Suffolk University

Perceptive Content elevated productivity at Suffolk University by eliminating photocopying, hard copy retrieval and other manual tasks. Collecting student records, applications and other documents in the central repository removes the risk of document loss associated with retaining paper folders.

Challenge

Suffolk University is required to retain certain student records for five years and others indefinitely, and over time, the registrar's office accumulated thousands of these multipage files. Storage space was running out and the university faced a choice—either purchase fireproof cabinets to protect records and more office space to accommodate them or search for a more efficient way to safely store student information.

In keeping with its reputation as an institution that advances education through technology, as demonstrated by inclusion in The Princeton Review's "Top 25 Most Connected Campuses" report, Suffolk decided to find an electronic document management solution to its paper problems.

Solution

Creating a single source for student information

Suffolk administrators watched several product demonstrations, but after seeing Perceptive Content from Lexmark in action, they realized that it was the right fit for their document management plan.

"Other document management products are stand-alone systems, but the Lexmark associate who came to our campus got Perceptive Content working with our Colleague by Ellucian data in 20 minutes — which blew me away," says Bob DiGuardia, director of administrative computing. "The demo proved that Perceptive Content is easy to install and integrate."

Using patented LearnMode™ technology, the solution seamlessly integrated with Suffolk's Colleague® by Ellucian system without programming. Integration creates a link between documents stored in Perceptive Content and host system records, enabling users to immediately retrieve the precise document they need from their Colleague by Ellucian screens.

"Perceptive Content's integration with Colleague by Ellucian gives users a single source for student information," DiGuardia says. "Complete records are instantly accessible from a desktop, instead of being buried in file cabinets."

Unlike many document management products that require customers to alter business processes, Perceptive Content works unobtrusively behind the scenes.

Meet Suffolk University

Founded in 1906, Suffolk University is a comprehensive private university located on Boston's historic Beacon Hill. This global university offers a wide range of undergraduate and graduate degrees in over 70 areas of study.

▸ **Main Campus:** Boston, MA

▸ **Founded:** 1906

▸ **Enrollment:** 9,101

Products in use: Perceptive Content

Integration: Colleague by Ellucian

Lexmark™

"We don't have time to change our Ellucian setup, so the ability of Perceptive Content to function without interfering with host systems was a key selection factor," DiGuardia says.

In addition to integrating with Colleague by Ellucian, Perceptive Content created a connection with Suffolk's ID card database, giving workers in the registrar's office instant access to digital photographs that are linked to academic records. This enables employees to confirm students' identities before giving them transcripts or other documents that contain private information.

Well organized project management exceeds expectations

Actively participating in the solution's installation and attending training classes prepared Suffolk employees to manage Perceptive Content independently. DiGuardia is extremely satisfied with the way Lexmark delivered the technology.

"Lexmark's team did an excellent job planning our deployment, and their organized implementation method helped get Perceptive Content up and running on schedule," DiGuardia says. If DiGuardia or his colleagues have a question about their system, they are free to determine the timing, type and extent of technical assistance. Interactive tools available through the online Lexmark Support Portal help Suffolk maximize the effectiveness of Perceptive Content.

"Lexmark is at the top of the list of software companies I've dealt with," DiGuardia says. "Perceptive Content is an excellent product that works as advertised and has competent people supporting it."

Results

Elevating productivity

When using paper processes, manually sorting, filing and duplicating paperwork were unwelcome but necessary tasks for employees in the registrar's and admissions offices. For example, to prove that a student had legitimately been enrolled in a course, a clerical worker once had to spend five hours going through the entire recycling bin to retrieve a document that had mistakenly been discarded.

Now, employees scan documents into the solution where they are converted into electronic document images, automatically linked to the relevant student record in Colleague by Ellucian and stored securely. Perceptive Content replaced time-consuming storage room searches with single-click retrieval, making documents available on demand. When Suffolk's registrar receives an email from a student about a course or other issue, the document is imported into the solution and linked with the appropriate student record in Colleague by Ellucian.

Each time Suffolk's academic standings committee meets, it requests a complete academic history for each student under review. Prior to the implementation, gathering this information was a labor-intensive process. With Perceptive Content, retrieving each record takes the registrar less than a second. "Perceptive Content has had a tremendous impact on productivity because it eliminates manual tasks," DiGuardia says. "It frees up hours each week for employees to dedicate to other tasks."

Safeguarding irreplaceable student records

Perceptive Content also reduces the amount of photocopying, as users can email documents instead of making and distributing duplicates. Collecting student records, applications and other documents in the central repository removes the risk of document loss associated with retaining paper folders.

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Bob DiGuardia
Director of Administrative Computing,
Suffolk University

"With Perceptive Content, we know that documents are safe and that we can get to them exactly when we need them, and that's priceless," DiGuardia says.

Regulatory bodies recognize the validity of Perceptive Content documents, so instead of retaining hard copies for five years, Suffolk destroys paper documents after scanning them into the solution. This has reduced storage overheads and allowed the registrar's office to expand its work environment. "Perceptive Content gave us the confidence to shred files, and getting rid of file cabinets enabled the registrar to create an extra office," DiGuardia says.

Expanding across campus

The efficiencies Perceptive Content provides in the registrar's and admissions offices at Suffolk will be extended when the university expands the solution into financial aid, graduate admissions and other departments. "The flexibility of Perceptive Content allowed us to start with a small-scale implementation and then expand at our own pace," DiGuardia says.

Read and watch more stories of success from our global customers at www.lexmark.com/success

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