How Sophos manages contract data with Aerofiler

Sophos is a leading cybersecurity company. Sophos makes security simple, and wants every organization to be protected by innovative, next-generation IT security – even those who don't have a huge IT staff. Sophos protects organizations of all sizes by making enterprise-grade security that is simple to deploy, manage, and use.

Sophos' legal team is distributed throughout different offices and serves Sophos teams around the world. They needed a platform that would help them complete projects that required reviewing and analyzing the content of their contracts.

The Challenge

As a multinational, UK-headquartered organization, Sophos operates in a dynamic business environment. Certain events, such as Brexit, acquisitions, and audits, require the legal team to be able to analyze a large volume of contracts. Prior to Aerofiler, such a process was predominantly manual due to the lack of systems that were designed to help them manage data within contracts.

In Legal Operations Manager Mark Nishihara's words, they needed a solution that enabled the legal department to "synthesize, identify and extract data elements associated with signed contracts" and, at the same time, "run filtered keyword searches on text within documents in response to … the changing needs and impact of the business environment." Any queries from their internal teams that required mining contracts for data were difficult to support given the amount of time those tasks would require given the absence of technological tools available.

Some of the specific improvement projects they wanted to implement included:

(1) Contract Metadata Management

(2) Performing Regulatory Reviews of Contracts

(3) M&A Integration

The Solution

After evaluating Aerofiler, Sally Whitehead (Global Director, Commercial Contracts) decided to "leverage Aerofiler in support of discovery, data identification & synthesis, contract searches." In particular, Sophos deployed Aerofiler on each project above.

(1) Contract Data Management. In under a day, Sophos loaded over 10,000 documents (comprising more than 15 GB of data and 55,000 pages) into Aerofiler. All documents were OCRed and all duplicates were filtered out automatically. Additionally, Sophos used the "Use Filenames for Metadata" feature to parse filenames and automatically fill in the title, counterparty name, and effective date for each document.

Use Cases

- **Audit contracts in response to a regulatory event**

- **Import, OCR, de-duplicate, and review large volumes of contracts**

- **M&A post-closing integration**

Speed & Power

Sophos used Aerofiler to upload and process 10,000+ documents (over 15GB of data) in less than a single day.

Following this, the legal team used Aerofiler's data review features to quality check document metadata. They divided the manual work of reviewing documents and verifying metadata between members of their contracts team, who were each located in a different time zone. This work was performed over the course of several days. Because Aerofiler's workflow tools made it easy for users to see what documents had already been reviewed, users could perform this work in batches, as time permitted in between their other job responsibilities. Sophos was then able to export all that metadata into a .csv file for importation into their end-to-end contract management system.

(2) Regulatory Reviews. Aerofiler's data management capabilities enabled Sophos to quickly review and track information in contracts. By using Aerofiler's search and filter tools, Sophos could quickly zero in on the documents they needed to review. With Aerofiler's "extract" feature, Sophos could run keyword searches across multiple documents at once and display all matches and the textual context in which they appear. On the same screen, Sophos could review the relevant language and perform metadata entry. Finally, documents that needed further actioning (e.g., amendments) could be exported to a report that could be used as a checklist.

(3) M&A Integration. Sophos was able to use Aerofiler to rapidly ingest target companies' contracts, instantly enabling full text search. Whereas it could previously take hours to find a set of documents (without being sure everything had been found), such searches could be run in seconds with Aerofiler. Aerofiler also let Sophos consolidate the contracts from its various acquisitions into a single system, instead of having to manage contracts housed in the different systems used by the different acquired companies.

Importantly, Aerofiler let Sophos perform all the activities above by themselves, without the need for any lengthy or costly system implementation work or vendor involvement to get started and deliver real results.

The Outcome

Overall, Mark reported that the results for Sophos were "rather dramatic" and that he had a "positive experience" with Aerofiler. With Sophos now having the ability to perform both basic and complex contract searches, as well as to extract data from contracts that was previously inaccessible, Aerofiler empowered "both legal and business teams with information to make decisions" which previously were "not possible."

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"The results were rather dramatic"

The Results

Using Aerofiler:

- Saved Sophos' legal team days of manual labor.

- Enabled them to serve their internal clients faster and better.

- Simplified their contract review workflow by moving documents with searchable metadata to a single system to review and manage their contracts.

Aerofiler is a next-generation contract repository that helps in-house legal teams to manage signed contracts and corporate records of all types, regardless of their source. By combining intelligent workflow automation, assistance, and AI tools with an industry-leading user interface, Aerofiler significantly reduces work and saves time compared to other solutions. Replacing folder storage, spreadsheets, and legacy contract management systems, teams use Aerofiler to file, search, browse, review, analyze, report on, and track key information in their legal and corporate documents.

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