

Correspondence Management Solutions for Government



Government Challenges

Compliance Regulations

Freedom of information/access to information legislation

Records and archive requirements

Privacy legislation

Paperwork reduction mandates

E-Government

The Solution

Manage incoming correspondence in any form — paper or electronic
Comply with privacy, freedom of information and archival requirements

Ensure accuracy, integrity and mandated deadlines

Work with subject matter experts across distributed or decentralized environments

Keep management and elected officials aware of response status and critical issues

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Providing a Secure and Managed Environment for Correspondence

In this age of electronic communication, government departments are facing challenges in maintaining control over the process, content and resulting records that are all key to the flow of official correspondence. An Enterprise Content Management approach to Correspondence Management allows business owners to establish a securely managed, indexed repository of all incoming and outgoing correspondence.

The Business Challenge

Accurate and timely responsiveness to the public, commercial enterprises and other levels of government is a critical function of a government agency. Whether dealing with routine questions about a property tax bill, or responding to the crisis of the day, the flow of information from the government to the public requires careful management of deadlines, content and process. Executives and responsible officials need to have a clear picture of the concerns and issues of the taxpayers, residents or businesses, in their jurisdiction.

The Changing Face of Correspondence Management

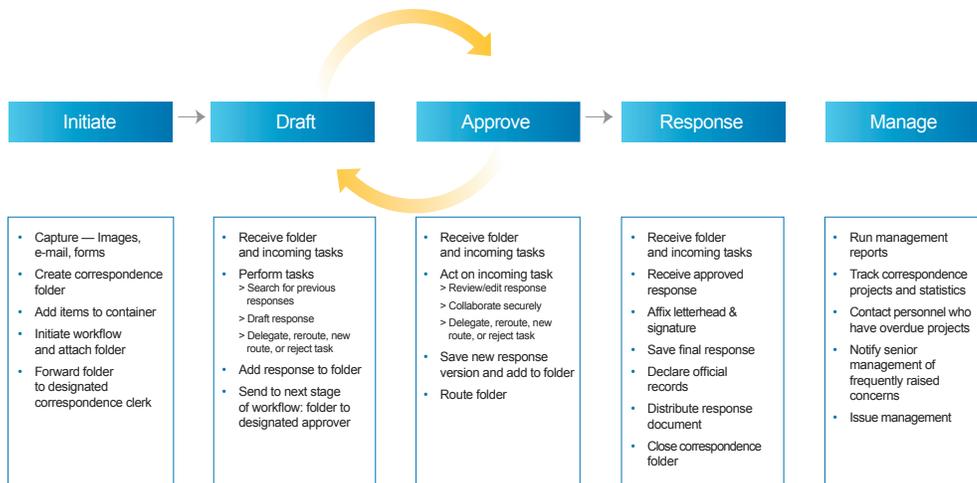
The ability to request information and express concerns to the government is a fundamental component of an open society. As individuals become more technically-savvy and communities become increasingly wired, the use of electronic communication platforms to interact with government agencies is becoming increasingly prevalent. Email and on-line forms are surpassing traditional paper-based correspondence when a citizen or business poses a question to a governing body. Paperwork reduction mandates and pressures on achieving internal efficiencies make electronic communication and responses increasingly attractive to government agencies. In this new environment of electronic communication, government departments are facing challenges in maintaining the same level of control over the process, content and resulting records that are all key to the flow of official correspondence.

The management of incoming correspondence and the formulation of accurate and appropriate responses may be a simple or a complex process, depending on the correspondent, the issue and the research required to provide a response. Professionals at the executive management level deal with a wide range of issues coming from a broad cross-section of the public, business and other public sector stakeholders. Elements of crisis management can also influence the correspondence control process, e.g., when front page news items cause the public to flood an agency with urgent inquiries. The effective use of technology to streamline and automate routine work activities can allow an agency to better fulfill its communication obligations, while achieving internal efficiencies.

Throughout the management of incoming and outgoing correspondence, the agency must also be aware of legislative requirements affecting information management. The contents of correspondence may contain items protected by privacy legislation — official responses are governed by records and archival mandates; research may be subject to Freedom of Information requests, and processes may be governed by Paperwork Reduction pressures. The move into an electronic work environment requires the agency to look carefully at how processes and work product are protected, managed and stored in order to ensure full compliance with the response timelines and information management requirements in its jurisdiction.

Using Correspondence Management to Gauge Constituent Concerns

Understanding the concerns and issues facing citizens and businesses is critical to the formulation of effective government policy and programs. Government executives and elected officials need an effective and consistent approach to handling and reviewing incoming communication. Correspondence Management is a document-centric business process that can significantly benefit from structured process flows and from the development of standard templates for responses, tasks and reports.



Livelink ECM – eDOCS™ for Correspondence Management

An Enterprise Content Management approach to Correspondence Management allows business owners to establish a securely managed, indexed repository of all incoming and outgoing correspondence:

- Common issues and questions can be routinely dealt with by leveraging existing research and responses
- Specific task assignments and routings can be templated to map out typical workflows
- Correspondence containing personal or commercially sensitive information can be secured to avoid unauthorized access
- Significant responses and research can be declared as official records
- Search across line-of-business application and corporate repositories facilitates complete responses



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Incoming correspondence will continue to take multiple forms for the foreseeable future: traditional paper-based letters and forms; email; online web forms and electronic documents. Agencies need to be able to establish common approaches to moving the correspondence to the appropriate subject matter experts in order to research, draft and approve responses. A consistent approach to the capture, task assignment and response process must exist regardless of the format of the original inquiry. Open Text technology tools can in fact be leveraged to further streamline processes and create common templates, workflow and status reports to manage the process of content receipt and response generation, as well look at larger issues such as effective records capture and management, and trend analysis.

Summary

Elected officials and senior government managers need to understand the issues and concerns facing their constituents. In addition to effective correspondence tracking, Livelink ECM – eDOCS for Correspondence Management can provide the base repository by which issues can be tracked, trends analyzed and provide data for program and policy review.



Livelink ECM – eDOCS™ Suite provides an integrated platform for enterprise content management and business analytics, offering government institutions and agencies solutions to manage business interaction information such as documents, records, email or financial data — linking processes, information and people. An Enterprise Content Management approach to Correspondence Management allows government departments to establish a securely managed, indexed repository of all incoming and outgoing correspondence.



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