case study

US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Manage Millions of Case Records Using a Hosted Alfresco ECM Solution from Armedia

Customer
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Industry
Government

Solution
Document Management

Products
Hosted Alfresco Enterprise

Armedia Caliente

Daeja ViewOne Pro

MySQL Enterprise

Open Office

Red Hat Enterprise Linux

SAMBA/Open LDAP

Sun JDK

Tomcat

VMware ESXi

Partner
Armedia

Challenge

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requires federal agencies to provide access to documents. As a result, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) had amassed an enormous amount of paper documents to meet these requirements.

Two divisions within HUD — the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act (RESPA) and Interstate Land Sales (ILS) groups — were quickly running out of physical space to store the documents. More importantly, finding information was challenging and time consuming. Under the existing process, HUD divisions did not have an easy way to share and collaborate on documents with other agencies.

It was clear that HUD needed to digitize their paper documents and implement a document management (DM) system for managing, storing and collaborating on documents. The system needed to support HUD's telecommuting policy and allow employees to securely access the information anytime, anywhere. The organization also hoped that a DM system would help drive efficiencies throughout the organization by automating business processes and providing a central location for managing case files.

Results

- Centralized Case Management System
- Digitized over 3 Million pages of documents
- Improved document search across all HUD divisions
- Reduced physical storage space by 1,500 square feet
- Improved response time for Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests
- Improved agency collaboration
- Support for telecommuting
- Highly scalable environment

> We are extremely pleased with the solution that Armedia provided us. They successfully completed the task of migrating over three million pages of hard copy files into a secure, hosted document management environment. The simple, yet functional user interface allows our employees to quickly and efficiently search and find the information that they need to do their job.

— Richard Dunne, Supervisory Team Leader, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Solution

HUD turned to Armedia, an Alfresco partner, to build a customized case management system using a hosted version of Alfresco Enterprise Content Management on Linux servers with a combination of physical and virtual security and storage components.

Armedia began by scanning and digitizing millions of pages of HUD's physical records into a MySQL database. Using a series of custom scripts and logic, Armedia was able to index the source content ensuring that the right metadata information (name, date, location, etc.) was extracted and appropriately mapped into the new Alfresco repository and case taxonomy structure.

Using Armedia Caliente, a content migration product, HUD was able to move the digitized documents from the database into Alfresco while retaining the metadata tags. Caliente helped HUD maintaining existing folder structures during migration and apply appropriate security to documents. This saved HUD valuable time and eliminated the IT department from having to manually re-create folder structures.

Armedia built a custom user interface (UI) for HUD's hosted document and records management system. The system is designed to be available via any browser and includes roles based security authentication. HUD employees can access the information at home, on the road or in the office.

In order to use the new DM solution for sharing and collaborating between agencies, HUD needed the ability to take out personally identifiable information before sharing. Armedia achieved this by integrating redaction functionality from Daeja into Alfresco. Alfresco and Daeja keep a history of document versions so that the user can keep track of modifications.

Other features of the total solution include advanced search capabilities and a custom export utility to support FOIA request and backup.

> " HUD is a wonderful example of how government organizations can leverage the benefits of Alfresco to effectively manage vast amounts of information. Alfresco is ideal for any government agency looking to automate document-centric processes. "
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> — Vicentee Ferguson
>   V.P., Federal Services, Armedia

Conclusion

HUD now has an extremely scalable and centralized case management system to manage all its cases and the documents within them. Over three million physical documents have been migrated into the new system. Users can now search for documents across all case files; they don't have to search specifically within the ILS or RESPA divisions. With all the hard copy documents now in electronic format, HUD has also been able to free up 1,500 square feet of office/storage space.

HUD Employees are able to collaborate with other agencies on the documents and respond significantly faster to FOIA requests as a result of having the information at the tip of their fingers.
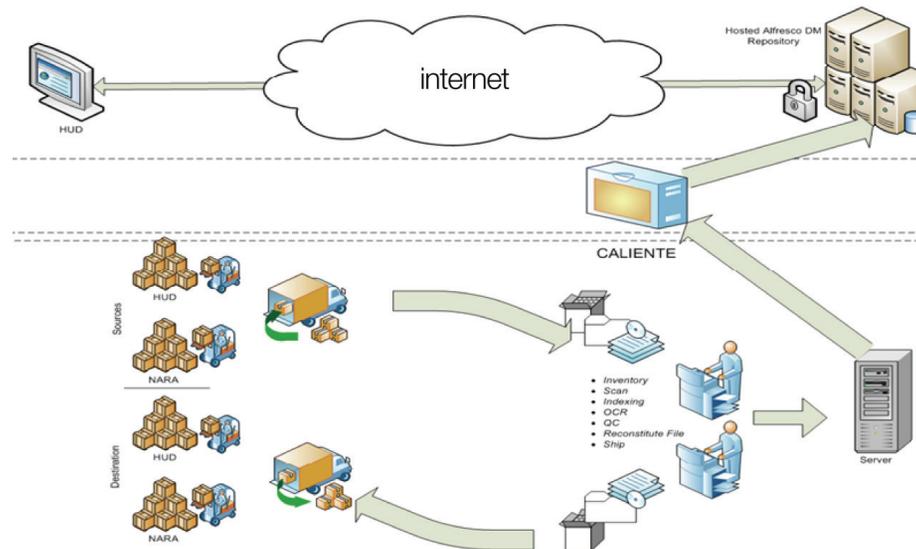
<< Left: a graphic outline of the process and workflow executed by Armedia and Alfresco to create a centralized case management system for HUD