

Industry	Manufacturing
Critical Issue	Inability to retrieve past customer invoices generated in PDF out of Oracle ERP without manually searching paper files.
Solution	A document management system capable of converting PDF invoices to full-text searchable records without the need to scan paper.
Result	Reduced document search time from minutes to seconds, and eliminated for the cost of third-party vendors used to locate documents. Improved efficiency, security, and compliance with Sarbanes-Oxley requirements.

Aventine Renewable Energy uses document management to automate financial processes, increase efficiency, and meet Sarbanes-Oxley requirements

In 1998, Aventine Renewable Energy, Inc. began its bio-products division to produce dried brewer's yeast and other value-added products. Today, as a leading producer and marketer of ethanol in the United States, the company supplies more than 500 million gallons of the nation's growing ethanol needs.

The problem: wasted time and energy managing invoices

For several years Aventine had been generating PDF invoices via their Oracle ERP system and filing them daily in a single file folder. Having 200,000+ invoices filed only by date, Aventine had a significant document management problem. To retrieve a specific invoice, someone had to manually search through file folders, each containing hundreds of invoices.

In March of 2005, management directed the IT department to find a solution. "It needed to be flexible, with an SQL platform, have a Web interface, be easy to use, easy to maintain, and expandable," said Trista Fandel, an application specialist at Aventine.

Fandel found that many products were insufficient. "Several companies could not provide the functionality without re-scanning the documents in order to render the document full-text searchable. Also, we needed a solution that could import other file types, not just PDFs."

Passing the test

After narrowing the options to three products, Fandel gave each vendor a scenario to use to demonstrate a solution.



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Trista Fandel

Application Specialist
Aventine Renewable Energy

Microsoft
GOLD CERTIFIED
Partner

Seamless
Windows
Integration

Fandel says, “ColumbiaSoft was the only vendor that used our specific data and developed a demo that used our data.”

Not only was Fandel impressed with the solution, she was also impressed that ColumbiaSoft “Created additional scenarios that coincided with our business practices and possibilities.” Ultimately, she chose Document Locator because, “It met every requirement we had. It was extremely flexible and could be adapted for any situation. I couldn’t believe that it did everything we needed and was so reasonably priced.”

A fully-integrated, efficient system

Document Locator has done everything Aventine wanted and more. To obtain a copy of a past invoice, Aventine would hire a third-party vendor to search for and generate missing invoices. Taking advantage of Document Locator’s functionality, Aventine has reduced its dependency on out-of-date in-house programs and no longer has to rely on third-party vendors to locate data.

Aventine’s efficiency and security have also greatly improved. Fandel reports, “We are able to search through more than 200,000 PDF documents in a matter of seconds, and we are able to meet Sarbanes-Oxley requirements for sensitive corporate documents.”

Document Locator also helps them store their documents more efficiently, says Fandel. “We recently discovered that we can access our repository documents through Oracle, which can then use the stored documents for supporting documentation. This wonderful discovery means we don’t have to store these documents in two systems.”

Continuing to expand

Aventine is planning to use Document Locator’s WebTools module to provide customers with secure invoices that they can access at their convenience. Fandel says, “Our use of Document Locator is expanding almost daily; it has become a very important tool in our day-to-day operations.”