

docSTAR 3.9



document management. **Easy. Fast. Smart.**



Value	★★★★★
Ease of Use	★★★★★
Ease of Administration	★★★★★
Compatibility	★★★★☆
Software Integration	★★★★★
Security	★★★★★
Dealer Support and Training.....	★★★★☆
Customer Support and Training	★★★★☆
Documentation.....	★★★★★
Global Business Readiness.....	★★★★☆
Upgrade Path	★★★★★

OVERVIEW

docSTAR 3.9, from Astria Solutions Group, is the latest version of a document management system that first arrived on the market in 1994. docSTAR runs in Microsoft Windows Server 2003 network environments and incorporates a Microsoft SQL Server database for enterprise-class data handling. docSTAR supports scanning of hard-copy documents and importing of electronic documents, and enables indexing, filing and retrieval of documents using templates that walk users through the process. It also enables printing, annotation and distribution of documents via fax and e-mail. The solution is available a la carte or in pre-packaged turnkey configurations that include the computer it runs on and most commonly used capabilities. According to the company, docSTAR installations in some 6,000 sites have more than 75,000 users combined.

What is Document Management?

Document management, which is part of content management (sometimes called enterprise content management, or ECM), enables users to organize and manage electronic documents created by a wide variety of applications. When used with scanners or MFPs, document management solutions help organizations convert paper documents into electronic files. This not only allows documents to be accessed far more quickly, but also enables users to much more easily collaborate on the information the documents contain.

Document management solutions are designed for companies that need to enable their employees to work collaboratively or handle document-intensive processes that require many people to access and edit documents. These solutions are designed to aggregate and share content created in nearly any software application and they often make files readable by users who do not have the associated software installed on their PCs.

New Features in Version 3.9

- Searches for text in annotations, not just documents
- Automatically files documents from within Microsoft Office applications using hot keys
- Optional docSTAR Records Management module enables the setup of retention and disposition policies for various types of documents, so that they can be kept for as long as they should be and either automatically deleted or moved to another folder after a specified time period; it also enables selecting multiple documents as a group for a retention policy “freeze,” for example, to ensure that any documents relevant to discovery in a court case are not destroyed.
- Optional Business Document Packages module enables creation of a checklist and an alert system to ensure that all the various documents required for a particular business process are obtained on time

Product Profile

Product: docSTAR

Version: 3.9 Workgroup Pro Package

Software Developer: Astria Solutions Group, LLC

Server Requirements:

2-GHz Pentium 4 CPU, 1 GB RAM (dual 2-GHz Intel Xeon CPUs recommended for enterprise solution), 40-GB hard drive space plus 2 GB of space per scan station, Microsoft Windows 2003 Server (Windows 2003 Server R2 for Enterprise package)

Client Workstation Requirements:

Windows XP SP2, Vista and Server 2003

Supported Devices:

ISIS-compatible scanners and MFPs; embedded control panel integration with MFPs equipped with embedded NSi AutoStore

Suggested Retail Price:

\$10,995, including CPU, support for up to 10 user licenses, one scan-station license and 160 GB of two-tier storage

Availability: The solution is available directly from docSTAR, as well as from docSTAR dealers and resellers.

Service: Annual maintenance agreements are offered by docSTAR and its resellers.

△ What we Thought



docSTAR is an impressive document management solution for Windows environments, particularly for insurance agencies that can benefit from the solution's integration with leading applications for that industry. This versatile solution, which accommodates both hard-copy and electronic documents, is available for a competitive price either a la carte or in bundled packages that include the PC it runs on, along with most commonly required functionality—scanning, OCR, barcode recognition, a range of retrieval methods and the ability to print, annotate and distribute documents via e-mail or fax. docSTAR is also easy to use and scalable, with a range of more advanced functionality such as records management, automated workflow and links to external databases and applications available as options. Scoring high marks in all of the most important aspects of BLI's evaluation, docSTAR earns an overall rating of 4-1/2 Stars.

Strengths

- Easy to use
- Versatile system accommodates both hard-copy and electronic documents
- Packaged turnkey systems support all typical needs, including OCR, barcode recognition, template-based scanning, archival and retrieval and distribution of documents via fax and e-mail
- Standard integration with Microsoft Active Directory and Outlook
- Optional integration with a range of business applications and databases
- Optional modules for records management and automated workflow
- Support for more than 150 native file formats with included viewer
- Patent-pending AuthentiDate technology and USPS electronic postmark enable verification that documents have not been digitally altered
- Two-tier storage provides redundancy

Weaknesses

- MFP control-panel integration only indirectly through NSi AutoStore
- Works only in Windows environments
- Solutions and documentation available only in English
- Longer wait times for technical support than with some other solutions, although only late in the day

Value



Pricing ranges from \$3,000 for an entry-level system that includes just the core functionality to approximately \$30,000 for extended functionality where needed, although larger installations can extend into the low six figures. The company also offers packaged turnkey solutions for workgroups (10 or fewer concurrent users), departments (15 or fewer concurrent users) and enterprises (more than 15 concurrent users). These packaged solutions include the computer the software runs on, one scan-station license, and a wide range of modules that are optional for users who just purchase the entry-level software.

Standard modules in the packaged solutions include advanced templates for scanning and filing documents, OCR, access management, audit trail, annotations and e-mail/fax/attaché for distributing documents or copying them onto a CD or DVD. Also included is a viewer and native file format support for more than 150 file types—basically everything typical users will need for an end-to-end solution.

docSTAR's biggest seller is the Workgroup Pro package, which supports up to 10 concurrent users and has a suggested retail price of \$10,995 including one scan station license and a license for 160 GB of two-tier storage. The Workgroup package is nearly identical, with the only difference being that the two-tier storage is not included. User licenses, which vary according to functionality, are priced at \$310 for a single View-Only software license (\$2,495 for 10 concurrent users) and \$625 for a View and File license (\$5,145 for 10 concurrent users). When the system is equipped with the \$995 WebView option, which enables remote access to the system over the Internet, remote users can access the system with a browser-based client that enables only viewing, which is priced at \$99 per seat. Maintenance agreements are priced at 12.5 percent of the total software cost, which is lower than that of other solutions evaluated, although note that it does not include the hardware. Hardware is covered under a 13-month warranty and resellers may offer their own maintenance agreements that include hardware. BLI feels that the versatility and functionality docSTAR offers for the cost make it an excellent value.

Ease of Use



docSTAR is very easy to use. Its clean, uncluttered user interface has seven large icon buttons in a column to the left: Scan, File/Inbox, Review, Retrieve, Log On, Help and Exit. Because of the clear text labels, users will intuitively know which one to select. Only the software loaded on the host system will display an additional selection for Administration (see "Ease of Administration").

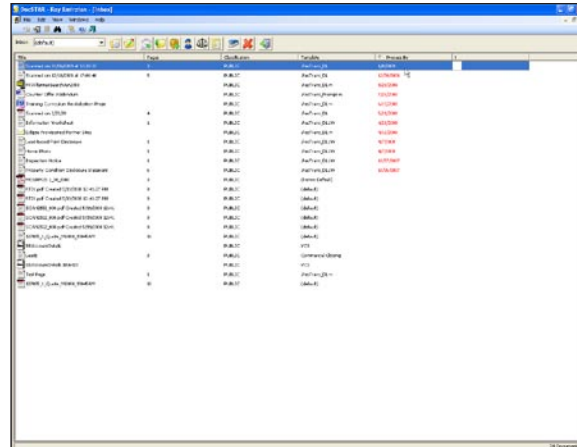


Easy-to-understand text labels and icons make docSTAR 3.9's uncluttered user interface simple to use.

Templates set up by either the vendor who sells the system or an administrator enable users to easily and quickly scan, file or retrieve documents without having to make numerous manual settings. For example, to scan a document, users select the template for the document type, which would include all of the pre-determined scan settings appropriate for that document type. The template could indicate whether pages should be scanned as single-page documents or as one multiple-page file; single-sided or two-sided; the destination inbox; security setting; whether it should automatically be filed according to pre-determined rules for that document type; and scanner settings such as resolution, paper size, brightness settings, and so on. Users then simply select Scan. If desired, they can select Preview Scan before scanning to ensure the document has been placed correctly.

In addition to supporting scanning of hard-copy documents from any ISIS-compatible scanner, the solution enables users to import electronic files. Importing of files can be automatic. For example, docSTAR can be set up to automatically watch a specific inbox or folder, so that whenever documents are placed in that folder, they are automatically imported into the system for processing. Users can also import files by browsing to them and by dragging and dropping them, individually or in groups.

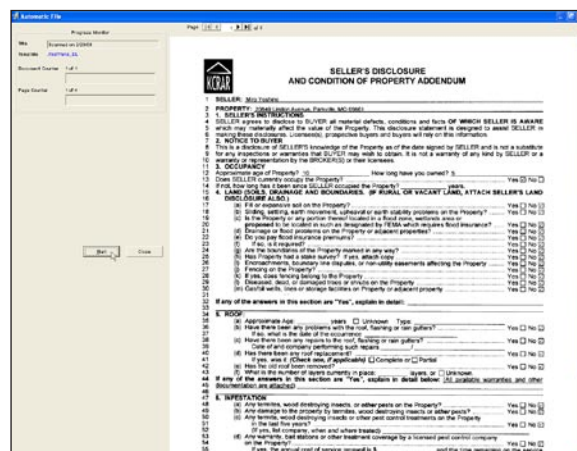
As with scanning, templates are also used to make filing easy by walking users through pre-defined steps for each document type. To file a document, a user selects a particular inbox. Any number of inboxes can be set up, whether by user, department, type of document, or other criteria. Selecting one displays its contents, with file types indicated by an icon.



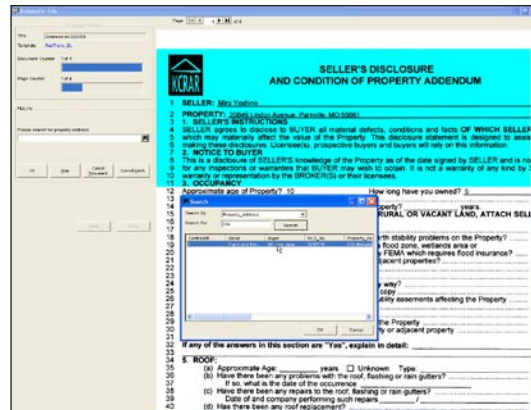
The contents of an Inbox can be sorted by deadline.

Because a template can also contain a timeframe by which documents are scheduled to be filed, users can easily sort the documents in their inboxes so that the ones that need the most immediate attention are listed first.

The templates walk users through all the index data that has to be supplied, in some cases zooming into the specific region. They can include drop-down menus so users need only select from fixed lists of acceptable data for that field, eliminating the need to type information. And with docSTAR's DataLink option (\$1,395), it's possible for certain fields to be automatically populated with information from external databases.



Templates for particular documents help automate filing; the selected document is displayed and the user selects Start to be prompted through the necessary filing steps.



SELLER'S DISCLOSURE AND CONDITION OF PROPERTY ADDENDUM

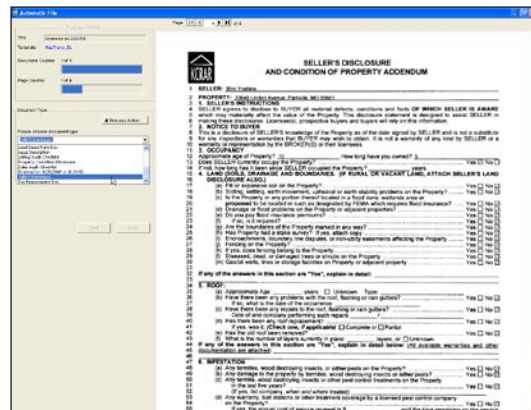
1. SELLER: Mrs. T. Jones
2. PROPERTY: 12345 Main St., Harrisburg, PA 17101
3. NOTICE TO BUYER: This is a disclosure of SELLER'S knowledge of the Property as of the date signed by SELLER and is not for any inspection or warranty (see docSTAR 3.9) to be used by BUYER. It is not a warranty of any kind by SELLER or representation by the BROKER/RETS or their licensees.

4. OCCUPANCY: How long have you owned? 3 years
5. RURAL OR VACANT LAND, ATTACH SELLER'S DISCLOSURE: No
6. STABILITY PROBLEMS ON THE PROPERTY? No
7. FLOOD ZONE, WETLANDS AREA OR FLOOD INSURANCE? No
8. WHY? No
9. ANY ASSESSMENTS AFFECTING THE PROPERTY? No
10. THE PROPERTY OR ADJACENT PROPERTY? No

If any of the answers in this section are "Yes", explain in detail:

11. ROOF: Approximate Age 10 years. Have there been any problems with the roof, flashing or rain gutters? No. Have there been any repairs to the roof, flashing or rain gutters? No. Date of and company performing such repairs: No.

When docSTAR is equipped with optional links to external databases, the template can automatically populate certain fields with this data.



SELLER'S DISCLOSURE AND CONDITION OF PROPERTY ADDENDUM

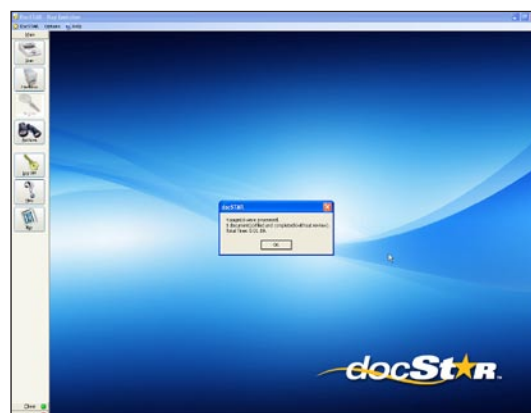
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9. ANY ASSESSMENTS AFFECTING THE PROPERTY? No
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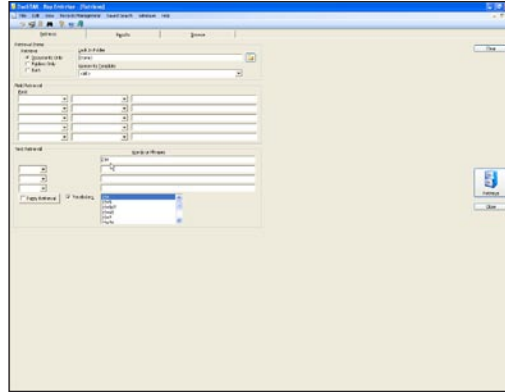
If any of the answers in this section are "Yes", explain in detail:

11. ROOF: Approximate Age 10 years. Have there been any problems with the roof, flashing or rain gutters? No. Have there been any repairs to the roof, flashing or rain gutters? No. Date of and company performing such repairs: No.

Drop-down lists enable users to select from appropriate field entries, reducing operator error and the number of manual keystrokes required.



Once the user finishes entering required information, this message confirming that filing is complete appears and the user simply clicks OK.



Users can retrieve documents using a variety of methods, such as by entering data contained in one of the fields or by using more advanced searches.

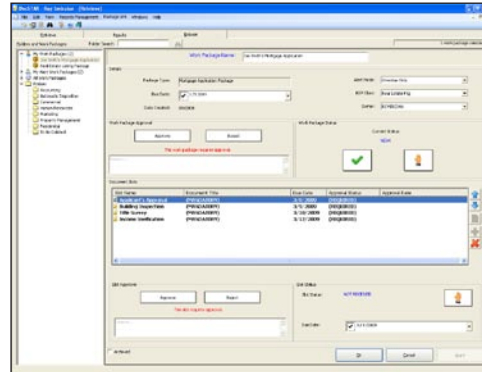
To find a specific document, users select the Retrieve button and are presented with the above screen. When either File/Inbox or Retrieve is selected, the large buttons disappear to allow for maximum screen area; the same functions are now accessible from small icons on a toolbar across the top. Documents can be retrieved either by fields that are automatically indexed (including the date a document was created, modified or last accessed) or by manually entered index information such as document title, security classification, keyword or phrase. More advanced searches can use And/Or, Within and Not operators. The solution also supports wildcard searches, whereby an asterisk or question mark can be used at the beginning, end or in the middle of a word to retrieve documents containing a portion of that word. The system incorporates OCR capability (using Nuance's Omnipage OCR SDK) so scanned documents containing text can also be searched.

As with the leading Internet search engines, as soon as a user begins entering a word on which to search, a list of previously entered words beginning with those letters is displayed. The user can simply select from the list instead of having to type the whole word or phrase. Text in "sticky note" annotations can also be searched.

Once the desired document is retrieved, a toolbar across the top of the screen enables users to view it (more than 150 file types can be viewed without requiring the native application), print it or distribute it via fax or e-mail. Thanks to the system's integration with Outlook, once the e-mail option is selected, the document is already attached and the user types in the address of the recipient. Another standard feature is Attaché, which enables a user to copy an entire collection of documents onto a CD or DVD, along with a viewer that enables viewing them. A typical range of annotation tools can also be used to annotate documents, including highlighting, rubber stamp and redaction (blacking out of private information).

Several optional modules also contribute to docSTAR's ease of use. These include Business Document Packages, which help automate workflow for document-inten-

sive industries, providing a checklist of sorts and an alert system to ensure that all necessary documents related to a specific workflow are received and processed on time. For example, a mortgage application might require that an applicant's appraisal, building inspection, title survey and income verification all be obtained and added to the package according to a set schedule.

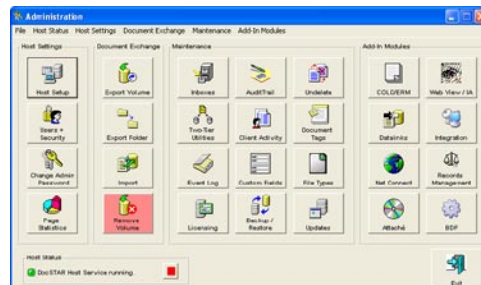


The optional Business Documents module can help ensure that all related documents for a specific type of workflow—a mortgage application, for example—are all obtained on time.

Ease of Administration



Installation of docSTAR, along with initial configuration and setup, is generally conducted by the reseller and takes less than day. Once that's accomplished, no special knowledge is required to administer the system; all that's needed is a good understanding of PCs and networking. Typically eight hours of training is provided, which includes training administrators in how to create, edit and delete templates; users just retrieving documents may only require 15 minutes of instruction.

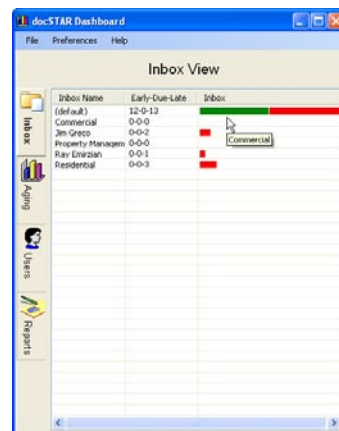


The administrative software is installed only on the host system.

End users access the system using either client software installed on their PCs or via a browser-based Web client. Administrative software is installed only on the host system. All administrative tasks, such as scheduling nightly backups and managing users and access rights, are accomplished from the administrative screen, which is organized into sections for host settings, document importing and exporting, maintenance, and management of optional add-on modules. A window on the lower left of the screen indicates the status of the system—whether it's running or there is a problem. The large icon buttons, coupled with text labels that are self-explanatory for most of the options, make it easy to find desired selections.

Licenses for users are in a hardware key inside the CPU and can be easily pushed out to users. Integration with Active Directory makes security setup easy, as user names can be imported. Users can also log on to the docSTAR using their Windows network user name and password. Page Statistics shows usage of the system such as the volume of documents being scanned and filed. As usage of the system grows over time, this information can prove valuable in determining scanner or storage requirements.

An optional Records Management module enables policies to be established for various types of documents, so that they can be kept for as long as they are required, but deleted automatically once that time period has elapsed. Another helpful feature for administrators is a dashboard that can show how efficiently work is being processed and where there might be backlogs, with some users behind on processing documents in their inboxes. This can help a manager redistribute work to ensure efficiency and timeliness.



The Dashboard enables an administrator to see where there may be bottlenecks and ensure timely processing of documents.

Compatibility



docSTAR supports scanning of hard-copy documents into the system from any ISIS-compatible scanner or MFP. However, unlike some document management systems, which support direct scanning of documents from the control panels of some scanners and MFPs, with docSTAR this is possible only indirectly through NSi AutoStore (that is, MFPs that offer control panel integration with NSi AutoStore, by extension, support control panel integration with docSTAR). However, because of the solution's import capability, documents can be scanned into a folder from any device, along with indexing data entered at the control panel, then automatically imported into the system.

docSTAR runs only in a Windows environment. While not likely to be an issue for most offices in light of the dominance of Windows, it should be noted that some other document management systems support other operating environments, including UNIX, Linux and Solaris. In addition, unlike docSTAR, some document management platforms offer Mac OS clients so end-users on Apple computers in an organization can use the solution.

Software Integration



In addition to integration with Microsoft Active Directory and Outlook, docSTAR, which is ODBC compliant, can also integrate with a range of business applications. Integration Agent, a \$1,995 option, enables integration with common applications such as Intuit's Quicken, so that if a user is viewing customer information on his accounting system and wants to see the physical signed copy of a document, he can press a hot key that brings up documents related to that customer. docSTAR offers optional integration with Microsoft Office applications, so users can save documents directly to the company's docSTAR file structure from within Word, Excel and so on.

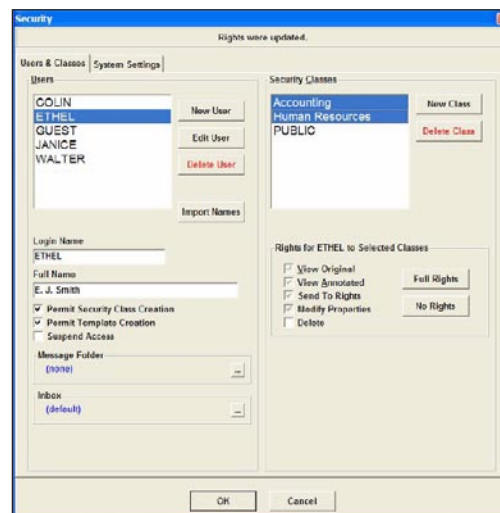
docSTAR also integrates with NSi AutoStore, AnyDocs, Artsyl and a range of applications used in the insurance industry. These include AMS Sagitta, AMS 360 and 360 Online, AMS AFW, AMS Instar and AMS Prime; Applied Systems Inc. TAM and TAM Online; eBix; SIS SEMCIPartner; VRC Velocity; and Zywave Brokerage Builder. Via integration with YouSendIt, users of that online file-transfer service can upload large documents to a hosted FTP site and send the user a link to the FTP site, eliminating the need to transmit large amounts of data.

Security



docSTAR's packaged solutions offer a range of security capabilities. Users can be forced to log on either using the same user name and password they use to log on to their PCs (via Active Directory integration) or by using an administrator-assigned user name and password, with login credentials protected by SSL encryption. In addition, administrators can assign security classifications to certain types of documents and ensure that only authorized users can access those documents. For example, a Human Resources classification could be set for resumes, employees' personal information, salaries, etc., and only users authorized for that security classification can access documents with that classification.

Further, users can be granted full rights to those documents or may be limited to one of five access levels: View Original, View Annotated, Send To (print or send via e-mail or fax), Modify Properties (to modify titles, keywords, fields or file a document) or Delete. Also, no user can permanently delete documents. Deleted documents are stored in a temporary trash bin; only an administrator can permanently delete them, or alternatively, choose to undelete them.



An administrator can specify which types of documents each user can access and can assign up to five levels of access for each.

Unique to docSTAR is the system's patent-pending AuthentiDate. With this feature, the binary digital value associated with the page, which is like a unique digital fingerprint—if even a period on the document is changed, the value changes—is wrapped in an encrypted time and date and embedded in the document when it is filed. docSTAR compares the embedded code against the document in its current state to verify that it has not been digitally altered. A similar feature is the electronic postmark. In this case, the embedded code is sent to a server on the Internet hosted

by the United States Postal Service so that verification that a document has not been altered can be provided by an objective third party (the USPS) instead of the docSTAR software alone. One-year licenses for the USPS electronic postmark are included in the maintenance agreement for the software and are renewed if the user renews the maintenance agreement.

docSTAR's Audit Trail feature enables an administrator to see reports that indicate which users accessed which documents and when and what they did with them. docSTAR's redaction annotation feature enables a confidential portion of a document to be blacked out so it can't be seen. In addition, documents are locked when being worked on, to prevent another user from making changes to the same document.

Company Profile

Vendor:	docSTAR, a division of Astria Solutions Group, LLC
Phone:	800-367-7799
Web:	www.docstar.com
Status:	Privately held
Founded:	Astria Solutions was founded in June 2007 and is owned by three individuals who have worked with docSTAR for between five and 10 years. docSTAR was originally founded in 1996.
2008 Revenues:	Information not provided.
Employees:	49

Dealer Support and Training



Training is required for dealers and resellers. In-person, regularly scheduled online training and computer-based self-study training options are available. Technical training for resellers is included in the sign-on package. An estimated 10 hours of training are provided. Sales training is usually specifically tailored to the needs of the reseller and is offered onsite by docSTAR's field sales team. According to the company, the core product training generally takes four hours.

Toll-free technical support is available to resellers from 8:30 am to 8 pm Eastern Standard Time. The tech support number is the same for resellers as for customers. Callers are greeted by an automated attendant and are prompted through a couple of rounds of selections to route their call properly (to identify themselves as either a reseller or end user and to indicate which docSTAR solution they are calling about). BLI called the tech support number a half dozen times at various times of the day, with response varying depending on the time of day. In the morning and shortly after noon, a friendly tech support representative answered in less than a minute, but on three occasions—all occurring in late afternoon or evening—we had to wait for seven or eight minutes, and in one case 19 minutes, which is longer than experienced with other solutions. While a recording periodically informed us that technicians were busy with other callers and that our call would be answered in the order in which it was received, there was no indication of how long the wait might be.

Customer Support and Training



In most cases, training and maintenance agreements are provided by resellers. For the small percentage of buyers who purchase the system directly from docSTAR, the company provides maintenance agreements for 12.5 percent of the total software cost, which is less than the 18 percent or higher that other vendors charge, although note that hardware is not covered. Customers covered under a maintenance agreement have access to toll-free telephone technical support from 8:30 am to 8 pm Eastern Standard Time. The number for end users is the same as for resellers. Customers also have access to Web-based support and to regularly scheduled instructor-led online training sessions and downloadable self-study course materials.

Documentation



Documentation includes a 164-page User Reference Guide and 56-page Administrator's Guide, which are provided in PDF format. The application also includes a built-in Help function. Both guides are well-indexed, easy to follow and well illustrated with screen shots, though they are only available in English.

Global Business Readiness



The company has branch offices in the U.S. and the United Kingdom, and docSTAR is also sold in Canada and the Caribbean. The solution and its documentation are available only in English.

Upgrade Path



A modular system, docSTAR can be sold or purchased with entry-level core functionality, or in packages bundled with most commonly used functionality, which can be upgraded with add-on modules. Note, however, that the Workgroup, Workgroup Pro and Departmental packaged systems are limited to 10 or 15 concurrent users depending on the package. The Enterprise packaged system supports more than 15 concurrent users; the customer simply purchases additional user licenses (see "Value").

The company has a Technology Steering Committee consisting of resellers and end users who provide input on capabilities that should be added to the system. Updated versions, which may include minor enhancements and additional functionality, are released twice per year at no charge to users under a maintenance agreement.

docSTAR Helps NY State

Provide Nutritious Meals to Children and Adults in Day Care Settings

The Division of Nutrition in the New York State Department of Health has been using docSTAR for the past 10 years to manage a program that ensures that children and adults get quality, nutritious meals. Based in Albany, the Child and Adult Care Food Program Bureau (CACFP) administers reimbursements from the federal government to some 1,500 sponsoring organizations—food service providers that meet the program's standards and provide nutritious meals to almost 17,000 day care centers and family day care providers.

Michael Sullivan, program research specialist, explained that the workflow involved in the program is similar in some respects to that of an insurance company: Sponsoring organizations submit claims for meals served to qualified individuals, along with required information needed to process the claims, such as meal counts and attendance, and the CACFP calculates the payments those organizations should get in return and submits approved claims to the office of the state comptroller, which then cuts reimbursement checks to those organizations.

Everyone Benefits

Sullivan said that the hook of the program is that day care service providers want to participate to get reimbursement, but their participation as a sponsoring organization allows a state nutritionist to examine their program and help them to improve the quality of their meals in order to meet the program's standards, so everyone benefits.

The claims, which typically consist of four to six sheets, are filed on a monthly basis, so it wasn't long after the program was established that the organization's file rooms became jam-packed. Even with only a year and a half's worth of paper files stored in a large room (the rest archived off-site), the manual files became too burdensome. Consequently, in 1999 the Division of Nutrition set out to acquire a solution to help accommodate the CACFP's growth.

Scalable System Grew With the Program

Electronic document management was a relatively new concept at the time, so the Division of Nutrition wanted to start conservatively, with an inexpensive system from a local company that could help the bureau work through any issues. Purchased through a competitive bid process from a company based in Schenectady, NY, docSTAR fit the

bill. Notably, it still does a decade later in spite of dramatic growth in the program, which has gone from processing \$100 million in claims annually in 1999, to \$175 million in claims today. In fact, Sullivan believes the system has been a major contributor to the expansion of the program and enabling processing of a higher number of claims, which he said, would not have been possible with a manual system.

Of course the solution today is very different than when it was installed in 1999. For one, jukebox-style optical storage was used initially, which made for slow access times to documents compared with today's hard drive-based storage system. Over the years, the division upgraded to a faster server processor and 800-GB RAID storage and utilized T1 digital lines, so that regional field offices could have remote access to the system via the division's intranet.

Currently, the division, which has 37 concurrent licenses shared among 80 people, uses docSTAR as a "true replacement for a manual file system with a lot of interaction," said Sullivan. Filing is only done by one or two people in the central office in Albany, while regional offices in Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse and New York City have remote access to the system via a Web client, only for looking up information about the sponsoring organizations. For example, the regional offices need to manage the sponsoring organization accounts (i.e., ensuring that in accordance with federal mandates, participants in the program are properly licensed and maintain certificates of authority to do the work they do with children and adults) and help them file claims, handle problems and get the training and information they need to provide nutritious meals.

There's also a team that scans about 17,000 pages a month into docSTAR. "We use it as a repository—a storage area—and a working file," said Sullivan. The department of health division is planning to expand the use of docSTAR to other bureaus, which will enable sharing of documents when appropriate.

Benefits Are Many

The division purchased the system to improve workflow, reduce paper usage and most important, to bring information on business transactions and sponsoring organizations to the fingertips of the bureau's nutritionists, fiscal clerks and other staff so they can make decisions about the program.

docSTAR has fulfilled all those needs. As noted earlier, its ability to grow with the organization's needs has helped the program grow substantially. Sullivan said, "For the amount of money you lay out, which is minimal as compared with well-known enterprise solutions, this solution fits for a small three-person shop to an 80-person shop and larger. You can easily add to the number of concurrent users just by installing more licenses—and the licenses are activated by a key in the server so it's really easy to expand the system to fit the size of the organization."

Also, over the years, the division's use of docSTAR has expanded from just the business transactions (reimbursement claims) to the point where now all types of docu-

ments that go along with running the operation—contracts, administrative letters, and so on—have a home in docSTAR.

Time-Savings and Improved Workflow

Sullivan explained that before docSTAR was installed, if the department had to perform an audit of a transaction, gathering the necessary paper files together, making copies and delivering those papers to the auditor would typically take from three to four hours to a day; the same process with docSTAR takes less than 15 minutes: The required documents are retrieved, printed or saved as a file and attached as a PDF to an e-mail and sent to the auditor. Sullivan added that the ability to comply with the audit so quickly adds credibility to the audit, since there is no time for someone to manipulate the information.

Sullivan described another example of how docSTAR has improved workflow. “Before we had docSTAR, we found that someone would have a file from a sponsoring organization on their desk and someone else across the room would need that same file to work on another aspect of that same sponsor’s account, so they would have to locate the file and retrieve it, all of which takes time. Now all the information they need is always at their fingertips for concurrent use by all team members.”

In addition, the system has reduced the number of paper files and created more space. The organization also uses docSTAR to OCR certain parts of forms—for example, the claim number on the claim form—in order to automatically populate the title box in the filing process, which has streamlined the filing process. This zonal OCR capability is also used on sign-in sheets to capture the number of attendees at training sessions conducted by the state’s nutritionists. Although theoretically docSTAR’s OCR capability could also be used to create a large keyword library for each document, Sullivan said the drain it puts on resources makes it too cumbersome.

Credibility and Ease of Use

Another key benefit of docSTAR for the New York Department of Health is its AuthenticateDate capability. Sullivan explained, “If you need to provide evidence in court cases, docSTAR has a time and date stamp that’s secure and is recognized by the U.S. Post Office as an accurate way of saying that this document was entered into the system at a certain date and time. The fact that it’s accepted in court adds credibility.”

Sullivan also praised the system’s ease of use, noting that users such as temporary employees and interns with no experience with the solution can work comfortably with it, retrieving documents with just 15 minutes of instruction. Administrative tasks such as assigning permissions and loading the right type of client for the function to be performed (scanning, filing, viewing) are also straightforward.

He stressed, though, that it's crucial for an organization to develop a sound filing plan with set naming conventions for certain types of documents. In fact, Sullivan noted, "During the first six months, we didn't feel like we did it right and we went back and redid it; now, we've got a filing system that's stood the test of time since 1999." In contrast, another organization he knows of did not put enough time into the library science aspect of developing a filing system. "They suffer for it now," said Sullivan, noting that its system has become a "catch-all, like a big filing cabinet that you still have to look through to find what you're looking for."

Fast Document Distribution and Great Support

Of paramount importance to the NY CACFP is the variety of ways in which docSTAR allows users to move information—whether via print, fax or especially e-mail. Sullivan explained that the ability to send documents as PDFs attached to e-mails means that file size is smaller compared to image files like TIFFs and JPEGs and that anyone can view the document—all they need is Acrobat Reader. "I like the way docSTAR fits with other technologies that are available," said Sullivan. "They've capitalized on those that are available over the long haul, like Adobe Reader."

Another big plus, said Sullivan, is the company itself. "They've worked with us over time, from 1999 to the present, to help us improve our process of records management."

Deploying docSTAR has also resulted in cost savings, not only in terms of time saved, but also in the cost of renting space to store file cabinets. Most important, though, is the growth the system has enabled. "We could not move the number of claims we process today if we had to rely on manual methods," said Sullivan. And that means that more children and adults are benefiting from the valuable Child and Adult Care Food Program.

Reseller Case Study: Mosaic Focuses on Vertical Markets and Providing a Good Customer Experience

After starting out as a dealer of copiers, printers and fax machines, Mosaic Corp., located in Atlanta, GA, made the transition to document management solutions 12 years ago when it began selling docSTAR. Over the years, the company eventually let go of the hardware aspects of the business entirely and now specializes exclusively in document imaging, capture, data extraction, and storage and retrieval solutions.

Although he looked at a couple of other document management solutions at the time, Jim Kingery, president of Mosaic, was most impressed with docSTAR and signed on as a reseller. “Fortunately, docSTAR was a good pick because they’ve stayed in the business and have become increasingly successful over the years,” Kingery said.

“docSTAR is one of the easiest to use solutions that can also provide some pretty sophisticated process management for an end user,” Kingery continued. “It can be deployed in a very basic way or you can take a deeper dive with it, connect to databases and automate processes to really turn a company around. We have hundreds of successful implementations where we’ve literally transformed customers’ businesses.” He added that its price/performance ratio is “really good compared to others,” noting that customers can generally break even within six months, with return on investment compounding over time.

Vertical Market Approach Has Many Benefits

Kingery explained that there are two ways to sell document imaging. One is to find as many prospects as you can through horizontal mass marketing and have as many meetings and demos as you can. The other is to go deeper into vertical markets by developing expertise in those industries. Having changed its strategy over time, Mosaic now focuses on a handful of vertical markets, primarily real estate and related businesses (such as lending and title companies) and hospitality. While Kingery acknowledges that the vertical market approach may take longer, he has no regrets. “You end up with more of a defined approach to business and repetition in the same segment,” he explained. “If you’re on your fifteenth sale in the same kind of business, you pretty much have everything mapped. Everything’s documented, you know the common document types, you’re able to share best practices, you’re evolving your approach and going deeper into how you can best meet the customers’ needs.” In addition, he noted, training and implementation are easier because they’ve been done before.

Mosaic initially gives a high-level presentation of document management concepts that it has customized for the target market. “It really delivers the message of where we fit in their environment, what we do, what they can expect to see and what their

return on investment might be,” said Kingery. “And we get into the numbers and cost and how it prices out in general terms. If they buy into the concept and vision, then we’ll do more of a proof of concept, running the software using their documents and showing customers how it would look in their environment.”

Focus on Customer Experience

Kingery stressed the importance of the customer experience to Mosaic’s approach. “Mosaic tries to create a customer experience that’s good through and through. Customers understand what the application will do, they understand how they’re going to be trained—the process we go through during implementation is documented—and they end up with what they expected, and usually more. They have a good feeling about the way the application works, the way in which it was delivered and the way they were trained.”

Every new customer is assigned a group of individuals from various teams at Mosaic who collaborate on an end-to-end implementation. The sales team creates the opportunities; the training team conducts the pre-implementation assessment of the customer’s exact needs to ensure the system is delivered with the right functionality and also trains end users; the technical team configures the servers and loads and configures the application, all of which is coordinated by someone from the administrative team.

“Because we spend a lot of time with vertical markets, we’ll show customers what might represent 90 percent of how they will use the system. And with their input, there will always be some additional personalization as we implement it for their specific needs,” said Kingery. “So rather than Mosaic having to reinvent the wheel each time, customers look to us to show them the best way to do things on our system, and I think that’s part of what they buy into.”

Mosaic generally provides a 30-day support program from the date of installation, but some steps, such as determining the work processes and document types, are confirmed with the customer beforehand, so that when the system arrives it’s configured and ready to go. Indeed, Kingery said that if Mosaic delivers a docSTAR system to a customer at 9 am, users will be scanning and filing with the system by 10 am.

In the first week, the company provides a few training sessions for the administrator, one or more power users, and end users who may just need to view documents. After one or more additional training sessions over the next three weeks, Kingery said, “customers don’t need us.”

Success Requires Patience and Experience

According to Kingery, 30- 60- and even 90-day sales cycles are considered short for document management solutions and make up only 10 to 15 percent of sales,

with the rest taking six months to a year or more and, in some cases, even two years. Again, the vertical market strategy can help shorten the sales cycle. "If you have twenty real estate offices using your system, the twenty-first, twenty-second and twenty-third don't seem to wait around as long to make their decision," said Kingery.

Noting that adoption of electronic document management has been slower than everyone in the industry expected it to be, Kingery said, "I've been 12 years thinking that any year is going to be the one that everyone goes crazy and invests in these types of solutions, but it's been a long, long, one-at-a-time kind of character-building effort to get the world committed to paperless solutions."

The positive side of imaging is the long-term nature of the business relationship. Kingery pointed out that customers tend to stay customers for a long time. They add to their systems, pay recurring support fees and over time lead to a very stable and reliable business model.

What's the key ingredient to success in selling document management solutions? For Kingery it's deciding that this is the business you want to be in and staying at it.

"Over time you'll end up with a lot of familiarity with the way processes work in offices behind the scenes, and it allows you to apply the application to needs more readily and understand more readily what it is customers are asking for so that you can give it to them without a lot of wasted time and energy."