

PrOMIS

THE CHALLENGE

Within the Department of Defense (DoD) arena there are vast amounts of program-related reference material stored in various physical and virtual locations. Documents can be found on local and network drives, removable media, and in hard copy. The disparate storage mechanisms make the efficient collaboration, retrieval, and coordination of information unwieldy, if not impossible. Traditional, manual requests require courier delivery of sensitive documents for review and approval. Multiple paper copies are routed iteratively among staff and comments are made accordingly. The risk that valuable input could fall through the cracks within this process is great. A better method of sharing, managing, and storing all of this information was required.

CSCI was challenged to implement a solution that would improve the collaboration and project management within organizations. This solution was to not only store information in a centralized repository and facilitate easy retrieval, but also had to provide this functionality in a compartmented fashion that protected the integrity of the data. Also, as part of this process, it would be necessary to assist in smoothly transitioning customers to the new system, to ensure that it was used effectively and provided the appropriate balance of usability and security.

THE STRATEGY

In 1996, CSCI began the process of developing the Program Office Management Information System™, or PrOMIS™. The strategy was to first identify the client's document management requirements, design a system that was tailored to those specific, functional business needs, and then work with customers to begin populating the system with their data. Following this construct, CSCI remained focused on providing an operational environment which would allow existing business rules and procedures to be followed while introducing new electronic processes to improve security and efficiency. The implementation of these processes needed to be transparent to users of the system, and enhance rather than impede their productivity, or else it would never be embraced and fully utilized.

Thousands of documents in hard copy form were reviewed to identify the levels of compartmentation

necessary to properly address security concerns. A flexible architecture was developed to allow for change and improvement, so that customized compartmentation structures could be created as needed to address each customer's specific needs.

To meet the collaboration requirements, CSCI incorporated compartmented document approval routing and peer review cycles into PrOMIS, which expanded the usefulness of the system beyond storage. This electronic document approval process is analogous to the manual processes CSCI's customers were accustomed to performing, but offers increased efficiency and data integrity. Various document-marking, classification, and other security attributes were identified and implemented into PrOMIS. These markings, in conjunction with access controls at the document level, allow the system to only reveal data to cleared individuals with the appropriate access and an established need-to-know. Enterprise-level, full text and attachment content search capabilities were also included in order to expedite the secure retrieval of information.

THE RESULTS

PrOMIS' success was a result of CSCI's skill in focusing on the critical need of the customer to improve collaboration, security, and information retrieval. PrOMIS has made a difference with customers by enabling them to easily manage their electronic data securely while limiting access down to the document level. By automating document approval chains, PrOMIS not only reduces the need for couriers and paper copies, but also provides both reviewers and approvers with a single point of entry for performing their tasks. At the same time, the system decreases the risk of data loss involved with the manual transmission of documents, and significantly reduces the amount of time dedicated to routing and managing this flow of information.

CSCI works with customers to facilitate the transition to the system, helping them to realize the ways in which the product refines their current processes and increases operational efficiency while staying within defined security guidelines. The overwhelming success of PrOMIS has led CSCI to discuss with clients additional requirements for features as CSCI continues to strive to provide the most complete set of secure information management tools to its customers.