

## **Algoma Insurance (Document Centre & DocuShare)**

### **Client Profile -Algoma Insurance Brokers Limited**

You might not expect to find an insurance industry leader in the reaches of northern Ontario, Canada. But that's where you'll find Algoma Insurance Brokers Limited. Algoma's staff of 41 handles a lot of documents - applications, payments, photographs, and claims - which guide its insurance decisions. For example, photos of a wood stove in a home give underwriters visual information about insurance risks, including details about location, installation, and condition. Similarly, home inspection reports contain valuable information about insured assets that must be tracked and filed. Add to that the industry updates that Algoma teams need to serve their customers responsibly, and there is a paper stockpile that occupies over 2000 square feet of storage.

Algoma is motivated to transact the majority of its business electronically, and is using current networked technologies, including full-time Internet access. That's what led Algoma's President, James Horbatuk, and Technical Administrator, Ross Weatherby, on a fact-finding mission: find out how new technology could help reduce costs, revolutionize business practices and increase profits and customer satisfaction.

### **The Challenge**

"The insurance business is paper intensive" states Ross Weatherby, Technical Administrator at Algoma. "We looked at how we were doing business, how we managed customer files and other documents. We could spend up to 8 hours a day just locating and pulling paper documents from our storage files for reference and claims. We were drowning in paper."

Algoma's biggest challenge was managing it.

The search for a better way of doing business started when Algoma began using digital cameras to photograph customers' insured assets, instead of standard photography. Using digital photography, Algoma immediately discovered how valuable it was for customer teams to have quick electronic access to those photos. Digital image files accessible from their desktops put an end to frustrating, time-consuming physical searches to locate paper photos to support business decisions or claims.

As the one responsible for bringing new technical business solutions to the company, Weatherby was well aware of the possibilities. "We saw the potential of electronic storage, access, and retrieval for our business," says Weatherby.

"We just needed to find the right software and hardware to make it gel - a digital filing solution that would easily integrate with our needs and our network."

## **The Solution**

When Weatherby attended a Xerox seminar about Document Centre and **DocuShare**, an easy-to-use digital filing solution for workgroups, he knew he was on the right track. "When I saw the demonstration, it just clicked for me," he remembers. "I saw how easily we could use **DocuShare** to store and share information in electronic customer files, including our digital photos."

Then Weatherby saw Document Centre 230ST scanning functions, and he knew he had the answer to his other problem -managing paper. "With Document Centre scanning, we can easily convert that paper flow into digital files that can be stored, shared, and accessed by everyone," Weatherby reports.

He recounts evaluating competitors' offerings. "We were looking at high end document management systems that were \$50,000 to \$100,000 to license 40 seats," he says. "The **DocuShare** feature and price -- under \$10,000 (CDN) for 50 seats - made it a very worthwhile investment."

Along with functional and costs benefits, Document Centre 230ST provided Algoma superior copy, print, and fax functions, all in one device and easily accessed from users' workstations. "Document Centre makes scanning so easy, anyone can do it, and **DocuShare** makes it painless for users to save documents and perform powerful searches to find exactly what they need in a customer's file. It's a powerful combination for us," Weatherby notes. This solution turned their office into an efficient knowledge-sharing center.

## **The Results**

Weatherby estimates that Algoma is saving up to \$40,000 per year in labor costs alone with Document Centre. "We documented that we were spending one person year in time just searching our paper files. We're not doing that anymore," he laughs. "Now any paper document that has lasting value is automatically scanned. **DocuShare** then helps us easily search records and databases by key words, customer names, and numbers. No more digging around in file cabinets. I figure Document Centre paid for itself in the first three months of operation in salary savings alone."

Customer teams at Algoma love the difference Document Centre and **DocuShare** are making. "We're making much better business decisions because we've got better information," he says. "Better business decisions mean fewer claims and greater profit."

But the greatest business result is more time for customer service, according to Weatherby. "We went from spending a lot of time on paper administration to spending a lot more time on our customers. That's the real pay off for us."

## **Summary**

Document Centre with **DocuShare** is working so well that Ross Weatherby routinely fields requests to make presentations about how Algoma is using Xerox digital technology to transform business. Document scanning, archiving, and sharing have leveraged Algoma's expertise, providing an intelligent paper capture system and a digital filing system. "We've even had the Police Department over taking a look," Weatherby laughs.

"The insurance industry overall is struggling to use current technology, and Algoma has always embraced it. Now we're proving this is a solid solution. Document Centre and **DocuShare** are helping us to be much more effective," Weatherby explains. "Xerox's total digital solution has revolutionized our business in the past six months."