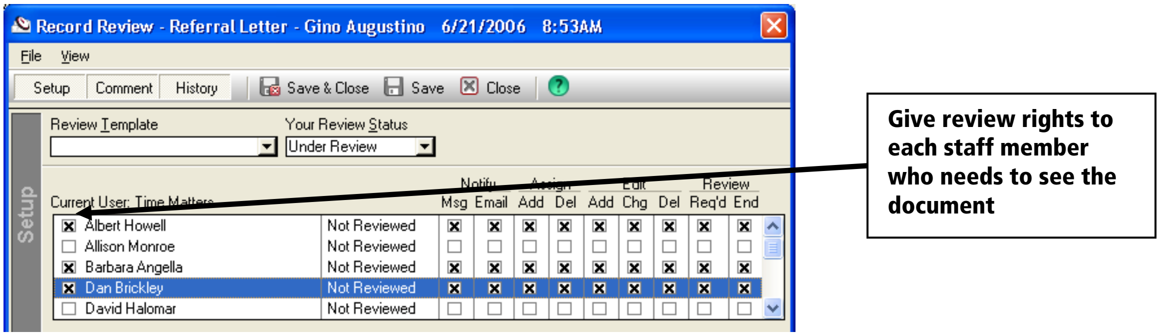


Review the Front Office Manual for more details about Record Review and Record Review Templates.

To start a record review for a document:

1. Check the "Review" checkbox on the document record 

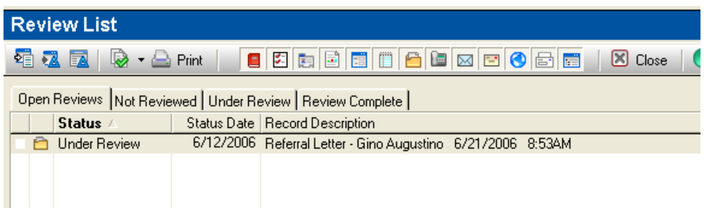
2. Choose the intended recipients as well as their review rights or use a Review Template to speed the entry



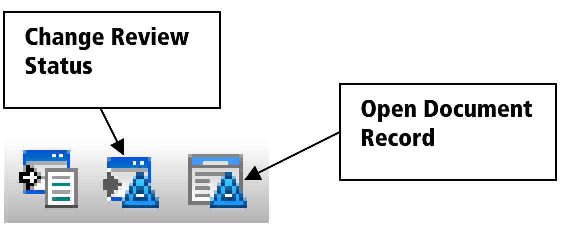
To view open document reviews:

1. Click on **VIEW ▸ REVIEW LIST** (or Press ALT+SHIFT+R) to open the review list. Alternatively a toolbar icon can be added to open the review list or a section can be added to a Journal

The Review List shows Reviews in various stages. The Open review would be those documents that still need to be reviewed or still have outstanding work that needs to be performed.



From the review list toolbar buttons can be used to open the document record, or change the review status. While the document has been reviewed, the status can be changed to “Under Review” and when completed to “Review Complete”



Once all staff members in the review have marked the review as complete, the checkbox can be removed from the review checkbox ending the review.

Document Collaboration

One of the many advantages of working paperlessly is that many users can look at the same document and comment on the document electronically thus reducing the cost of internal communication and facilitating greater team efforts. The document review functions as well as the version control feature of Front Office facilitate this process. Comments can be added to the record review about edits and changes needed to the document. The version control features can be used to save historical copies of the document as those changes are made.

Archiving Documents

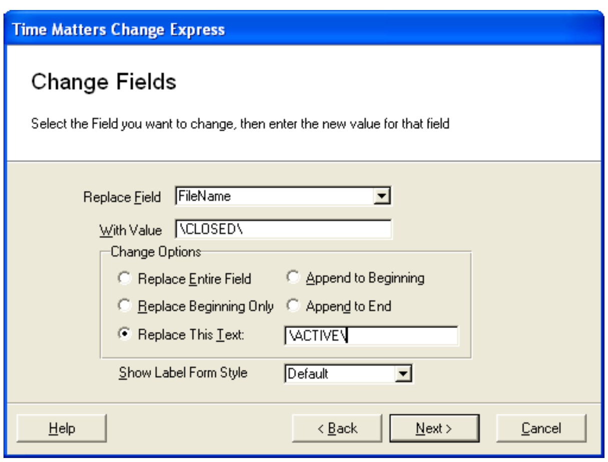
Over time, the larger volume of electronic documents created in a paperless office can overload the hardware and storage capacities of the network and also create clutter which threatens the order of the system. It is necessary to have well-organized archival plans. To archive electronic documents, it is useful to set up a folder structure for closed documents that mimics the structures for active documents (as discussed earlier in this white paper.)

The first step to archive documents is to move the actual files from the ACTIVE folders to the CLOSED folders. This is done through standard Windows functions such as Windows Explorer or some other file manager. Many find it useful to use “drag-and-drop” to move the files to the new location.

Once the files have been relocated into the CLOSED folder, the DMS pointers in Front Office can no longer locate and open the files since they are not present under the ACTIVE path. The path needs to be updated to reflect the new location. Since the folders are well-structured, the only difference between the file paths after archiving is that the word “Active” should be replaced with the word “Closed”

To update pointers to the “Closed” documents folder:

1. Move all the documents for one matter from the *ACTIVE* folder to the *CLOSED* folder using Windows Explorer or some other file manager.
2. Open Front Office to the Document list.
3. Filter the list by Contact or Matter for those items that were moved to the *CLOSED* folder and tag those records desired.
4. Click on **PROCESS ▸ CHANGE RECORDS.**
5. Walk through the steps to create a new change template.
6. Change the contents of the *File Name* field by changing only the word “*\ACTIVE*” to “*\CLOSED*” in the file path. Now all pointers to the documents are up-to-date. The slashes are used to prevent the accidental change of the word “active” in a filename.



Use CTRL + T to tag all records in the filter.
The PROCESS ▸ CHANGE RECORDS menu used to update the file name path can be saved in a template and reused. This speeds the process and reduces the possibility of error.

Conclusion

Paperless law offices are becoming a reality in many law offices. Other industries have already made the transition and law offices will not be far behind - driven by the demands of the market and the push toward e-filing as many courts have begun to convert to paperless systems putting pressure on law firms to soon follow suit. Good management dictates that all law offices should begin a review of document procedures to ensure future compatibility with paperless systems. A paperless office is more of a discipline than a technology – offices must evaluate and streamline how they store and retrieve documents so that the increased load of electronic documents in a paperless environment does not cause the firm to be overwhelmed. Front Office is a good management tool whose existing functions facilitate paperless office systems. By using Front Office as the central focus of a paperless office, law firms can obtain a paperless office and thus raise their efficiency and lower overhead costs related to paper.

Appendix A: Document custom field suggestions

There are 8 custom fields on all document records that can be configured to track additional information in order to better profile each document. Information in these fields can be searched and sorted the same as any other field in Front Office. Data in these fields can be used for auto-naming but do not have to be. Form Styles can also be used to tie the field customization to specific document classification codes.

Author
- Outgoing documents: this is set as a lookup to the staff list
- Incoming documents (i.e. documents with a class code designating them as incoming): this is set as a lookup to the contacts list

Recipient
- Outgoing documents: this is set as a lookup to the contacts list
- Incoming documents: this is set as a lookup to the staff list

Index Date
- This is set as a date field and tracks any critical date expressed in the document. This can be used to sort documents based on critical dates inside the document rather than the date the document was actually created/received.

Destroy After Date
- This date field contain that date after which the document can be destroyed. The destroy date is often filtered on a cycle and the selected documents are deleted using the **PROCESS ▸ DELETE** menu

Variant
- Front Office has a feature to maintain multiple versions of a document. However, many times a variant of a document is created rather than a version. Variant in this context is understood to be a document that is separate from the original and is different in some visible way that ***does not affect the functional content of the document***. A signed copy or file stamped copy of a document would be an example of a variant since the optical form of the document has changed but the actual written content is the same. This field is usually a custom text drop-down list which includes, but is not limited to the following options: Original, Signed copy, Notarized copy, File-stamped, copy

Sub-Type
- This is a text field with a custom drop down list which is usually customized with a Form Style per document classification code. The sub-type lets users to pick from a short list of additional descriptors for the class code. Example: if the code were DISC for "Discovery," some sub-types might be Interrogatories, Request for Production, etc.

Delivery Method
- Tracks how the document was delivered. With outgoing documents this explains how the document was shipped. With incoming documents, it details the method of receipt. Usually this is a custom text drop down list containing the following options: Mail, Overnight Shipping, Courier, Fax, Email Attachment. For Outgoing documents, this field is often inadequate since the document might be sent to multiple recipients, multiple times. Often it is only used for incoming documents

Shipping ID
- Text field that tracks a shipping tracking number (if applicable)

Code (written out form)
- A written out form of the document classification code. This is used in the auto-naming to create sub-folders with fully spelled-out names. This is usually automatically filled with an Auto Entry Form that is tied to the document classification code.

Doc ID
- A number field set to create a sequential number. Usually used in auto-naming to set a unique number into the document name

Appendix B: Useful Tools

The following is a list of third-party software tools that can assist in a document migration. They are mainly focused on helping you clean up your Windows folder structures in preparation for a paperless office.

WARNING:
The author of this white paper does not make any warranties about the software packages listed below. Use at your own risk.

Folder Print Utilities

- Facilitates the printing of the Windows folder structures to paper. This allows for easier processing and group collaboration enabling decisions to modify folders

  Suggested Utility:
  Dirhtml (http://dirhtml.enware.info/)

File/Folder Rename Utilities

- Assists in the process of batch file and/or folder renaming. Such utilities can automate the process thus reducing the time and tedium

  Suggested Utilities:
  Quick File Rename (http://www.skyjuicesoftware.com/software/fmk_info.html)
  Fast Folder Rename (http://www.skyjuicesoftware.com/software/ffr_info.html)

Folder Creation Utility

- Creates Windows folders based on data in a comma delimited format file (.CSV) Front Office can export data in this format. This can be used to create empty folders based on Front Office client and/or matter names.

  Suggested Utility:
  Folder Maker (http://www.skyjuicesoftware.com/software/fmk_info.html)