



Success story

Alberta Justice and Solicitor General

Industry

- Government, criminal justice

Solutions

- OpenText™ Content Suite Platform
- OpenText™ Connected Workspaces

Partner support

- Sierra Systems



Alberta Justice and Solicitor General rehabilitate criminal case management

Canadian provincial justice system replaces paper-based systems with Criminal e-File powered by OpenText Content Suite Platform

Results



Saved time and money with streamlined, automatic e-filing



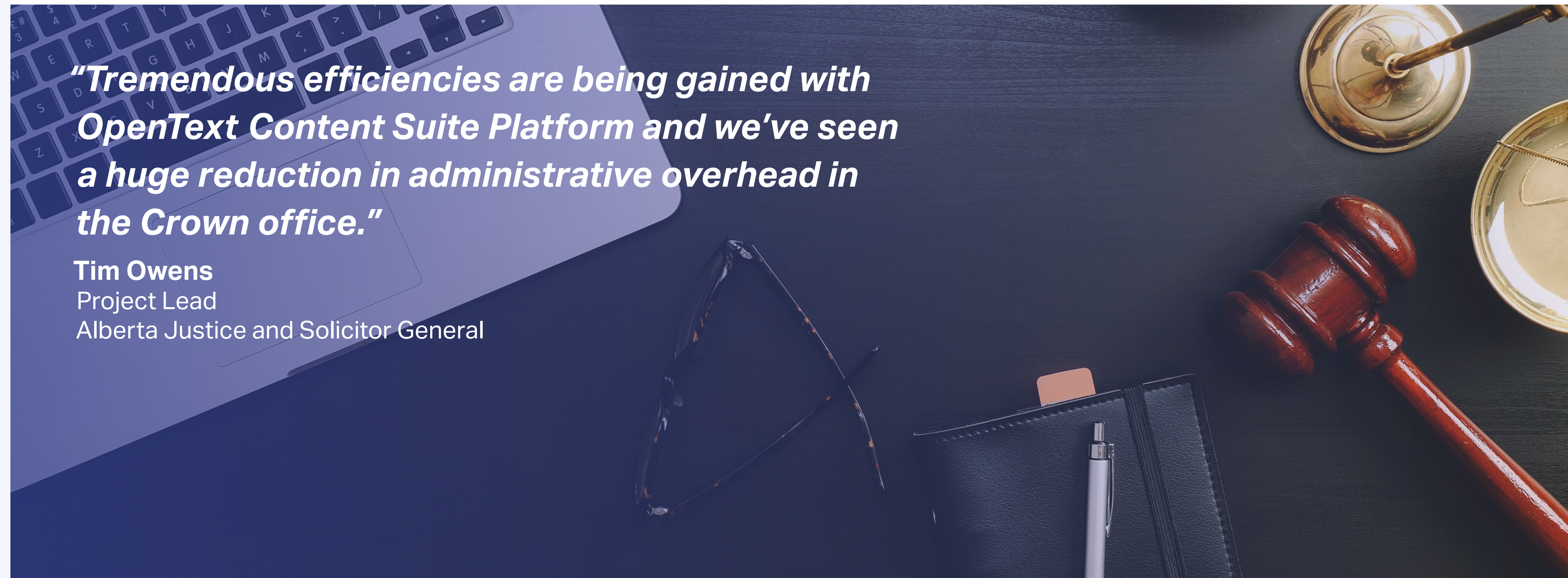
Reduced time to dispose cases



Increased evidentiary file availability for case efficiency and bail decisions

"Tremendous efficiencies are being gained with OpenText Content Suite Platform and we've seen a huge reduction in administrative overhead in the Crown office."

Tim Owens
Project Lead
Alberta Justice and Solicitor General



Alberta Justice and Solicitor General manages legal and correctional systems and law enforcement for the province of Alberta and its millions of citizens.

Supporting an effective and innovative justice organization demands reliable and secure access to information. Evidence for court cases ranges from paper-based police reports and witness statements to multimedia material including photos, video and audio. Alberta Justice and Solicitor General experienced content challenges during the process of sharing evidence with legal teams working on the defense, especially with paper-based disclosure.

Occasionally, defense counsel would claim they did not receive files. ***“In the paper-based system of disclosure, the Crown really couldn’t refute the allegations,”*** explained Tim Owens, prior prosecutor and project lead for Alberta Justice and Solicitor General. ***“Even with signed acceptance, recipients could claim a page was missing. As a result, disclosure issues were costly and courts were awarding damages against the Crown.”***

Other proceedings were also delayed by outdated methods, including bail hearings. Arrested individuals maintain the legal right to a bail hearing within 24 hours of arrest. Previously, bail packages from law enforcement to the Crown, justices of the peace and duty counsel would be delayed by ad-hoc emailing and data entry from hand-written forms.

While users recognized the benefit of electronic filing for all material, disparate systems were soon overextended. ***“We needed to find a solution with the purpose to manage content,”*** Owens said.

ECM capture: Criminal e-File

In 2009, Alberta Justice and Solicitor General conducted an evaluation on Enterprise Content Management (ECM) options and selected OpenText™ Content Suite Platform as the ministry system.

The deployment of Content Suite Platform continued to evolve and now supports the Criminal e-File program in the Edmonton Crown office, the Calgary Crown office and an ongoing rollout to regional Crown offices within the province. The solution supports the intake, management and disclosure of electronic documents to the Alberta Crown Prosecution Service (ACPS), provincial courts, police departments and defense counsel. Criminal e-File and an electronic disclosure portal are moving the justice system towards paperless efficiency.

Implementing a comprehensive solution across several groups requires flexibility and integration, especially for departments tied to strict regulations and reticent to adopt new technology. Municipal law enforcement delivers digital disclosure material: an average of 326 documents (up to 1,635) per day with an average daily size of 6.5 GB (up to 151 GB). OpenText partner, Sierra Systems, developed utilities to retrieve material, reorganize it into a consumable form and load the data into Content Suite Platform. The platform currently handles more than 300,000 active cases and more than two million documents across two million folders.

ECM distribution: e-Disclosure portal

Criminal case information is now available electronically 24/7 and the 650 Crown and 850 defense counsel users in the province can find and access it with a docket number. Defense lawyers obtain files through a disclosure request page (DRP), an online portal hosted in the Alberta Justice and Solicitor General secure data center enabled with two-factor authentication for added security.



Alberta Justice and Solicitor General leverages the ability to create workspaces and processes that organize case information in a standard folder structure in Content Suite Platform, which is organized by docket number and includes sections for documents, media and more.

ECM transformation: OpenText flexibility

Paperless case management transformed the Alberta justice system. Comprehensive, flexible integration with existing systems paved the way to real results for all participants.

Crown office

“Tremendous efficiencies are being gained with OpenText Content Suite Platform and we’ve seen a huge reduction in administrative overhead in the Crown office,” noted Owens.

Legal professionals focus on casework, not paperwork. ***“I know from experience, one of the most significant improvements is in quality of life for prosecutors. They don’t have to be at the office to get work done; they can access files during court downtime. That can be an enormous advantage and efficiency gainer,”*** Owens said.

With workflow and process automation, audit trails and reliable record retention, Content Suite Platform provides proof of disclosure distribution to avoid costly penalties. More importantly, the ECM solution improves access to content which encourages collaboration and supports efficient case management. Also, as the first official electronic records repository in Alberta, the office is on the cutting edge of automated archival and disposal.

Law enforcement agencies

Criminal e-File streamlines the transfer of prosecution packages from law enforcement to the Crown prosecutors. The costs and time required for managing and tracking DVDs and paper is greatly reduced. Cases can also move along more quickly as evidence is uploaded at regular intervals.

Law enforcement personnel rely on Criminal e-File to deliver bail packages. With OpenText, all evidentiary files are now available 24/7 and integrated with other Crown and police systems to provide a seamless, exhaustive view of the accused. For hearings that run 16 hours per day, 6 am to midnight, having ready access to police files is critical.

Defense counsel

With the system powered by Content Suite Platform, defense counsel can skip trips to the prosecutor’s office or courier services, eliminating associated delays, courier costs and paper storage. Instead, they gain an increased opportunity to focus on facts and features of each case.

In total, Alberta Justice and Solicitor General leverages the immediacy and flexibility of OpenText Enterprise Content Management in its mission for a fair and safe Alberta.

About Sierra Systems

Sierra Systems, headquartered in Vancouver, British Columbia, is a top-tier IT services and management consulting firm offering a full range of advisory services, systems integration and managed application services.



About OpenText

OpenText, The Information Company, enables organizations to gain insight through market leading information management solutions, on-premises or in the cloud. For more information about OpenText (NASDAQ: OTEX, TSX: OTEX) visit [opentext.com](https://www.opentext.com).

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