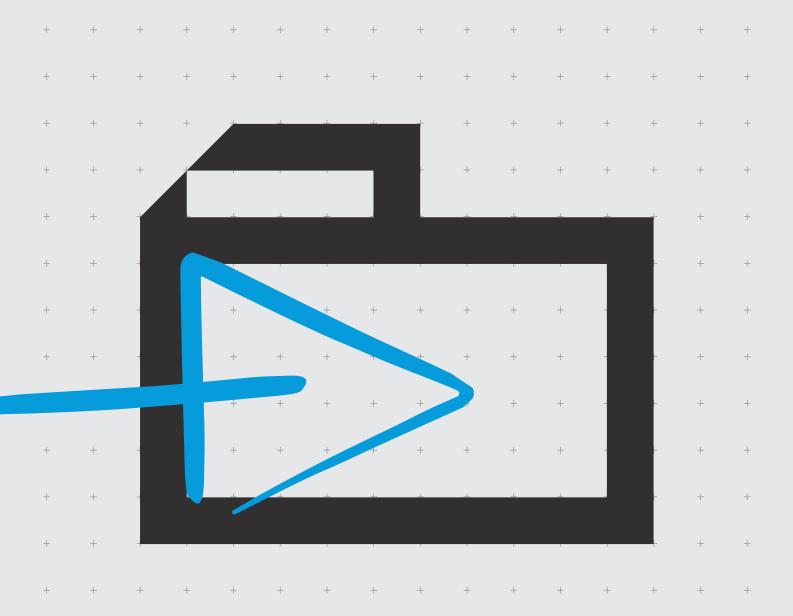KYOCERA

Managing paper in a digital world.

Compliance & regulatory issues for law firms.

Current landscape.

Much of a law firm's written product is in electronic form, and whether originating internally or externally, has for decades been stored in dedicated law firm document management systems (DMS), such as iManage and NetDocuments, by reference to client and matter.

Many had imagined that this would be the end of the 'paper' problem in law firms. However, regardless of the increasing use of electronic documents and correspondence, there still remains a volume of paper materials being received by, having to be managed within, and transmitted from, law firms.

The problem.

Whereas materials in the DMS repository are subject to secure matter filing, compulsory metadata and audit trails and can be made subject to other relevant regulatory controls (such as GDPR) — the incoming and outgoing paper is not.

There is an integration and control disconnect at the 'joins' between the paper and the electronic realms, this leads to behaviour and risks, such as:

- Lawyers obtaining scanned versions of paper documents in a number of irregular ways, and emailing them to themselves.
- Leakage of confidential information.
- Losing track of the movement and sharing of information.
- Co-ordination of the timely and cost-effective delivery of documents to the intended recipients.
- Liability to GDPR breaches.
- Ensuring that paper documents received by mail, courier or fax reach the intended recipients, and only them, in a timely and cost-effective manner.
- In general, the secure, timely and efficient movement of materials between internal and external interested parties for collaborative purposes.

Other factors

These issues need to be considered against the wider background of a range of current issues facing law firms. In the current business environment, there are simultaneous — and conflicting - pressures on price, a drive for cost-efficiencies, an ever-increasing regulatory environment and constant fears of security breaches.

The overall obligations each law firm owes to its clients are set out in the Solicitors Regulation Authority Handbook which, among other duties, imposes the following principles:

Principles 1 (8)

- Run your business or carry out your role in the business effectively and in accordance with proper governance and sound financial and risk management principles

Principles 1 (10)

- Protect client money and assets.

The additional SRA notes provide further explanation relating to these general principles:

2.8

- You should always act in good faith and do your best for each of your clients. Most importantly, you should observe...your duty of confidentiality to the client ...

2.9

- You should provide a proper standard of client care and of work. This would include exercising competence, skill and diligence, and taking into account the individual needs and circumstances of each client.

A typical legal organisation is still dealing with hundreds and thousands of paper documents per year.

In relation to these general obligations, there are specific related concerns.

In examining the current IT investment trends in law firms in the UK, a clear message from the past two years is in the focus of firms on Document Management/Automation. When comparing the Legal IT Landscape briefing report over the past two years document automation has jumped from 5th to 1st in efficiency in perceptions of the value of the technology, this is now even ahead of AI technology. One of the key drivers here is that firms are becoming more concerned about how documents are controlled and moved around their organisation.

In 2018 60% of firms reported suffering a security incident. During the year 2017 33% of firms reported a security incident related to their own staff where there had been a loss or leakage of confidential information, this had risen to 46% in 2018. All these security incidents related to document management, or rather mismanagement, within the organisation.

Then there is also the related additional burden of complying with the GDPR requirements.

A typical legal organisation is still dealing with hundreds and thousands of paper documents per year. To be competitive in today's business environment, law firms need to access different versions of files or track documents related to a specific matter. The days of lever arch binders are likely to hamper flexibility on those with flexible working hours and working away from the office. Whilst poorly managed documents can hurt productivity and customer satisfaction. Many law firms rely on manual sorting and delivery of paper-based information to fee earners and secretaries, much of which is of crucial importance to the daily management and updates of their live matters. On top of this, Information enters an organisation in so many forms and from multiple sources, therefore it is a real challenge to co-ordinate the delivery of documents and the data they contain to where they need to be in a timely and cost-effective manner.

A better way

What is needed is a 'hermetically sealed' over-arching hardware/software environment that brings the all-electronic DMS-style security and control capabilities to the wider ecosphere of electronic and paper materials. Kyocera is able to provide such a comprehensive environment. This is a unique configuration of proprietary hardware and software that manages and controls all paper either entering, created within, or leaving a law firm. It consists of an integrated suite of Kyocera MFD devices, and integrated Kyocera managed software.

Reported security incidents

33% → **46%**

2017   **2018**

With the ability to capture documents from any physical or electronic input source, and — crucially —integration with all leading law firm DMS systems, the system is able to manage the entire document lifecycle from information creation to deletion and, with minimal human intervention, to connect Mail Rooms, departmental users using Desktops and multi-function printers.

When a law firm creates matters and sends out paper and electronic information the Kyocera software can be used to acquire this information via the central hub. It can then run document workflows to parse and analyse the document types to classify or categorise them and search for client and matter identifying information. If a matter reference is found - and ratified against a client - it can be converted to a PDF, profiled and send straight into the legal content system. If the document needs approval or verification first it could be sent to a departmental queue — this could be the actual fee earner associated with the matter or the secretarial group associated with the fee earner. From the Desktop client the user can further profile, title or QA the document and quickly submit it to the content system. This drives increased productivity across the entire business.

Whether capturing on MFDs in the department or via the email the system can fully understand the content of the document in transit and pull out and reconcile all data. It can even automate the document title or description. It can then assimilate information into a variety of DMS products such as those already mentioned as well as Peppermint.

The all-in-one PC and touchscreen interface supports 'stage one' quick batch preparation and submission for all paper sizes, including large format conveyancing documents.

Many law firms rely on the manual sorting and delivery of paper-based information to fee earners and secretaries, much of which is of critical importance to their live matters. Being able to acquire, convert and deliver this information electronically at source is the best way to add efficiency and collaboration to the information flow and help the law firm to be much more competitive and far more responsive.

Our system can capture the documents at the source, before they get lost in - or en route to — an employee's inbox.

Kyocera Technology connects to all input sources (email / MFDs / mailroom / desktop) and is engineered to rapidly assimilate both paper and electronic information feeds. This provides the ability to distribute information speedily to both the law firm DMS and, if needed, directly to other recipients. It also enables secretaries or fee earners to deal with unassigned documents, orphan documents or information that just needs identifying, or an approval process, to be managed in that office, or in another office, or even working remotely on their tablet.

Similarly, distributed users can also leverage the software to send information back into the central hub. This gives firms complete transparency on what information is within the business and puts a stop to staff emailing documents to themselves to - hopefully - be categorised and deposited into the DMS later.

The paper input or acquisition process is undertaken in a two phased approach to maximise efficiency.

The all-in-one PC and touchscreen interface supports 'stage one' quick batch preparation and submission for all paper sizes, including large format conveyancing documents. This capability can also be connected to any TWAIN compatible high capacity scanner and is used to feed the document workflows though fast minimum-click user screens honed to deal with the document batch types typically processed within a law firm.

This two-stage approach allows just one mail room user to concentrate on opening, sorting and submitting the documents for scanning with the documents then forwarded to the 'stage two' workflows where they can usually be automated, or exceptions dealt with. The system ensures that those documents that can be automated and delivered are not held up in any manual queue process behind exception documents that need human intervention. Stage two utilises a powerful core engine workflow, parsing routines and logic algorithms to pre-determine indexing and routing decisions for documents by applying AI (artificial intelligence) algorithms to the document contents. By automatically extracting information, such as a matter/ correspondence reference or by analysis of document structure (to define a document type), the system can route a document to its correct place in the firm's DMS without manual intervention. Most importantly, any documents that cannot be dealt with in this way can be directed to designated users for manual assignment — either via their desktop or a mobile app.

The proprietary HyPas connectors available on Kyocera MFDs allow departments to scan information into content and records management systems with full OCR to various formats, including PDF and MS Office standards. The MFD connectors are very easy and intuitive to use; an operator can authenticate at any enabled MFD device using their proximity, swipe or active directory logon. The connector will provide dynamic personalised functionality to each secretary or attorney based on their user or group status within the firm. The MFD touch screen allows the user to navigate to the relevant DMS folder, or other designation, or to trigger a workflow process.

The paper input or acquisition process is undertaken in a two phased approach to maximise efficiency.

For most law firms we usually provide two types of connector, the first allows scanning directly into the client/matter DMS folder. The second is a two-click connector that allows you to scan a document to your content hub queue for further processing and/or routing, or for full collaborative processing. The Desktop Client then allows further document manipulation, editing and QA.

The tools in the Output Module require the absolute minimum of human intervention. Users simply print as they normally would when submitting a document, various hidden components then trigger several events such as automated cost recovery, rules to determine how and where the job can be printed (to save costs) or even whether instead of print output the recipient (via a CRM check) should receive the document as an electronic PDF via email. The Module can even trigger an entire review and approval process by the lawyer linked to the matter, with specific electronic signature and/or stationary requirements. All and any of these processes will maintain a full electronic audit trail. Whether users are printing a desktop file or copying a document at a multi-function device, the Kyocera Technology system will comprehensively and automatically audit the operation against a matter and produce any necessary cost capture information. As such, this solution does not need any additional expensive cost recovery terminals. Furthermore, there is full integration with "follow me" secure print systems as well as print room device submission.

Whether users are printing a desktop file or copying a document at a multi-function device, the Kyocera Technology system will comprehensively and automatically audit the operation against a matter and produce any necessary cost capture information.

The systems job ticketing process helps to streamline print room environments. An eTicket Request Client tool makes it easier for fee earners and secretaries to specify exactly what they need done and how urgently it is needed. The eTicket tool lets them quickly create detailed requests for copying and scanning, and lets users upload documents for assembly and printing requests.

The eTicket tool submits an electronic job ticket into the Office Services work scheduling queue and optionally outputs a printed ticket which is used as a job cover page for original paper documents to be worked on. Finally, the eTicket tool also provides a dashboard view for administrators and users to track their pending jobs.

As can be seen, such a system can provide a wide range of significant benefits in the areas of management, control, security, efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and speedy and timely operations — as well as enhanced GDPR compliance. The system described has a massive range of functionality, with touch points across the firm involving all users. Furthermore, it involves fundamental change of working practices — thus necessitating a high degree of change management.

This is all very daunting, but the specialists at Kyocera Consulting have a strong and unique industry partnership with integrated tailored software solution providers and have also implemented this system in a range of law firms, which means Kyocera can help make this a speedy and painless experience. They can also help with project planning management, project management and - crucially — related change management and training. Kyocera's ability to provide a comprehensive solution designed specifically for law firms means that any law firm customer will only have to deal with one organisation, and Kyocera can manage the whole process.

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Kyocera Document Solutions has championed innovative technology for more than 60 years. We enable our customers to turn information into knowledge, excel at learning and surpass others.

With professional expertise and a culture of empathetic partnership, we help organisations put knowledge to work to drive change.

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