

Case Study

Napa County

Napa Valley is home to more than its world-renowned vineyards and picturesque rolling hills. The region also features one of the most technologically advanced county governments in the U.S.

In 2005, the Center for Digital Government rated Napa County third in the nation in its population category for applying information technology to serve citizens more effectively.

Among the excellent examples of technology in action at Napa County is the municipality's extensive use of business process management software. Napa County (www.co.napa.ca.us) deploys Cardiff LiquidOffice to manage the creation, routing and processing of electronic forms and documents.

LiquidOffice reduces paperwork, expedites processes and helps more than 1,250 municipal employees work smarter and faster across all of the county's 45 agencies and departments.

The Challenge

Napa County needed to get a handle on the excessive stacks of paperwork that had been entrenched in the government's daily processes for years. Municipal employees spent precious time gathering forms manually, completing them by hand, and delivering the paperwork to colleagues in different departments and other county offices for signatures.

Forms frequently took weeks to process. For example:

- A manager at the County's Training and Employment Center fills out the paperwork to hire a new employee. The forms are sent via inter-office mail to a department head in the same building for review and approval. **Time: 5 days.**
- Once approved, the paperwork is shipped downtown to the County Administration Building for review and approval. **Time: 4 days.**
- A manager in Human Resources needs clarification on one of the submitted forms. The paperwork is sent back to the Training and Employment Center. **Time: 5 days.**
- The hiring manager corrects the form, gets approval from department head, and ships the



form back to the County Administration Building. **Time: 5 days.**

- The Human Resources manager approves and signs updated forms. **Time: 2 days.**

Total time to process one form: **21 days.**

"We have a warehouse full of archived forms and signed documents that we're trying to get a handle on," says Rod Getsy, Information Technology Services Manager for Napa County. "We brought in a document management system to help us, but we needed to address the beginning of this problem—the electronic capture, creation, routing and processing of information."

The Solution

Napa County's Information Technology Services department brought together technology from several leading vendors to reduce the municipality's reliance on paper-based processes.

Napa County's solution includes:

- Cardiff LiquidOffice business process management software
- OnBase enterprise content management software
- PeopleSoft enterprise resource planning system
- Microsoft SQL Server database

The selection of LiquidOffice was key to the solution. "We looked at several workflow and eForm options, but chose Cardiff because we knew it would integrate well with the other technology we have deployed in the county," says Getsy. "The LiquidOffice electronic signature capabilities are also the most mature, which is essential to any government organization."

Customer at a Glance

Napa County

Industry: Municipal Government

Application: HR, grant proposals, building inspections, etc.

Challenge: Napa County has 1,257 employees in 45 agencies and departments and excessive stacks of paperwork that have been part of the county's daily processes for years.

Solution: Cardiff LiquidOffice

Results: By deploying Cardiff LiquidOffice, Napa County reduced paperwork, accelerated form processes and helped hundreds of municipal employees work smarter and faster.

"With Cardiff LiquidOffice, Napa County has significantly reduced the amount of time it takes to process various forms, in some cases by a period of weeks. We have also integrated it with our document management system, enabling us to eliminate the piles of paper that used to clutter the desks of so many of our employees."

—Rod Getsy, Napa County

County employees in virtually every Napa County department take advantage of LiquidOffice. The software has been used to design more than 30 electronic forms that power a wide variety of processes—from personnel action requests for the Human Resources Division to daily activity tracking reports for the Sheriff's Department and building inspection forms for the Building Inspection Division.

About 90% of all municipal employees in Napa County use the LiquidOffice-powered personnel action request process. When employees need to perform an HR-related activity such as a personal leave request, department transfer, or salary review, they securely log onto LiquidOffice and enter the information into the appropriate electronic form.

With logic programmed by Napa County, LiquidOffice is able to:

- Provide drop-down boxes to guide employees through the form questions.
- Perform database look-ups in the municipality's PeopleSoft system for information such as payroll dates, employee position codes and civil service salary classification codes.
- Route completed forms to department heads and the HR department for review and their electronic signatures.
- Route the processed information to the County's OnBase content management system for storage and easy access.

While County employees praise LiquidOffice for its ease of use, the Department of Information Technology Services says the product is easy to deploy. "We had an urgent request from the Sheriff's Department to design and develop a program that captured information for federal and state grant proposals," Getsy says. "In a matter of days, we developed an electronic form process with LiquidOffice. It was that easy."

The Benefits of Cardiff

Napa County has experienced several com-

PELLING benefits from Cardiff LiquidOffice. LiquidOffice accelerates processes, facilitates faster and more accurate response times, and dramatically reduces the cost of paper copying, faxing, mailing, filing and storage.

For example, the County's personnel action requests can be processed in less than two days now, rather than the three weeks previously required. "With Cardiff LiquidOffice, Napa County has significantly reduced the amount of time it takes to process various forms, in some cases by a period of weeks," says Getsy. "We have also integrated it with our document management system, enabling us to eliminate the piles of paper that used to clutter the desks of so many of our employees."

Napa County employees have been quick to praise the addition of electronic forms and process automation across the municipality. "There has been a significant shift in workload thanks to LiquidOffice," says Getsy. "One of my colleagues called it: 'The greatest timesaver ever.'"

Citizens in the Napa Valley are also benefiting from improved service levels. Several LiquidOffice forms are now available from the municipality's public website, meaning Napa County residents get real-time access to the documentation they need without having to go to the County Administration Building.

While the early results from LiquidOffice have been favorable, Napa County's Department of Information Technology Services is not about to rest on its laurels. The County will soon deploy the software to simplify key government processes such as restaurant inspections. "Our inspectors will fill in their evaluations on-site in a Tablet PC with LiquidOffice's disconnected form option," says Getsy. "We are really excited about the efficiency and productivity gains we expect to see from this application."

About our VAR

Neko Industries, Inc.

NEKO Industries, Inc. serves as Napa County's preferred vendor for document management solutions. The value-added reseller has been helping organizations improve and automate work processes since 1993. Headquartered in Roseville, California, NEKO provides everything businesses need for a complete solution including software, hardware, implementation, customization, training, and support. For the Napa County solution, NEKO recommended Cardiff LiquidOffice, provided knowledge transfer and integrated the software into the municipality's IT environment.

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