

Whitepaper for Government
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IBM Information Management software

Case Management: Transformational Process Management in Government

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Executive Summary

Instead of being a single entity, government is really multiple units and processes contained within an agency. As such, there is a broad range of government functions – from academic research to military operations – that can be reduced down to a case file which can represent a citizen, asset, tank, drug submission, correspondence, task order, etc. Thus, case management is the life blood of government agencies worldwide.

Case management is really about process management within government. The challenge in the past is that people, process and policy seldom inter-operated in a way that would allow case management systems to increase operational efficiencies, increase worker productivity and reduce program costs as had been envisioned.

Enterprise Content Management (ECM) software integrated with Business Process Management (BPM) capabilities now allow people, process and policy to integrate, thereby providing value to the constituent/citizen, the case worker, government manager and IT developer. Since process can now be automated with the content that is generated around a case file; metrics, analytics and best practices can be derived from the case management system.

Existing case management solutions may address some needs; however, decisions and control are still being lost to technologies such as e-mail and other controlled non-documented communication mediums. For example, when decisions on case files are made outside of the case management system and in a completely different environment such as e-mail or instant message, both have different compliance requirements that may not be in alignment with the case management system. In order to prove compliance to policy and prove equitable treatment of a case file, government organizations need to align people, process and policy to ensure they can prove compliance as well as prove greater value for continued funding or budget expansion.

IBM FileNet Business Process Framework is a framework that gives governments the ability to rapidly build a case management system. A proven and documented framework allows the focus to be on the success of the case worker as well as allows the lines of business within government to successfully participate in the development of a case management solution that reduces cost, minimizes time and removes complexity of opening, handling and closing a case file.

People, Process and Policy

In looking at all the components in case management, it can be reduced to the case file. The manila file folder stuffed with data, reports, analysis, forms, payment receipts, tribunal hearings, etc. is the case file. This manila folder is then passed from one case worker to another, but only one person at a time. Once the folder has traveled its long and sometimes arduous journey it is then filed as a record, potentially having to be reopened in response to freedom of information requests or legal discovery. All told; we are talking about document management, content management, records management and e-mail management. The common word across all these areas is “management” and management is all about process. The reality of case management is the requirement to coordinate case workers with case management processes and policies.

Case management is about process management – the coordination of people, process and policy to effect a rapid outcome or decision.

Common functional areas of case management include:

Receive Cases: Initiate new investigations received through multiple channels including detection systems, internal audit, employees and citizens.

Distribute Cases: Using workflow rules, prioritize, assign and route cases and tasks to the most appropriate people or organization.

Resolve Cases: Send and receive e-mails within the system, record notes, evidence and activities and record the outcome of the investigation.

Report: Provide required data to regulators as well as develop ROI and other types of management reports for tracking business and efficiencies.

Regardless of the functional type of case management system, there are three key requirements of the system:

1. Work flow or business process management
2. Case management (document, records, integration)
3. Reporting and analysis

An effective case management system is about disparate organizations/resources having to reach an outcome quickly which has; until recently, run counter to how government programs were run. Silos, conflicting policy; and manual, paper based processes brought case management programs to a near standstill. Automated case management can be thought of as the next step in the development of an agile government. It represents the convergence of process, policy and people – something that in government has never happened before even though this policy-process alignment has been the goal of government department leaders and information managers for some time. It has been a challenge in the past, but now, with ECM technology, case management is ready for the enterprise.

Operational Efficiencies and Government Transformation

Operational efficiency is the primary driver around providing or supporting a government program; case management is about inter-operating with existing systems but at the same time focusing on automating more processes, thereby reducing the dependency on paper-based case files.

Operational efficiencies will drive return on investment both at the business level of a government program as well as at the technical level. Case management systems are the prime area within government where “words” and “numbers” must come together. Enterprise Content Management with integrated Business Process Management supports the interoperability of data and information and gives transparency to the case worker to provide rapid decision-making capability.

Case management is primarily about process management and coordination. As governments have transformed themselves, the need to align content with data has become the driving force for successful programs. ERP, HRMS and CRM rationalization has occurred as well as database applications being rationalized. The next phase of rationalization in government will be around process management and since most programs and services provided by government focus on case files, case management is the next arena of transformation for governments.

Whether case management is administrative legal or investigative in nature, the primary focus for success is to integrate people with policy and process; this will allow governments to achieve innovation and operational efficiency.

The Hidden Costs

Even though government organizations understand the cost of dealing with manual processes and existing management practices, there are many other ways the expenses related to a manual case management program can skyrocket. Case management systems should be viewed as a balance of time, complexity and resource cost.

Case workers dealing with physical documents on a daily basis are aware of the time consumed in closing out cases; however, the costs of sharing, storing and finding information and documents can quickly paralyze an entire department attempting to start, work and close case files:

- **Sharing documents among case workers**

The actual movement of documents and/or case files can slow decision-making capabilities but it can also circumvent policy and effective best practices. Even using e-mail to move case file information, which may seem to be efficient, can cause bottlenecks and a breakdown in the overall effectiveness of case file management. Additionally, agencies (especially in social services or citizen services) must be able to prove equitable treatment of all case file activity. Both physically sharing and e-mailing of documents alone does not allow for equitable treatment nor does it provide productivity metrics or an auditable process.

In order to reduce cost and loss of compliance tracking in a case management program, the process should be automated using BPM to enforce policy and compliance. BPM automation provides an auditable record providing proof of governance and equity of the overall system.

- **Storing the documents**

The physical space that documents require and the associated cost per square foot dedicated to holding these static documents can be astronomical and in an emergency situation such as a natural disaster, the costs associated with moving these physical documents can quickly destroy a program budget. Not to mention, physical documents are vulnerable to damage or destruction by the environment. For instance, should a pipe break within the storage facility, all documentation can be lost in a matter of minutes.

The use of electronic documents or forms reduces the output of physical documents that may require storage. In addition, as the case file is being created electronically, not only are the documents being created, they are also being indexed and classified for electronic storage, reducing the need for this to be done manually and therefore, reducing costs.

- **Search and retrieval of documents**

Another benefit to an electronic index and classification system is the reduced time required to retrieve documents when needed. The ability to manually index and search physical documents is limited and may rely on tacit knowledge of the case worker or program manager. When litigation or investigation requires document discovery the costs associated with “re-finding” physical documents can rapidly increase.

Case management systems that were implemented even a few years ago may not allow integration or federation resulting in yet another silo of information. This can result in physical printing and movement of paper.

By implementing an automated document and records management program, the costs associated with search and discovery are greatly reduced and by requiring open standards or interoperability of the system, one reduces the likelihood of creating another electronic silo.

Reliability vs. Efficiency

In every manual system that is built, as with case management systems, there is usually a compromise between the system being either highly efficient or highly reliable. In the physical world of engineering, one must give up some level of reliability to be efficient. Since the two requirements take from the other, manual processes and paper-based systems quickly suffer from the reliability versus efficiency conundrum. On the other hand, ECM-based electronic case management systems can achieve a more efficient and reliable solution, enabling a reduction in cost, complexity and processes.

Active Case Management: Bringing it All Together

As one rationalizes the processes associated with case file management, one realizes the need for structured and unstructured information to converge in order to provide increased service levels. In any information management solution, the need to inter-operate with existing systems and technologies is paramount. To make case management “active” it is necessary to integrate the case file into the processes and enable inter-operability with systems such as ERP, HRMS, CRM and other database focused applications. Once a case file is active, a case worker’s decisions can be made more rapidly and effectively.

From a planning and measurement perspective, an integrated ECM/BPM solution captures more information that can then be analyzed. Having process, policy and information automated provides the ability to assess how case files are being managed, but more importantly, it enables development of tangible metrics, thereby providing a strong proof point of the performance of the case management system.

For example, active case management can be used for fraud monitoring of case files to identify:

Between Citizens and Government Agencies

- Benefit claims without proper eligibility
- Claim benefit continuation after initial eligibility lapses
- Simultaneous, multiple “mutually exclusive” benefit claims

Between Citizens and Service Providers

- Virtual Service Delivery – beneficiary allows the provider to show “service delivery” without actually receiving any service
- Billing-delivery mismatch – beneficiary allows the provider to report/bill service delivery that is more than the actual service delivered

Between Service Providers and Government Agencies

- Service billed to the administrative agency is more than the actual service delivered

Monitoring these situations can be done with existing case management deployments or through manual processes; however, the cost, time and complexity associated with these tasks would be extremely high. The ability of ECM technology to bind all the necessary components together allows for more efficient case file management.

Case Worker Productivity and Effectiveness

On a daily basis case workers and case program managers must deal with increased expectations of service levels from citizens and constituents while at the same time dealing with policy and compliance requirements. The reality of government today is that silos of processes and information still remain, along with a constant changing political environment resulting in added pressure on the case worker which can slow down their decision making.

Automation with technology, such as ECM combined with BPM, can increase worker productivity through:

- Information transparency to make work easier for all types of case workers
- Self-service based applications to offload work demands
- Automating frequently asked questions into a knowledge base that is being fed from actual work within the case management system
- Automated workflow allowing the case file to become “active” and its content integrated into case file processes
- Back-office integration, with ECM enabling unstructured data to be connected with structured data
- Collaboration of case file information by using technology and open standards to streamline the flow of information both within a single department as well as across multiple departments

Type of Case Worker

There is increased expectation from government workers to automate more of what they need to do. ECM/BPM can meet these needs since government workers tend to deal primarily with unstructured data and e-mail in order to do their jobs, which means that decisions and work are being done outside the actual case management process. The demands of internal controls and eGovernance require that more decisions and work be done within an automated case management system.

To further help case workers be more productive and effective we must understand the reality of their work environment, understand the various types of case workers, and understand how ECM combined with BPM can provide greater transparency to better enable them. The following is a summary of the types of case workers and their associated tasks that technology can automate:

The **generalist** provides a broad level of service but cannot handle complex issues or exceptions.

- Case management collaboration/communication across programs
- Access to basic program policy/information in order to speed decisions
- Access to knowledge bases and pre-determined scripting help to increase productivity
- Workflow that allows redirect to experts or specialists to deal with exceptions within the bounds of the case management system

The **specialist** works within a more specialized area of service and handles the more complex issues and exceptions

- Specialized but repetitive services to deal with exceptions and complex issues
- Providing services or decisions within existing policy to ensure rapid compliance with program guidelines

The expert handles service request fulfillment when exceptions go above the boundary of the specialist

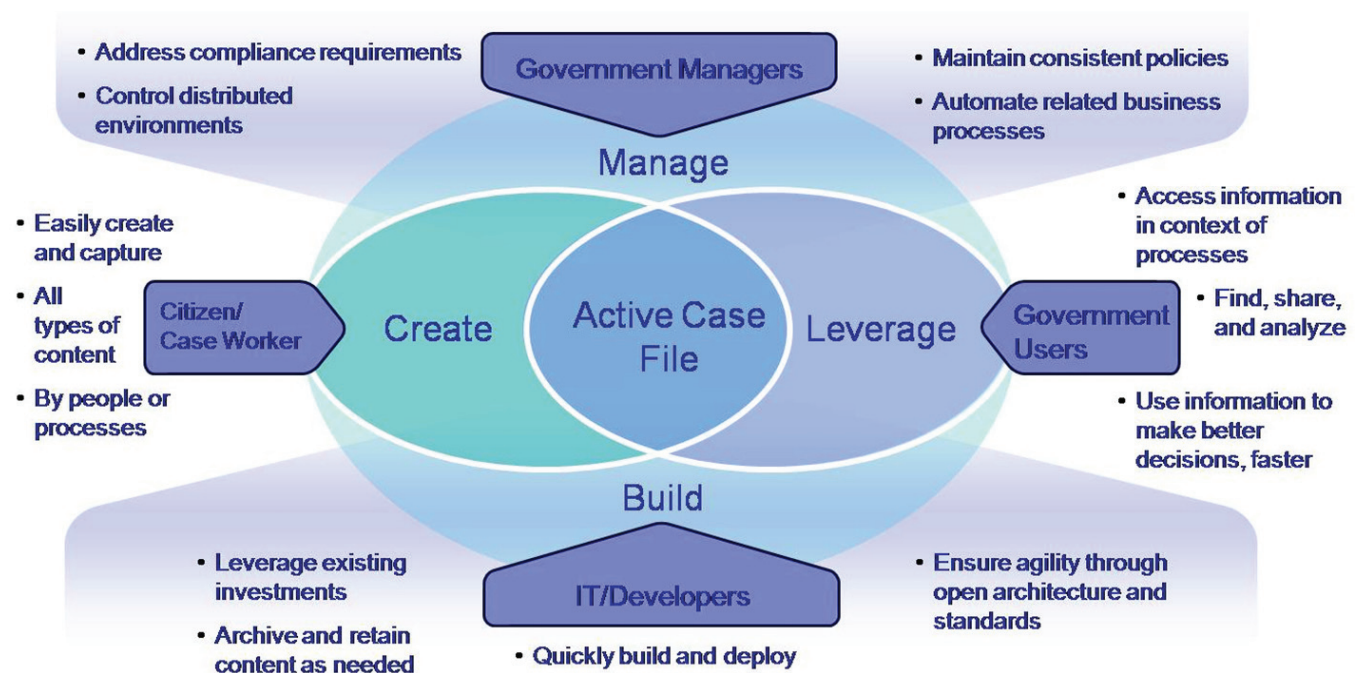
- Human judgment when the business process and policy boundaries cannot address the needs of the case file
- Decision making beyond policy when best practices and tacit knowledge is required based on experience
- Professional expertise needs to be supported and captured to allow sharing of best practices

The goal of ECM is to automate more process and content, thereby allowing more productive use of the case workers' time.

The Need for Transparency

Having transparency in a case management environment means having access to information that is timely, accurate and complete but it is also imperative that it is within the bounds of policy and process of the case management requirements. Transparency is having information access without being exposed to the complexity of retrieving and processing that information. Transparency is not just for the case worker but for management and the constituent/citizen as well.

In order to provide greater transparency for all constituents, the case file becomes central to case workers, managers, and developers of the case management system. As seen below, all constituents from the citizen to the manager have a vested interest in an efficient case management solution.



Operational Effectiveness for Case Management

In order to address the issues of operational effectiveness of a case management program or policy, one must address specific functional areas in a responsible fashion. One will not realistically remove all manual processes and physical documents and train end users in one fell swoop. As Business Process Management and Enterprise Content Management technologies interoperate with existing transactional systems like finance or human resources, there will be a move toward transformation and increased value along with a greater return on investment (ROI).

Transformation of Process and Policy Integration

Automated case management should be looked upon as the culmination of a government transformation starting from the capturing of information, such as scanning of physical documents, to automating capture with eForms to finally automating processes. This approach allows a government organization to further automate internal compliance or eGovernance requirements as well as records management and search – further mitigating risk and reducing cost.

Transformation = Government Success

As governments continue to transform the way they provide service (lower cost, increased service and increased operational efficiency), they continue to focus on a path of process, policy and people alignment. A case management program or system is the pinnacle example of this transformational model.

Governments in the past have rationalized ERP, HRMS and CRM systems as well as database and operating systems infrastructure. However, the real benefit of transformed government is the convergence of “words” and “numbers.” By being able to automate the world of content and data, programs can measure their success more effectively and therefore justify budget dollars and/or additional funding to increase service levels of the case management system.

In order to realize greater operational efficiencies, increased productivity and lower cost of ownership case management systems need to be built on an ECM framework that provides rapid development times and templates to allow IT and LOB to work quickly to develop robust case file focused applications.

Achieving Return on Investment

Enterprise Content Management and Business Process Management are two critical components of information management architecture. When government organizations focus on operational effectiveness and efficiencies they start to experience return on investment in two critical areas – business operations and technology.

Business Benefits and ROI:

- Greater transparency of information means more streamlined processes, thereby reducing the overall transaction cost of the case file
- Streamlined, lower cost delivery of business processes both inside and outside the government program/department
- Digitization of content and process means geographic boundaries and silos are broken down, thereby expediting decisions and outcomes of a case file
- Embedded collaboration across an organization's enterprise applications, content and processes to provide rapid exception handling and knowledge discovery
- Embedded training within business processes to keep skills current and assure organizational compliance

Technology Benefits and ROI:

- Simplified purchase, use and deployment of technology by implementing an ECM platform that provides greater functionality and interoperability for the overall case management program
- Reduced cost in the lifecycle since upgrades and reprogramming costs are reduced
- Reduced project risk with a single architecture and one technological platform
- Capability to provide deep business functionality to mobile users with a rich client experience across multiple devices
- Improved leverage of existing investments by componentizing and standardizing access to business information, application and content, thereby allowing a step approach in increasing technology without risking massive change management at one time

Benefits of an ECM/BPM Solution

Case management systems and solutions have been available for quite some time; however, they have lacked the interoperability between structured and unstructured information. Many existing systems today are not open, which creates electronic silos of information. As governments transform how they deploy and support case file operations, they are focusing on aligning program policy, case workers and government process. When ECM and BPM are implemented to support case management programs specific benefits can be realized such as:

- **Security:** Case workers have access to information based on preset authorization
- **Transparency:** Case Workers do not have to worry about where the information resides but only that it is complete and accurate
- **Collaboration:** With open standards, case file information can be shared across government departments or agencies dependent upon the scope of the program

- **Access control:** Privacy and access to information constraints can be enforced by policy
- **Reduced costs:** Case file information is entered once and shared as appropriate – eliminating the need for duplicative data entry
- **Communication:** Data can be transmitted between systems using a common interchange format
- **Metrics:** Since the processes are automated, the entire lifecycle and work effort can be analyzed and reported for optimization

The IBM ECM Solution

IBM ECM provides private and public sector organizations with the tools and best practices to develop case management systems more effectively and at a reduced cost. IBM FileNet Business Process Framework provides the synergy of people, process and policy required in government today.

Designed to accelerate the development of custom case management applications, BPF leverages tested, proven, re-usable code that forms the foundation of business process automation for all types of case management scenarios. The resulting IBM solution gives organizations better control of their business activities to ensure that cases are being processed in the most efficient manner. IBM users can easily and immediately locate and know the status of active cases, as well as prioritize existing cases. They can also add new data, documents, images and other information, if needed, to support the case.

Business Process Framework provides templates and best practices that give governments the ability to rapidly build a case management system that addresses the needs of the case worker but also the needs of government: increased operational efficiencies; increased worker productivity and reduced costs.

The BPF delivery methodology is composed of both industry best practices and IBM ECM best practices that allow IBM to concentrate on the unique characteristics of the organization's business rather than having to build a solution from the ground up. As a result, organizations can achieve automated business processes with a much broader base of functionality compared to what most organizations achieve based on the time/resources they invest during the development process. As such, BPF delivers enhanced capabilities throughout the delivery process.

Design – BPF enhances the design stage by understanding an organization's business requirements and how to best automate the processes it has today to achieve the highest level of efficiencies. IBM recognizes that many of these efficiencies are already built into the BPF's best-practices code base. While BPF provides an excellent foundation, IBM also recognizes that a successful project still requires an in-depth analysis of the organization's current processes, how the processes should operate at the end of the project, the levels of integration and data exchange with existing systems, and the overall benefits of the solution to the organization.

Development – The proven code-based BPF approach significantly reduces the overall development effort and provides rich, proven code with added functionality, as well as establishes a backbone for integrating additional custom code requirements. Much of the tedious coding usually required for creation of customized applications can be reduced since a significant amount of the code-based development process has already been done.

User Acceptance– Because there is less unproven, new code to test, user acceptance can be more productive. Organizations typically perform user-run activities that test the processing of a number of the organization’s case transactions from different areas of the business to ensure that everything functions as expected. With BPF, many of the changes identified during testing can be accomplished by configuration and do not require code changes, making it easy and faster to re-test.

Production Rollout – BPF simplifies training by providing a consistent user interface to the users. Recognizing that production rollout is one of the highest-risk phases of a project, IBM incorporates the rollout plan in its deployment of BPF to ensure a smooth transition to a full-load production environment. If deployment was not incorporated from the beginning, production issues that did not appear in the testing phase might suddenly surface, such as scaling issues once the solution is running many thousands of transactions each day. With the highly configurable BPF, IBM consultants can quickly fine-tune the solution so that it more closely matches the organization’s needs.

Of course, every organization has its own set of business rules and workflow processes unique to its department or agency. No single out-of-the-box solution can satisfy all government customers. BPF enables government departments to solve this dilemma by utilizing a solid foundation of proven, re-usable code that is highly configurable.

Conclusion

According to the U.S. Government Case Management Line of Business Directive¹ which is being sponsored by the Department of Justice and is primarily an investigative case management business model, we see that the intention of enterprise case management is as follows:

- Enable case management data to be shared efficiently within and across agencies.
- Improve effectiveness and efficiency of law enforcement, investigation and civil and criminal litigation case management business processes.
- Identify common case management processes across components and agencies that will drive system and function consolidation.
- Address immediate and long-term case management needs and opportunities at the Department of Justice and sister agencies.
- Provide guidance for future case management investments across the federal government.

¹ Source: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/egov/c-6-1-case.html>



The primary focus of the U.S. government model, similar to other national governments worldwide, is one of process and policy alignment to support greater transparency for case workers. Therefore, case management is really about process management within government.

Enterprise Content Management software integrated with Business Process Management capabilities now allow people, process and policy to integrate, providing value to the constituent/citizen, the case worker, government manager and IT developer. Since process can be automated with the content that is generated around a case file, metrics, analytics and best practices can be derived from the case management system.

IBM FileNet Business Process Framework gives governments the ability to rapidly build a case management system. A proven and documented framework allows the focus to be on making the case worker successful and the lines of business within government to successfully participate in the development of a case management solution that reduces cost, minimizes time and removes complexity of opening, handling and closing a case file.

About IBM ECM

As the clear market leader in Enterprise Content Management (ECM), IBM's ECM solutions help organizations make better decisions, faster by managing content, optimizing business processes and enabling compliance through an integrated information infrastructure. IBM's ECM portfolio delivers a broad set of capabilities and solutions that integrate with existing information systems to help organizations drive greater value from their content to solve today's top business challenges. The world's leading organizations rely on IBM enterprise content management to manage their mission-critical business content and processes.

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