

GOING GREEN | Building Orange County's Future

Green = Lean²

How eliminating paper from business processes leads to a leaner, more efficient workplace.

Did you know that Americans discard four million tons of office paper every year and that one ton of office paper equals 24 trees? (For those searching for a calculator, this comes out to 96 million trees, or the equivalent of about 500,000 acres of mature forest!) Furthermore, did you know that the cost of handling, filing and retrieving a single paper document can cost upwards of \$360 a year? The environmental and financial impact of paper in the workplace is astounding, but there is a solution that has proven to reduce the amount of paper consumption while increasing workplace efficiencies, ultimately leading to overall operating cost reduction.

To understand the impact of paper in the workplace and the environment, let's look at some statistics of our overall consumption, which has increased six-fold over the past 50 years. Research has shown that the average American office worker is estimated to use a sheet of paper every 12 minutes and is responsible for the disposal of approximately 150 pounds of paper every year. Additionally, the average business grows its paper usage by about 22 percent a year. What this means is that in less than three and a half years, your organization will double its usage and disposal of paper. If the United States cut office paper use by just 10 percent, it would prevent the emission of 1.6 million tons of greenhouse gases. To put this into perspective, this would be just as impactful as taking 280,000 cars off the road! Now take into consideration that 7.5 percent of all documents get lost, 3 percent get misfiled and the average document gets copied 19 times. The amount of unnecessary waste that occurs with the normal operations of a paper-based company is significant on a global basis.

Financial significance

Aside from the environmental effects, the financial impact of this type of consumption and dependence on paper is worth exploring as well. The dollar amount associated with the paper and ink is actually minor compared with the cost of handling and processing the information on the documents. The graph below contains actual cost breakdowns of handling paper documents, based on research conducted by Coopers & Lybrand.

PAPER HANDLING / STORAGE COSTS

\$20 to file a document	\$1,300 to purchase a fireproof cabinet
\$120 to find a document	\$7,560 to store 15 filing cabinets a year
\$220 to reproduce a lost document	

Document management solutions

So what can companies do to minimize their paper consumption, the associated financial costs and the negative environmental impact?

Paper-intensive business processes such as those in accounts payable (where multiple copies of documents need to be filed, retrieved and distributed for approval) can be done electronically. This significantly reduces the consumption of paper and increases workflow efficiency. An enterprise document management and workflow solution such as *doc-link*™ by Laguna Hills-based Altec Products, Inc. (www.altec-inc.com) offers companies the ability to eliminate paper-based bottlenecks, increase efficiencies and reduce paper-related operational costs.



Documents can be electronically captured into *doc-link* through a number of different methods, including e-mail, fax, scan or automatically from an accounting application. The need to print and file documents is now eliminated. When capturing the document electronically, index values can be added to it before being stored into the *doc-link* repository for instant retrieval. What once used to take hours or days for someone to physically locate and distribute key information on paper now takes only seconds. Based upon the Coopers & Lybrand figures, this alone can be quite a substantial cost savings.

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Streamlined business processes

Additionally, business processes are streamlined by using *doc-link's* workflow module, which mimics a company's existing paper process in an electronic format. The electronic movement of information offers visibility to all documents at any time with proper security credentials, eliminating lost or misfiled documents. This not only increases the speed in which documents are distributed and approved, but also dramatically reduces shipping and courier costs for companies that have approvers in remote locations.

doc-link's Output Manager module further streamlines processes by automating the routing and distribution of all printed documents, reports and forms in the format desired by the intended recipient.

Altec has teamed up with Irvine-based Epicor Software (www.epicor.com) and Sage Software (www.sage.com) to offer a seamless solution with each company's enterprise resource planning (ERP) system to automate accounting processes. *doc-link's* integration allows users to work straight from within the ERP application, allowing users to drill down to original documents. The productivity benefits and cost reductions attendant with utilizing *doc-link* have been enjoyed by both local and global companies, including Aquarium of the Pacific in Long Beach and New Horizons Computer Learning Center.

Safeguard business-critical information

The environmental rationale for reducing paper usage makes sense from both a business and financial perspective. Furthermore, with 90 percent of business information still existing on paper, consider the consequences of its loss. More than 70 percent of today's businesses would fail within three weeks if they suffered a catastrophic loss of paper-based records due to fire or flood. Having a document management solution in place with back-up data stored off-site would mitigate these crippling scenarios.

With the tightening of resources stemming from today's economic climate, coupled with the growing pressures of global and environmental responsibility, companies do have viable options. Now by going green and reducing their consumption of paper, companies are also running leaner and realizing the benefits of increased efficiencies. Going green leads to getting lean, which makes good sense (cents).

For more information on doc-link, please call 1-800-997-9921 (x1255).

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GPS® Green Partner Support™

GPS® Green Partner Support™ is a comprehensive approach to helping our customers clean to protect health without harming the environment. GPS encompasses all aspects of the cleaning process and seeks to have a positive effect on the health of building occupants and cleaning personnel, while also striving to minimize any negative effects on the environment. GPS is ongoing support from WAXIE that consists of a combination of proper cleaning procedures, processes and planning to safely and effectively clean buildings, as well as the cleaning chemicals, equipment and accessories required to perform the cleaning function. GPS is a blueprint for best practices, is continually seeking improvements, and adopts from Executive Order 13101 the definition of environmentally preferable as "products and services that have a lesser or reduced effect on human health and the environment when compared with competing products and services that serve the same purpose." GPS identifies third-party certifications whenever available to substantiate environmentally preferable claims [such as EPA Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines, EPA DfE, EcoLogo, Green Seal, SCS Certified (Green Cross), Carpet & Rug Institute Green Label, Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), etc.] and includes the demonstrated knowledge of 10 LEED® Accredited Professionals employed by WAXIE. GPS is a collaboration and partnership between WAXIE, its customer partners, and its manufacturer partners, and includes everything you need to clean when you want to go green.

WAXIE offers GPS® Green Partner Support for its green-committed end user customers who would like to collaborate on implementing a green cleaning program that combines environmentally preferred products with good sound cleaning procedures, training and expertise to create an effective and safe cleaning program.

For more information please visit www.waxie.com.