IBM

Digital document management system for worldwide accessibility and management of patent dossiers

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Overview

Philips Intellectual Property & Standards (IP&S) division in Eindhoven (the Netherlands) protects and exploits the value of Philips' portfolio of intellectual property rights: 115,000 patent rights, 22,000 trademark registrations, 11,000 design rights and some 2,000-domain name registrations. Ideas are sent to IP&S from subsidiaries all over the world for central administration. In the past the paper on which the ideas were stored covered an area almost as large as three soccer fields. In 2003 the company decided to review its archiving strategy with the specific goal of reducing that area. The review coincided with a planned move to a new archiving facility. Philips opted for a digital document management (DM) system from IBM.

The Challenge

As well as saving space, Philips wanted to improve the efficiency and flexibility of its processes and to reduce the time taken to access patent dossiers, administrative bother, lost dossiers, duplicated archives, and the daily use of courier services for delivering DVDs and CDs containing business critical patent data. It wanted to have a complete up-to-date dossier available, accessible and visible, 24x7, everywhere around the world – at the push of a button: it became clear that digitisation would bring the answer.

"Our management team did not want to wait any longer before converting to a digital archive so we began two projects simultaneously at Philips IP&S. We started the search for both document scanning and document management solutions.", says Luc Elsen, Manager ICT at Philips IP&S.

Email integration and scalability

In September 2004 Philips IP&S chose to implement a digital document management system. Consultancy Atos Origin was selected as prime contractor for archive migration, as well as for system development and overall consultancy. For the extensive scanning activities IP&S uses Pitney Bowes equipment and services. For the software application selection Atos Origin proposed a number of suppliers; IBM was on the shortlist, as well as Oracle, Hummingbird and SAP.

IBM met the needs of Philips IP&S and proved to be the best supplier with the best product. In particular its email integration capabilities and product scalability were seen as positive. Also IBM FileNet was already used by other Philips IP&S subsidiaries – for instance, for invoice scanning and processing. Those subsidiaries were satisfied with the functionality of the IBM FileNet product. The ability of IBM FileNet to enable compliance with national and international regulatory and legal requirements also played a role in the selection. The IBM FileNet platform has been up and running since July 2005.

IBM FileNet P8

The IBM FileNet platform for Enterprise Content Management, IBM FileNet P8, enables organisations to streamline and automate business processes and makes all forms of content.

'IBM FileNet P8 is a very scalable and reliable package to which we could add a lot of functionality - such as exporting dossiers into a zip-format and migrating

"The powerful solution from IBM enables us to access up to date documents whenever and wherever we need them – in order to prove patent ownership."

Luc Elsen
Manager, ICT Philips IP&S

them as soon as they are adapted. For our organisation it is crucial to be able to access an up to date document, whenever and wherever you need it, for instance to prove ownership of a patent in case of a legal dispute,' said Elsen.

Implementation

IP&S opted for a 'two-step' implementation. Prior to the implementation, key users were trained and put through several acceptance tests. At the same time, the scanned documents from the Netherlands were put into the document management system. The first phase of the implementation went live.

"The transition to the new working method was very smooth. Employees using the system were so enthusiastic that others were keen to know when they would have a chance to adopt it. Initially we experienced a few small technical issues, but during the system introduction itself everything went well. It is very stable. Of course, the paper archive is still available and sometimes used by employees. In 2006, we will transition to an entirely digital archive," said Elsen

300 IBM users worldwide

In the Netherlands, IP&S employs around 350 people, of which 200 use the IBM system. In the near future, the overall number of users will grow to 300 from 22 IP&S subsidiaries worldwide. "At the moment, we are providing the large local subsidiaries with all relevant information about the

new system and are scanning and reading all local documents. Uniform working methods and terminologies are also crucial. The most important subsidiaries are located in France, Germany, Austria, United Kingdom, United States, China and India," explained Elsen.

Integration patent system

In late 2005, Philips began integrating the IBM FileNet software with a Philips patent system running on Oracle (called IBIS). "IBIS manages the administration of the patents and will be connected to IBM FileNet's application. IBM FileNet operates as a database of all patent dossiers. It is also the strategic electronic document management system to which the archives of trademark designs, domain names and legal departments are connected. As a result of the integration with IBIS, the need to constantly log in and out of different applications has become a thing of the past. Employees using Oracle have access to the document management system, and therefore to all the documents, at the push of a button," said Elsen.

Optimal email management

IBM's electronic DM-system can be tailored to IP&S' specific needs. A good example of this is the desire for optimal management of worldwide email traffic. "We used to search through an extensive list to find the relevant correspondence before we could write an email on a specific patent dossier. Because the IBM FileNet application

incorporates email management this is no longer necessary. The full text search functionality saves us a lot of time. Within a few seconds IBM FileNet is able to find the right patent dossier along with the right correspondence," said Elsen

IBM FileNet Email Manager is a rules-based email management solution that helps easily capture, organise, monitor, retrieve, retain and share email content. It selectively captures email content as defined by predetermined business rules based on the properties of the email itself. This email content can include shared documents, contracts, project files, or messages that initiate particular business processes. IBM FileNet Email Manager is a server-based email management solution that integrates with popular corporate email systems like Microsoft Exchange and Lotus Notes mail servers as well as desktop applications such as Microsoft Office.

"This email integration capability was an important requirement. At IP&S it is all about one question: what are we going to do with the requested patent – are we going to make it our own or will we license it? According to the Philips' business strategy, we build a portfolio around every patent request. There are constant changes so we have to consider how to deal with the daily incoming document flow. We have to handle all correspondence, mostly by email, from and to the European and worldwide patent office, as well as with

all background information, research material, documents from and to legal departments, internal administration and so on. In short, a tremendous amount of incoming and outgoing documents have to be scanned by the facility department. IBM FileNet has given us optimal control over this extensive email and document flow," said Elsen.

Records Management
IP&S is considering future extensions to records management in order to meet current and future regulatory and legal requirements relating to digital document traffic. Several new regulations such as Basel II and Sarbanes Oxley, as well as local financial economical legislation, require organisations to be able to audit both the way a decision has been made and the result of that decision. This is crucial for Philips worldwide," said Elsen.

IBM FileNet Records Manager meets this need. Based on the IBM FileNet P8 ECM platform, the solution is designed to automate and streamline all records-based processes. It securely and easily classifies, stores and retrieves all records. IBM FileNet Records Manager eliminates burdensome end-user participation and helps address regulatory compliance challenges. Also operational risk will be reduced by ensuring consistent policy enforcement through automation of the entire records management lifecycle process. There are fewer human errors, lower administrative and operational costs

and improved productivity by automating routine business user and records management tasks. All records that are related to a specific business process or project will be entered, classified and maintained automatically. It also ensures expired records are destroyed or disposed of in a legally acceptable manner.

Putting to the test

"When our paper archive is history, I am convinced that our employees will have no problems with the new way of working. I only foresee benefits for them and the organisation as a whole. The same goes for the foreign subsidiaries - they are already asking for earlier access to the system. Our new business location also brings new challenges. We will be an open campus from that day on, so security will be a priority and authorisation issues have to be tackled. It is crucial that access rights are protected. Our trading capital has to be guaranteed, not just now but also in the future. We are aiming to complete the full integration of all systems and documents in 2006," said Elsen.

Knowledge management

Quantifiable results are not yet available, but Elsen says process improvements and efficiencies are already evident. "The project can be summarised as 'knowledge at your fingertips'. All knowledge within the Philips organisation can be shared quickly and easily at a push of the button. The full text search functionality is essential; IBM FileNet finds the right dossier. The content and business process management are tightly integrated with each other enabling us to quickly and efficiently share information whenever needed. We can anticipate and respond to business events all over the world – generating efficiencies for IP&S – the technical heart of Philips," concludes Elsen.