



Minimize the Paper Trail and Go Paperless with Fortis Enterprise Document Management

Many of us have taken steps in our daily lives to reduce our impact on the environment in our homes and to support sustainable living practices. Yet, we have been slow to extend this practice to the organizations where we work.

Businesses can also make their facilities and operations paperless not only to help save the environment, but also to save money. The business case for going paperless is simple: environmentally safe practices help the bottom line. A paperless workplace means a lighter ecological footprint, and a more productive and efficient place to work.

From recycling to energy consumption, businesses can make a difference by taking a close look at their practices to find ways to implement improvements. One practical step is to address the paper trail that follows many employees and adds hundreds of pounds of waste. The average American office worker disposes of 100 to 200 pounds of paper per year. (Source: Sierra Club)

Taking a look at your company's paper trail can help you start your "paperless" movement. You'll find that making one change can bring improvements in other areas. For example, when you minimize your reliance on paper, consider the energy efficiencies you gain from less frequent use of copiers and printers.

Do you know...

- Paper products make up roughly 39 percent of the municipal solid waste stream. (Sierra Club)
- The production of one ream (500 sheets) of paper uses 6% of a tree. (Conservatree)
- Within the last 15 years, paper consumption has increased almost 3% per year, due for the most part to the increased accessibility of printers. (Global Warming Initiatives)
- Dumping paper in landfill adds methane to the atmosphere as it decomposes, with 20 times the global warming potential of carbon dioxide. (Printpaperlesser)

Digitize information

A common belief is that we are in the paperless, digital age. Technology has changed our business operations as well as personal lifestyles. However, even in the "digital age," we are increasingly reliant on paper and process enormous amounts in our daily lives and business operations.

Instead of copying documents in triplicate and shuffling papers from file cabinets to desks, digitize your documents. Working with electronic files can help your organization streamline processes, reduce costs and increase efficiency.

The more work your organization performs online, the shorter the paper trail and the less waste produced. Consider the following:

- Every year, more than 1.1 billion trees are cut down in order to satisfy the needs of office workers around the world.
- The U.S. paper industry emits around 17.2 million metric tons of carbon dioxide to produce 83 million tons of paper.
- Energy consumption by the pulp and paper industry is projected at 25.8 billion kWh of electricity and 54.3 billion BTUs of fossil fuels in 2010.

(Source: Global Warming Initiatives)

About Fortis

Fortis from Westbrook Technologies is an enterprise document management software solution that allows organizations to efficiently manage and access business information from disparate sources.

Fortis allows organizations to capture, index, store and retrieve paper-based and electronic documents into one system. Information is readily accessible, centrally located and secure. This means employees no longer spend time routing documents from desk to desk or trying to locate a misplaced file.

Fortis enhances paperless office initiatives and reduces costs by:

- Significantly reducing the need for paper documents by providing electronic access
- Eliminating the need to copy documents
- Limiting the amount of paper coming into the organization through the use of web-based forms
- Decreasing energy consumption being used by large file or records rooms

While going completely "paperless" is not possible, your organization can reduce paper consumption and waste by implementing the right technology.

Reduce manual paper processes

Paper-intensive processes typically slow down business operations creating delays and bottlenecks. As the number of forms and documents an office worker must manage grows exponentially, the time and effort needed to complete a task increases, overwhelming your staff and stifling productivity.

With documents in electronic format, you can quickly search for and retrieve information from your desktop, and electronically exchange information with colleagues. You can collaborate more effectively and reduce many of the problems with paper, such as time and costs associated with manual filing, document misfiling, and lost documents.

More efficient workflows translate into improved productivity and better information management. Think about how your accounting practices can be improved, for example, with digitized documents and information flowing electronically to the right people at the right time.

Implement the right technology

The right document management software solution can help your organization contribute to a paperless environment while meeting business goals.

Here's how:

- Reduces paper usage
- Decreases paper waste
- Promotes online collaboration to save time, increase productivity
- Speeds document search and retrieval
- Reduces costs of printer and copier maintenance and repair
- Removes costs and efforts associated with manually distributing documents (postage fees, courier fees, etc.)
- Eliminates shuttling of files amongst various locations, reducing fuel consumption and decreasing emissions

