Laserfiche Specialist Capture Workflow

August 2011

Laserfiche Certified Professional Program. Not For Distribution or Resale.

Laserfiche®

Table of Contents

1.0 Introduction 4
1.1 Purpose Statement 4
1.2 Course Materials 4
2.0 Capture Workflow Overview 5
2.1 Traditional Capture vs. Capture Workflow 5
2.1.1 Case Study: Compton Compressors 6
2.2 Taking A Step Back 7
2.2.1 Business Process Re-engineering 8
3.0 Software Considerations 12
3.1 Key Tenets 12
3.1.1 Access to Information 12
3.1.2 Exceptions 13
3.1.3 Processing Order 13
3.1.4 Document Tracking 14
3.2 Laserfiche Tools 14
3.2.1 Import Agent 14
3.2.2 Laserfiche Scanning 15
3.2.3 OCR 15
3.2.4 Quick Fields 15
3.2.5 Workflow 17
3.2.6 Laserfiche Repository 19
3.2.7 Audit Trail 20
3.2.8 Integration 20
4.0 Case Study: The Capture Workflow Way 21
4.1 Initial Capture 22
4.2 Holding Folder 22
4.3 Reprocessing 22
4.4 Filing 22

Laserfiche Certified Professional Program. Not For Distribution or Resale.

4.5 Exceptions 23
4.6 Distributors 23
4.7 Audit History 23

Laserfiche Certified Professional Program. Not For Distribution or Resale.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose Statement

Content capture is one of the most time- and resource-intensive aspects of a content management system. In fact, capture is often considered a separate part of the overall process, because all of the work to properly capture, identify, and file information comes first, before the information is handed off to the content management system.

But due to the robust tool set included in a Laserfiche system, you don't have to wait until the capture process is complete to know your data is secure and searchable. Instead, content can be gathered into the repository early and often and can be text-searchable even before it has been properly filed. Later on, this content can be re-processed and useful information can be extracted to properly fill in metadata, rename the document, and file it in an appropriate location.

Capture workflow is intended to rework and streamline an existing capture process, wholesale. Rather than just tweaking individual pieces, it looks at the whole process from start to finish to create a capture strategy that is more efficient, requires less oversight, and forms an integral part of the content management system.

1.2 Course Materials

This manual provides an overview of the capture workflow philosophy and introduces you to the tools that will help in developing a better capture strategy. It will also include examples of how to translate these concepts into production. In addition, accompanying capture workflow videos highlight the specific software features and configuration that facilitate such a capture system.

Both the manual and videos should be studied thoroughly to learn the philosophical and practical tenets of a capture workflow system. Only after careful study of all materials should the certification exam be attempted.

Laserfiche Certified Professional Program. Not For Distribution or Resale.

2.0 Capture Workflow Overview

2.1 Traditional Capture vs. Capture Workflow

Traditional capture systems are designed to collect and process content before it is stored in a content management system. Tools for traditional capture excel by improving the speed of a particular part of the process, often through automation. Sorting a stack of pages into individual documents, capturing information from a page, and alerting a scanner operator to potential problems are common ways a capture system can improve efficiency.

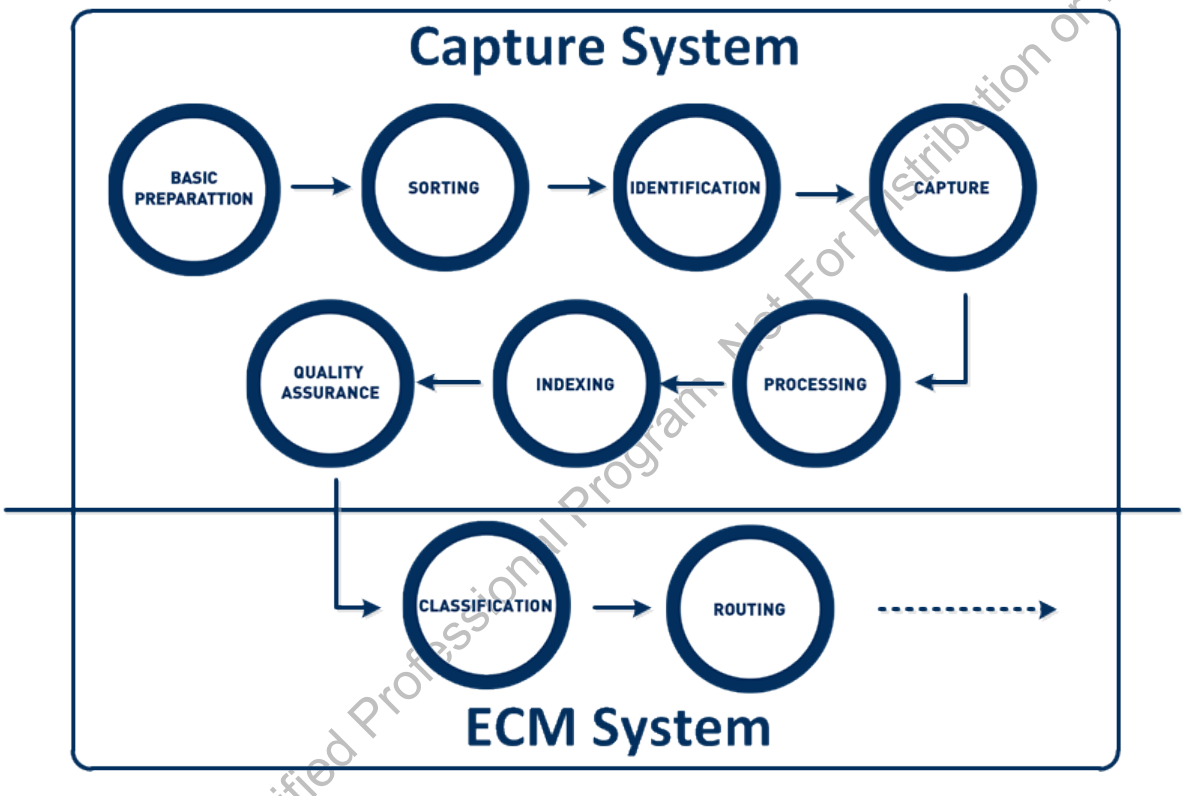


Figure 1 Traditional Capture

By using such an automation tool—for example, Laserfiche Quick Fields—a scanner operator can work more efficiently. And while productivity improvements due to automation can have a big impact on a business, there is more that can be done with tools at hand, and there are some questions about how the flow of business information is handled that are still unanswered:

- What if somebody needs a document before it has been processed?
- What happens if the scanner operator is unsure of what to do with a document that could not be processed correctly?
- What if you are required to track the document from the time it comes into the office, not just after it has been stored in Laserfiche?

Laserfiche Certified Professional Program. Not For Distribution or Resale.

These questions are symptomatic of a business with distinct capture and enterprise content management (ECM) systems. When capture is a separate entity, content is isolated until it has been thoroughly processed, then it is handed off to the ECM system. This means that you cannot take advantage of ECM functionality until after that transfer.

Capture workflow resolves these and other concerns by integrating traditional capture steps—sorting, indexing, ensuring quality, etc.—into the ECM system. With the capture tools available with Laserfiche, content can be gathered into the repository from various sources as soon as it enters the office. The document or content may go through several stages within the ECM system, as business process actions are performed on it. Even if it has not yet been filed in its final location, it can be made text-searchable so those who need it can find and work with it. In addition, every step the content takes, and every action taken on it, can be tracked and reported on by Audit Trail.

2.1.1 Case Study: Compton Compressors

During the course of this manual, we will discuss the challenges faced by Compton Compressors, a company that manufactures air conditioning (A/C) units. These units are sold through a distribution channel, and records related to sales are the focus of this capture process.

When an A/C unit is sold, it is registered in Compton Compressors' sales tracking system. This system is a bit old and does a nightly printout of the day's sales on forms called "sales confirmations." The sales team needs to make these confirmations available to the distribution channel, and the legal team needs to make sure they can be accessed for 20 years—long enough to outlast warranties and any litigation that may crop up.

As Compton Compressors outgrew their paper-based filing, they realized they needed to go digital to make these sales confirmations easier to track. The sales confirmations are being digitized and stored on a network share.

In the morning, scanner operators work through the stack of sales confirmations printed out the night before. The first step is to do a quick check on the quality of the documents, because the printers occasionally get jammed or run out of ink. Additionally, they check for any special order confirmations, which need to be sent to "special order desk" right away. In order to increase the throughput, the sales confirmations are distributed to two scanner operators, who begin scanning the special orders first and then the regular confirmations. Occasionally a sales order gets lost somewhere in the process.

Once the sales confirmations have been scanned, they need to be made available to the distribution channel. However, there is some information that the distributers should not be allowed to see. Specifically, Compton Compressors needs to hide the manufacturing cost. They cannot change the way their sales tracking system prints, so they need to black out that data on the confirmations. The scanner operators do

Laserfiche Certified Professional Program. Not for Distribution or Resale.

this using permanent markers, then re-scan the distributor's copy of the sales confirmation. After these have been scanned in, they can be e-mailed to the distributers.

Generally the morning is devoted to working with Compton Compressors' copies of the forms, while the afternoon is devoted to the distribution channel's copies. Business has been improving lately, which is certainly a good thing, but it means there are more sales confirmations to sort through. The scanner operators now regularly put in overtime hours to get through it all, and they are looking to make this process more efficient. Not only are things getting backed up, but the increased workload is causing errors: documents getting lost, special orders being mixed in with regular sales confirmations, and some distributors seeing the manufacturer's costs that they should not see. Additionally, the hardware involved—printers and scanners—is running at the threshold of its duty cycle, and IT has had to spend more and more time going through more parts to keeping it all running.

Compton Compressors' current process could benefit from being reworked. The company is looking to implement a new system to ease the burden of the scanner operators and make the overall process flow more smoothly.

2.2 Taking A Step Back

When looking to improve inefficient processes, it can be easy to focus on each specific task. In the case study, for example, there are numerous ways the system's performance could be increased: buying faster or more reliable printers, buying faster scanners, scanning with tools that automate the data capture and filing steps, and hiring more scanner operators. Those are all steps that can make the system run more efficiently, by speeding up the process of digitizing sales confirmations and reducing the overtime and frustration. However, there are underlying problems that will still be present: they are at the mercy of the printers and scanners being used, there is a lot of manual labor that goes into digitizing the sales orders, and the potential still exists for mistakes. Speeding up the different steps in the process is one way to improve business efficiencies, but they would be better served implementing a system that corrects the fundamental issues.

Example: Lisa and her boyfriend Mike go to New York for a family reunion over Easter weekend. Three generations of Lisa's family will gather for Easter Sunday, and Lisa and Mike offer to help with dinner.

They get a ham from the supermarket and glaze it to prepare it for the oven. Then Lisa takes a carving knife and starts to cut off the top two inches of the ham. Mike stops her, asking why she's cutting off the best part of the ham.

Lisa explains that's how her mother taught her to cook a ham. Her mother always cut off the top section of the ham before putting it in the oven. After some discussion, they call over Lisa's mother, who says the

Laserfiche Certified Professional Program. Not For Distribution or Resale.

same thing: her mother has always cut off the top part of the ham before placing it in the oven. They finally walk to the living room, where Lisa's grandmother is sitting with the other relatives. They ask her why she has been preparing the ham that way.

She responds that years ago her oven was so small that a whole ham wouldn't fit, so she had to cut it in pieces to cook the whole thing. She has no idea why her daughter and granddaughter do the same thing, since modern ovens are huge.

Lesson: Unquestioned assumptions and rules prevent business processes from evolving and may result in overly complicated, inefficient, and even unnecessary practices.

2.2.1 Business Process Re-engineering

Many organizations today are stuck with inefficient or counterproductive processes because people make assumptions about why things are done a certain way. It is not uncommon for businesses to rely on processes that are decades old, even when those processes were originally created based on constraints and conditions that no longer apply. This leads to slowness, reduced quality, poor service, and higher costs—all of which are deal-breakers in today's competitive world.

The story of Lisa and Mike is a good example. Lisa was preparing ham a certain way because that was the process she had learned. She never questioned why the top part of the ham should be cut off before placing it in the oven because she assumed there must be a good reason for it. However, the constraints that were present previously are no longer relevant. In fact, cutting off the top part of the ham increased the preparation time and was likely detrimental to the value of the end product.

In most organizations, business processes are fragmented into sub-processes and tasks that are carried out by different specialized areas or groups within the organization. For instance, mail clerks may be in charge of processing incoming mail, which is then routed to several other departments based on key identifiers—resumes may be sent to human resources, invoices may be sent to accounting, and so on. Often, no one is responsible for the overall performance of the entire process.

Refining or optimizing individual processes—business process improvement—can result in some benefits, but if the processes themselves are fundamentally inefficient or outmoded, the benefits won't be dramatic.

For example, a traditional business process improvement initiative may recommend stapling the pages of incoming mail together to prevent them from getting lost during transport. However, if the process is thoroughly examined, those heading the initiative would recognize that the transport process itself is not necessary and can be eliminated by scanning the mail at the arrival location and sorting later via

Laserfiche Certified Professional Program. Not For Distribution or Resale.

software processes. This is the focus of the accompanying video, Case Study: The Mailroom Example.

In contrast, business process re-engineering is the means by which organizations fundamentally rethink how they do their work, in order to significantly improve critical performance measures, such as cost, quality, service, and speed. The approach requires someone with complete understanding of the process from start to finish, because it is holistic and involves radical re-design, rather than refining current work practices. Based on this perspective, individual processes can be re-structured, have their order of operations changed, or be eliminated altogether.

Capture workflow is a method for business process re-engineering. When developing a capture workflow system, you should focus on two parts of the process: how content is coming in and how it is ultimately used. With this focus in mind, intermediate steps may prove unnecessary, and effort can be redirected to tasks that greatly improve the efficiency of getting people the information they need.

2.2.1.1 Case Study: Fundamental Problems

When Compton Compressors was originally examining their problems, they were in the business process improvement mindset. They saw their business as consisting of stand-alone parts, which they tried to make more efficient, and they wanted to digitize what they already had, as opposed to rethinking it. As a result, not only did they not realize many of the benefits that usually come with going paperless, but they also introduced new problems and overhead.

One example is the sub-process of printing sales confirmation forms coming from the sales tracking system. They were using older printer models that ran out of ink quickly and broke down on a regular basis. It was not uncommon for the staff to work overtime just to compensate for the technical difficulties and limitations of the printers. Sales confirmations sometimes weren't finished printing in a timely fashion, which lead to activities further downstream in the business process cycle being delayed because of problems upstream.

As a solution, they asked some of their IT personnel to fix the printers when problems cropped up, which improved the situation. Printer issues started getting resolved in a timelier manner, and the IT staff was able to optimize them to use less ink per print job. The sales confirmation printing throughput improved by 20 percent.

However, this introduced a new problem. Because the company used several different printer models, each issue had to be researched separately. This meant that IT personnel with printer maintenance duties spent a lot more time on them than they had previously. As a result, the IT department became short-staffed and needed to hire more people.

Purchasing better printers and scanners can speed up two of the key parts of the process. However, this does not address some of the fundamental concerns: the time

Laserfiche Certified Professional Program. Not For Distribution or Resale.

required for people to manually sort the paper, the oversight and maintenance of printers and scanners, and the manual redaction and re-scanning.

After running into situations like this, management soon realized business process improvement was not the best approach. They needed to step back and analyze the system as a whole, establish the fundamental goals, and redesign their process to meet those goals in the most efficient way possible.

2.2.1.2 Case Study: Fundamental Goals

To design a capture workflow system, we need to look at the business process from a birds-eye perspective and determine what it is meant to accomplish, as well as who the stakeholders are. Then we need to determine which processes need to be improved, re-designed, or eliminated to fulfill the goals.

After subscribing to the capture workflow methodology, Compton Compressors management sat down with several key stakeholders of the system to evaluate the inputs, outputs, and end goal. Based on the dialogues that occurred, the following goals were defined:

- Internal staff needs to be able to see the sales confirmations in a timely manner to be able to process the orders.
- Distributors need access to the sales confirmation forms, with key pieces of information redacted.
- The sales confirmation records need to be accessible for 20 years after they are generated.

At this point, the management team realized that their current business process was overly complicated. They also understood that the way certain tasks were set up actually detracted from the efficacy of the business. For those reasons, it didn't make sense to try to speed up and automate the process as is, because doing so would lead to marginal benefits at best. What they needed to do instead was to redesign it by looking at how the sub-processes fit together. After analyzing each process as an output of one and an input for another, and discussing it with the relevant stakeholders, they could identify which tasks needed improvement and which ones could be scrapped.

At the end of this self-study, software could be employed to make dramatic improvements in cost, quality, flexibility, and speed. The final result is a system that has fewer moving parts, less manual input, and information getting where it needs to be more quickly. Here is a broad overview of the system that will be put in place. Further details about how the system works will be covered in section 4.

- Rather than printing to paper, the output from the sales tracking system will go directly into Laserfiche.
- Manufacturer's costs will automatically be redacted.
- Sales confirmations will be stored in their correct locations automatically.

Laserfiche Certified Professional Program. Not For Distribution or Resale.

- Distributors will be sent an e-mail linking to the sales confirmation in WebLink.
- Everything will be filed and waiting first thing in the morning.

Laserfiche Certified Professional Program. Not For Distribution or Resale.

3.0 Software Considerations

3.1 Key Tenets

A capture workflow system, at its core, is designed to deliver information quickly and efficiently to the people who need it. Building such a system requires numerous points to be considered. This section will address the primary considerations, while section 3.2 will cover specific Laserfiche tools and functionality that address these concerns.

> **Warning:** Making content easier to find and work with does not mean that it should be broadly available to an entire organization. There are still security and possibly regulatory policies that must be followed, regardless of where a document is in the capture process. Initially, content can be sorted into departmental holding folders, giving department heads access while processing is still taking place.

3.1.1 Access to Information

A big concern of the traditional method is the time it takes information to become available to the organization as a whole. With so much information so readily available through the Internet, clients may not accept that it takes four hours for their signed, overnighted agreement to get from the mail room to the service professional who needs to review it. Even if four hours is a perfectly acceptable turnaround time, what happens if something of high urgency needs an immediate review?

When dealing with physical documents—or faxes, e-forms, or other content—that are queued for processing, there may be no way to track a single document down besides waiting for it to enter the repository or manually digging through a pile of paper. Instead, documents should be imported and OCRed right away. When that's done, something of an urgent nature can be tracked down and processed very quickly.

This is the first tenet of a capture workflow system: Digitize content as early as possible in the process. This allows stakeholders to find documents regardless of where those documents are in their lifecycle.

> **Case Study:** For Compton Compressors, the original capture method meant at least half a day before employees could access the sales confirmations, and a full day before the distributors could access them. Improving some of the steps in the initial process would have made access times slightly better, but building a capture workflow system will really kick it up. Content can be processed automatically overnight, making it available to everybody first thing in the morning.

Laserfiche Certified Professional Program. Not For Distribution or Resale.

3.1.2 Exceptions

Even the best automation tools encounter documents that cannot be identified or processed properly. Traditionally, the burden of determining how to handle a particular document falls on the scanner operator. The problem with this method is that exceptions often represent specialized documents, and determining what to do with them may be tricky for someone who has not been trained on how a file is used once it has been processed. Instead, someone who works with the files in question on a regular basis should be able to quickly identify the important information about a file that could not be processed properly.

In a capture workflow system, exceptions can be re-routed to people who can decide what to do with it. This ensures that exceptions are handled properly, and frees scanner operators to keep getting new content into the system.

This is the second tenet of a capture workflow system: Documents that cannot be processed properly should be addressed by people familiar with their use. This keeps the whole system running more smoothly and ensures that exceptions do not get misfiled.

> **Case Study:** For Compton Compressors, scanner operators were the point of entry for the sales confirmations. If information was missing, such as the distributor's ID number, they had to make their best guess about what it was or take time they didn't have to look it up. With the new process, problematic sales confirmations can be routed to the order desk, so someone familiar with the process can take care of it. Problems will be resolved more quickly and accurately.

3.1.3 Processing Order

Traditionally, content entering an organization is processed on a first-come, first-served basis. This otherwise normal and logical method doesn't always make the most sense when dealing with a large volume of content. When there are many different document types to be processed, some may be more important than others and some may be easier to process than others. Sorting, processing, and filing can be broken up into distinct tasks so that content that can or should come out of the process quickly, does, while content that is lower priority can wait longer before being filed.

This is the third tenet of capture workflow: Iterative processing can get urgent content to the people that need it first. Additionally, content that is easier to work with should get pushed through so that it is not waiting on content that is more difficult to process.

> **Case Study:** When Compton Compressors was scanning paper, they had to rely on scanner operators seeing the special order confirmations and sending them to the special order desk. With the new process,

Laserfiche Certified Professional Program. Not For Distribution or Resale.

special orders will automatically be flagged and routed appropriately, ensuring they are seen by the special order desk immediately.

3.1.4 Document Tracking

Content being managed by an organization may have specific rules about how it is supposed to be handled. Organizations that must answer to outside regulators—for example, financial companies governed by the Securities and Exchange Commission—have to prove content is being handled appropriately and by whom. Some organizations have rules about response time and have to show they responded to inquiries within a given timeframe. A capture workflow system lends itself to these concerns because the content enters the system immediately upon reaching the organization. Even before it reaches its final destination or the people who need to work with it, a history is being generated so that a document's entire lifecycle can be tracked.

This is the fourth tenet of a capture workflow system: A document's audit history should reflect its entire lifecycle, not just its life after processing has completed.

Case Study: Compton Compressors occasionally gets audited to ensure it has all of its appropriate records, including sales confirmations. Since they will come into Laserfiche directly from the sales tracking system, employees no longer have to worry about confirmations going missing. Additionally, the document's audit history will show exactly who accessed the record and when.

3.2 Laserfiche Tools

This section highlights specific functionality within the Laserfiche software suite that is important to a capture workflow system. This manual will touch on the relevant functionality, while the supporting videos and product help files give more information about software configuration. Note that these tools have more functionality than listed here; this section is highlighting only the points relevant to setting up a capture workflow process.

3.2.1 Import Agent

Import Agent is a simple import automation tool that monitors folders on a network drive. When a new file is stored in one of these folders, it is imported into Laserfiche, either immediately or on a scheduled basis. This is commonly used with multi-function peripherals (MFPs) that store scanned images on the network, fax servers, and FTP servers.

Import Agent can monitor and import from many folders. This means that multiple folders can collect content—for each department, each user, each fax sender, etc. Content from each monitored folder can be sent into a unique holding folder in Laserfiche, so that as content comes in, some presorting has already taken place.

Laserfiche Certified Professional Program Not for Distribution or Resale

3.2.2 Laserfiche Scanning

Laserfiche Scanning is a core component of Laserfiche and can be installed on any workstation to distribute the scanning load. Individual users can scan paperwork as it comes to them, and it can still be centrally processed later by Quick Fields.

The Scanning tool, particularly Basic Mode, is designed for quick and easy scanning jobs. Paper can be scanned into Laserfiche without keeping people from their normal duties, and the amount of training time required is minimal.

3.2.2.1 Remote Scanning

The Scanning interface is available through Web Access in addition to the Laserfiche Client. Using it through Web Access, users can scan paperwork from wherever they are, even if they work primarily from a home office.

3.2.2.2 iPhone App

Laserfiche now offers an iPhone app that connects through Web Access to extend remote capture capabilities even further. Rather than using a physical scanner, users can take a picture of a document using their iPhone and store it directly into Laserfiche.

3.2.3 OCR

Part of Import Agent, Scanning, Quick Fields, and other modules, OCR processing extracts the text information from documents to make them full-text searchable. Even if files are being collected in a "to be processed" folder, they can still be tracked down through full-text searching.

3.2.4 Quick Fields

Quick Fields is one of the key pieces of any capture workflow system because it does the heavy lifting when it comes to automated document processing. Its features are particularly relevant and useful for the capture, processing, and filing parts of the process.

3.2.4.1 Laserfiche Capture Engine

Central to the idea of working with content being collected into Laserfiche is reprocessing it to make it more usable. The Laserfiche Capture Engine is used to "scan" out of the repository and is key to the idea of reprocessing. There are many options to ensure the best use of the Capture Engine, such as:

- Scan from specific folders.
- Search for documents that meet certain criteria.
- Pull just the first page if that has all of the relevant information.
- Retain pre-existing field data, if appropriate.

The accompanying video, Capture Workflow with Laserfiche, shows this in more detail.

Laserfiche Certified Professional Program. Not For Distribution or Resale.

3.2.4.2 Quick Fields Agent

If the content being processed by Quick Fields is of high enough quality, it may be possible to run Quick Fields without any human oversight. If so, Quick Fields Agent is a good tool because it will run Quick Fields sessions automatically. The Agent is used to schedule sessions, running them at specific times or at regular time intervals. Additionally, the Agent can run more than one session at a time—up to two sessions per processor core—to do parallel processing.

3.2.4.3 Image Refinement

If the content being processed started out as paper, there is a good chance the images will need to be cleaned up prior to processing. There are a number of tools available to make sure images are legible to the people using them, as well as to the automated processes.

3.2.4.4 Identification

A single Quick Fields session can process numerous document types, even if they have different processing needs. This is done by sorting them into different "document classes," where each "class" has its own processing and filing options. This sorting is handled through an identification step: Quick Fields can automatically determine the kind of document it has scanned and process it accordingly.

3.2.4.5 Data Extraction

One of the fundamental features of Quick Fields is automatically extracting information from the pages it is processing. This can be done by reading text via Zone OCR, reading barcodes, or identifying boxes checked on a form. Once extracted, the information can be used to fill in fields, name the document, or file it in Laserfiche. Barcode is an especially good option for automated data extraction, given its inherent high accuracy.

3.2.4.6 Database Lookup

Used to look up and use information from an external database, the Lookup process in Quick Fields can speed up processing and reduce the need for duplicate data entry. For example, a clinic may be scanning patient records that all have the patient ID on them. Once this ID number is known—through Zone OCR, manual entry, etc.—the rest of the patient's information (e.g., name, insurance details, etc.) can be retrieved from the patient database. Lookup is a common part of a capture workflow system.

3.2.4.7 Pattern Matching

Pattern matching can be thought of as text-based logic. It is a way of capturing only a small part of a bigger string or checking the accuracy of what was captured. When

Laserfiche Certified Professional Program. Not For Distribution or Resale.

automatically extracting text with Zone OCR, Pattern Matching should be used to account for text not being in the exact same place from one document to the next.

Since Pattern Matching works with text input, it can be used with other aspects of a document, like the file name. If a fax server is naming documents with several pieces of information in the name, such as the name and phone number that sent the fax, Pattern Matching can extract those two pieces of information for use elsewhere.

In addition to these "standard" uses of Pattern Matching, there is additional functionality, including the Token Editor and Substitution. These are used to convert extracted information into a different format.

3.2.4.8 Auto-Redaction

Based on the logic of Pattern Matching, auto-redaction can automatically black out—or "redact"—sensitive information from a document. Patterns of text are flagged for redaction so they are hidden no matter where they appear in the document. For example, social security numbers can automatically be hidden from HR paperwork.

3.2.4.9 Filing

Any information Quick Fields has about a document can be used to name it, file it in a unique folder path, or categorize it (i.e., can be added as metadata).

Not only can Quick Fields file documents based on information read from the documents, but it can also be used to update existing documents "in place." File merging options can be set up such that the processed document is "filed" back in its original location with its original name, but with the newly acquired metadata. Details of this process are included in the accompanying video, Capture Workflow with Laserfiche.

3.2.5 Workflow

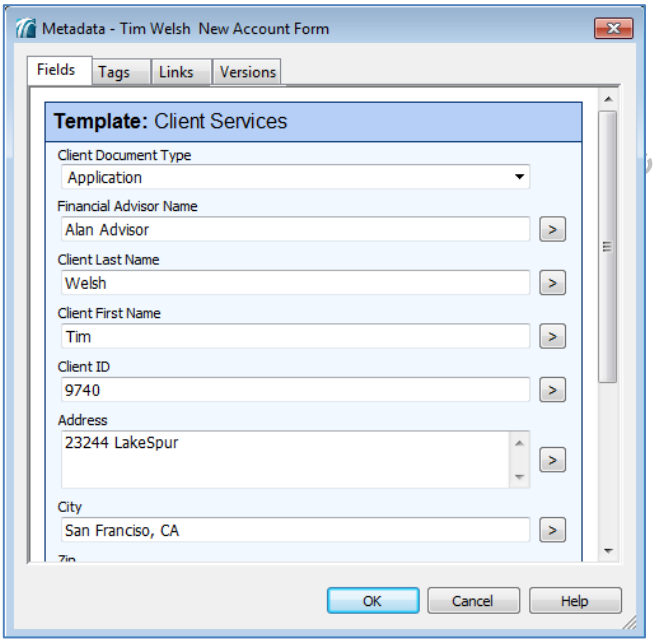
Most commonly used to file content into appropriate folders, Workflow has a number of activities that are useful for automation within a capture workflow environment.

3.2.5.1 Rename

Much like Quick Fields, Workflow can make use of any information available about a given document. This includes naming documents based on a combination of field values, which can ensure consistency and improve the usability of the Laserfiche repository.

Laserfiche Certified Professional Program. Not For Distribution or Resale.

Example: Jolly Greenbacks, a financial services firm, has many field reps who visit client sites, work from home, and generally are not in the main office for more than a few days a month. To keep up with paperwork, the field reps scan forms from their home offices; the forms end up in a holding folder named for the time and date they were scanned, such as "8/5/2011 – 9:34AM." Quick Fields then reprocesses the documents at the main office.



Due to oversight by the Securities and Exchange Commission, these documents need to be tracked by Audit Trail from the time they are scanned into the system until they reach their final disposition. This means Quick Fields updates the field values of the documents, but after this update they are still named as DATE-TIME of original scan.

In addition to routing these documents to their proper folders, Workflow uses the Rename activity to make these forms easier to work with. The naming convention will come from the Client Services template you see here, and documents will be named in the form LAST NAME, FIRST NAME – CLIENT ID – DOCUMENT TYPE. In this case, Welsh, Tim – 9740 – Application.

3.2.5.2 Pattern Matching

Workflow also includes Pattern Matching logic, so that specific pieces of information can be extracted from a larger string—for example, the fax with information in its file name. In addition to Pattern Matching, scripting activities can be used to do advanced manipulation or decision-making based on the document's information.

3.2.5.3 Databases

In version 8.3, Workflow will be able to interact with databases to acquire more information about a document. Additionally, Workflow can update a database, such as a recently faxed order updating the sales processing system.

Laserfiche Certified Professional Program

3.2.5.4 PDF Activities

In version 8.3, Workflow will be able to interact with PDF forms. Data in fields on the form will be available to Workflow to use in fields, document naming, and document filing. Additionally, Workflow will be able to enter data in fields on PDF forms, so that user decisions, processed date, etc., can be included in the PDF.

3.2.5.5 Filing

Field data can be used to route documents to folders dynamically based on their metadata. In addition to storing the document in its proper location, an e-mail can be sent to notify somebody that the document is present. If the proper folder does not yet exist, it can be created and even have security assigned to it by Workflow.

Beyond standard filing, document shortcuts can also be created in relevant locations in Laserfiche. This means the original copy can be filed with a records clerk or the attorney's office, but still be made available to users in other departments.

3.2.5.6 Routing Decision

The Routing Decision is a branching activity that handles documents in different ways based on their properties, such filing into different folders based on the type of document it is, as defined by a field value. Different document types can be handled in different ways—for example, different naming conventions used for different document types—in addition to being filed in different locations.

In addition to handling processed documents, the Routing Decision can include a branch to catch any documents that did not get processed correctly. These exceptions can be routed to a special folder and an e-mail can be sent to someone who can quickly correct the issue.

3.2.6 Laserfiche Repository

Section 3.2 has focused primarily on tools that work with the repository. However, there are also some features of the Laserfiche repository itself that are important to a capture workflow system.

3.2.6.1 Security

Security is often a primary concern for organizations that use Laserfiche and want content only available to the users who are authorized to see it. Within a capture workflow system, security applies to documents throughout the process, not only after being stored in the repository. Documents that are awaiting processing can be held in folders specific to the department they are relevant to, making them available to people in that department, but not to the rest of the organization.

3.2.6.2 Searchability

With all of the search tools available in Laserfiche, there won't be a time when a document gets "lost" in the capture process. Full-text searching can be used for

Laserfiche Certified Professional Program. Not For Distribution or Resale.

documents that are in the early stages of processing, while additional search types can be used once metadata starts getting filled in. Running a Quick or Full Text Search will find documents regardless of where they are in the process, so users can find them without knowing precise status.

3.2.6.3 Dynamic Fields

As of Laserfiche 8.2, fields can be linked so the options in one field depend on the value of another field. For example, the first field may be for "car make" and the second for "car model." Once the make is selected (e.g., Ford), the model field will only show vehicles made by that manufacturer (e.g., Edge, F150, Taurus).

3.2.7 Audit Trail

Audit Trail is a tool used for security and regulatory compliance that gives a complete history of a document. It is used when the content being processed has rules about who views it, how it is handled, or how quickly a response must be sent. With the capture workflow framework, the content is immediately stored in Laserfiche, meaning that its audit history begins as soon as the content enters an organization.

3.2.8 Integration

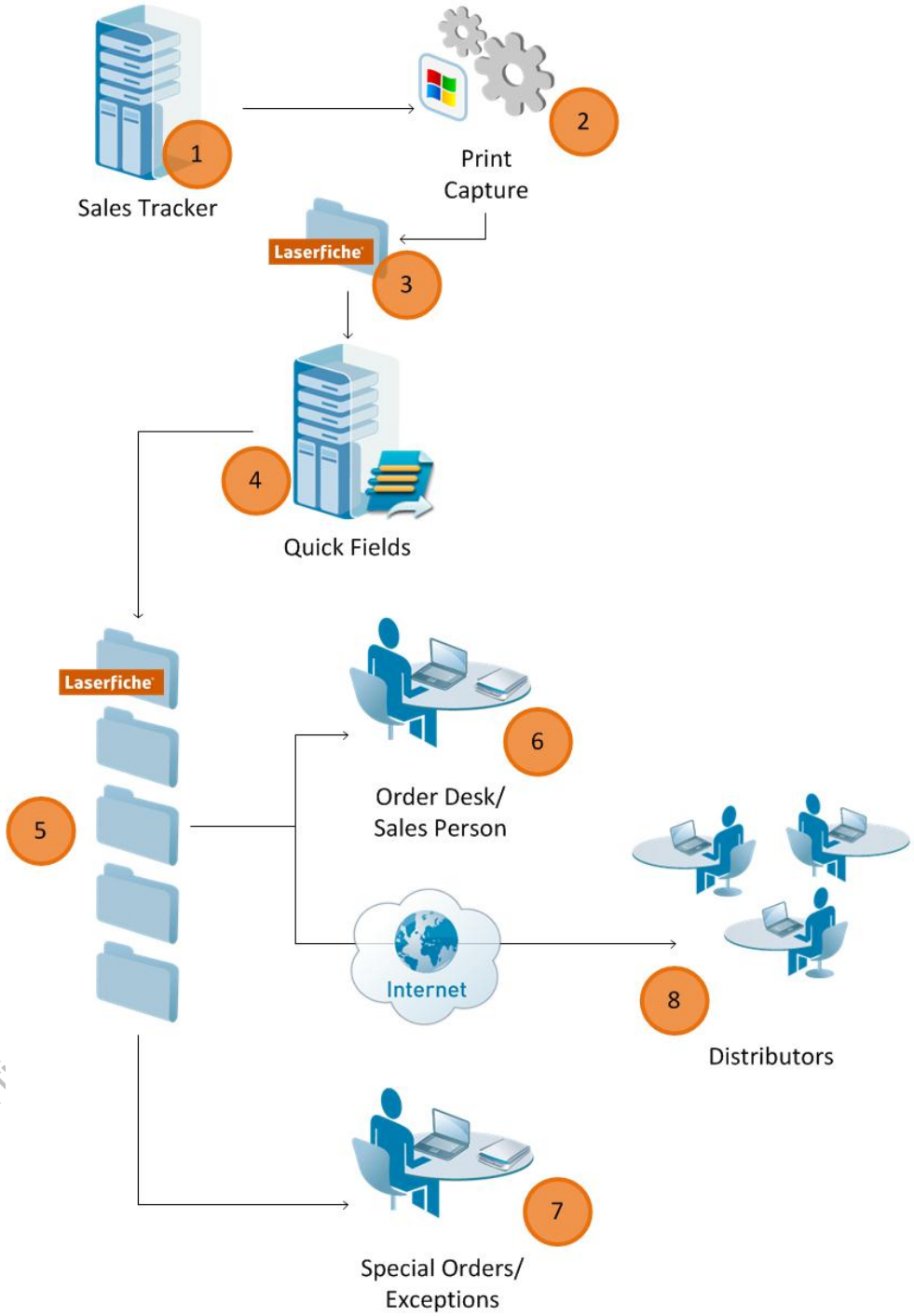
Sometimes the most efficient method of getting content from another system into Laserfiche is to have those two systems communicate directly with each other or use a tool to transfer documents without generating paper. Using the Software Development Kit, or SDK, communication can be established between Laserfiche and the other systems within an organization.

If there are no development resources, the Laserfiche Marketplace is full of pre-built tools to aid in this communication. For example, there are tools to send directly into Laserfiche from an MFP, electronic forms tools that will store to Laserfiche, and print capture tools that will convert a print output to images stored in Laserfiche instead of paper on a printer. Our case study for Compton Compressors will use such a print capture tool.

Laserfiche Certified Professional Program. Not For Distribution or Resale.

4.0 Case Study: The Capture Workflow Way

In section 2.2, the capture needs of Compton Compressors were broken down into specific, big-picture goals.



Rather than incrementally speeding up the individual tasks in the process, the whole capture strategy was reworked, focusing on the starting and ending points. The basics of their Capture Workflow system were laid out in section 2.2.2. Now, we will go into more detail about the tools involved and what they are doing.

You will notice that the end result is a system that is much less error-prone and makes content available much faster.

4.1 Initial Capture

Following the first tenet of Capture Workflow—digitize as early in the process as possible—the step of printing to paper will be eliminated. The meeting between management and stakeholders determined that after being scanned into digital format, there is no need for the original paper that comes from Sales Tracker system (1). Even if there is litigation, they work with the scanned documents. Since there is no business reason for the paper, there is certainly no logical reason to keep it around. In fact, there is no real reason to generate the paper in the first place. The content is digital to begin with and it will remain that way.

Compton Compressors will use a tool called PlanetPress (2). It is designed to capture print output, format it, and store it as images in a system like Laserfiche. In fact, it is integrated with Laserfiche such that documents can be named and have their metadata filled in when they come into Laserfiche. Any text contained on the sales confirmation is available to PlanetPress to use in metadata, document naming, etc.

4.2 Holding Folder

This initial capture stores the documents in a holding folder in Laserfiche (3). The time spent in this folder should be minimal. However, if something happens with other parts of the process—Quick Fields or Workflow running into an error of some sort—the sales confirmations are still in the system, searchable, and accessible to the internal staff.

4.3 Reprocessing

Documents in the holding folder get reprocessed by Quick Fields (4). The primary purpose of this is to redact the manufacturer's cost from the sales confirmations. Additionally, Quick Fields can find and tag the special orders that need to be addressed promptly. Once complete, the Quick Fields session will "store" the documents back into the holding folder, replacing the original pages of the documents with the redacted pages.

4.4 Filing

Once Quick Fields is done redacting the sales confirmations, Workflow will file them into their appropriate folders in Laserfiche (5). Special orders will be sent to the special order desk, while the rest of the confirmations will be filed based on the distributor that placed the order. Due to the way security is handled, only one copy

Laserfiche Certified Professional Program. Not For Distribution or Resale.

of the document is necessary—distributors will see black bars across the manufacturer's costs, while internal employees will be able to see through the redactions (6).

4.5 Exceptions

When Workflow routes the documents, any that have unexpected errors can be re-routed (7). They can go to a sales person, order desk, or any other location where they are seen by someone who knows the system and can quickly fill in the missing information, following the second tenet of Capture Workflow.

The exceptions will essentially be stored in another temporary holding folder, and an appropriate person will be sent an e-mail notification. Once the missing information has been added, they will be filed in the vendor's folder.

4.6 Distributors

At first glance, sending copies of these sales confirmations to the distributors does not seem part of the "capture" process. However, it is one of the end goals that can and should be handled by the Capture Workflow. In this case, Compton Compressors will use WebLink to make the sales confirmations available to their distributors (8). Once Workflow has filed the confirmation in the correct folder, it sends an e-mail to the distributor that includes a URL to the document in WebLink. Distributors will log in with a username and password and only have access to their own sales confirmations. Due to the redactions, they will not be able to see Compton Compressors' costs.

4.7 Audit History

As soon as the documents are imported into Laserfiche, they can be tracked with Audit Trail. Throughout the process, any updates to the documents are tracked, such as adding the redaction, as well as with information about who is viewing the document. This is the reason for Quick Fields to "overwrite" the pages in the original holding folder: it all remains a part of the original document. This satisfies the fourth tenet of Capture Workflow, that the entire lifecycle of a document should be tracked.

Laserfiche Certified Professional Program. Not For Distribution or Resale

5.0 Conclusion

Capture workflow is a system that extends beyond the functionality of the individual tools being used. It is the interplay between these tools, the way they can interact as part of a bigger system, that leads to powerful functionality. Viewing capture as a component of an enerprise content management system leads to a new way of thinking about the capture process in general, creating improvements in efficiency, productivity, and accountability. It is our hope that these tenets will be used the next time you are tasked with evaluating and improving a capture process.

Laserfiche Certified Professional Program. Not For Distribution or Resale.

Laserfiche Specialist Capture Workflow
August 2011

Author: Ege Ersoz, Pieter Nauta
Editors: Tammy Kaehler
Technical Editor: Miruna Babatie

Laserfiche
3545 Long Beach Blvd.
Long Beach, CA 90807
U.S.A

Phone: +1.562.988.1688
www.laserfiche.com

Laserfiche is a trademark of Compulink Management Center, Inc. Various product and service names references herein may be trademarks of Compulink Management Center,Inc. All other products and service names mentioned may be trademarks of their respective owners.

Copyright © 2011 Laserfiche
All rights reserved

Laserfiche Certified Professional Program. Not For Distribution or Resale.