

Wayne County, Ohio

When the Child Support Enforcement Agency (CSEA) of Wayne County, Ohio, sought a solution to remove workflow bottlenecks and improve service to citizens who receive family support assistance, it chose process and content management products from Lexmark, including Perceptive Content. The solution quickly integrated with the CSEA's legacy system to provide instant access to critical files, connecting staff to relevant information in a secure, electronic environment.

Challenge

As with most human services agencies, Wayne County CSEA faced many challenges typically associated with paper processes. Incoming mail represented one of the biggest headaches for the CSEA. When mail was delivered to the agency, each document was opened and manually routed to the appropriate case manager. Case numbers and other pertinent information had to be written on each document, which was dropped into an accordion file until staff members had time to route the paperwork. Files and folders accumulated in desk drawers, making information difficult to access; and because case processing is sequential, the entire cycle was delayed if even one case worker was behind schedule.

According to Deborah Watkins, Director of Wayne County CSEA, "If a file moved from one person to the next, or if that person was behind, it could delay each step by sixty to ninety days." One of the main goals of the CSEA is to provide a high level of service to its customers, and paper-based processes often caused delays and frustration for families calling into the customer service unit. Government-issued notices and correspondence can be difficult to decipher, which drives a high number of calls into customer service. In addition, if a customer did not have a document in hand, customer service representatives had to guess what the customer has received from the agency before they could offer assistance.

Another challenge was timely access to critical information by the CSEA attorney, who was frequently summoned to court unexpectedly or had cases added to his schedule when an obligor was picked up on a warrant. In this scenario, the attorney would call back to the agency for information, and staff would scramble to locate the case document or file, in hopes they could find it quickly. "When the courts are ready to have a hearing, they want to have the file immediately, and don't want to wait on an attorney to get it," explains Watkins.

Meet Wayne County

The Wayne County Child Support Enforcement Agency (CSEA), located in Wooster, Ohio, is responsible for administering child and spousal support orders that are issued through the county. The agency's core services include establishing paternity, locating parents and assets, enforcing family support orders and modifying child support obligations. The CSEA collects about \$16 million in child support payments annually and provides family support services in over 7,000 cases.

- **Location:** Wayne County, Ohio
- **Population served:** 114,520
- **Focus:** City government child services

Products in use: Perceptive Content

"When we're viewing a case in our legacy mainframe system, we're able to use Lexmark's Perceptive Content to quickly retrieve the related case and all its documents. This actually happens with the click of a button, and we now have all the documents at our fingertips."

Deborah Watkins,
Director of Wayne County CSEA

Solution

Needing a better case management solution

In 2010, the CSEA knew the time had come to make a change in the way they processed paperwork. The flood of paper documents was causing workflow inefficiencies and delays in customer service, as well as maxing out existing storage space. Seamless integration with the agency's legacy child support system was an important consideration, along with the ability to easily link documents and data to the appropriate case.

"At that time, we were looking at some significant federal budget cuts on the horizon, and we knew we could not maintain this inefficient way of managing our cases," says Watkins. "We also wanted to improve our ability to provide case management services, and reduce our environmental footprint." After researching technology solutions to address these challenges, the CSEA chose Perceptive Content from Lexmark. The solution has transformed the way staff handles daily tasks and significantly improved collaboration across the agency. According to Watkins, "When we're viewing a case in our legacy mainframe system, we're able to use Lexmark's Perceptive Content to quickly retrieve the related case and all its documents. This actually happens with the click of a button, and we now have all the documents at our fingertips."

Results

Better balancing workload

The solution enables supervisors to quickly re-assign tasks and case work, if a staff member is busy or out of the office. Instant access to documents and cases by multiple people also means the right person has access to the right information, regardless of location or the device being used. The automated workflow function in Perceptive Content ensures that important follow-up procedures no longer fall through the cracks. For example, when the agency modifies a court order and sends out notices to a customer, tasks are scheduled automatically through workflow rules, which keeps case processing accurate, secure and on track.

In addition to streamlining workflows, Lexmark solutions give supervisors a better way to monitor cases and supervise staff workloads. Managers utilize dashboards to generate reports on daily business activities to determine if caseworkers are behind, allowing for easy reallocation of resources. Lexmark technology is also used to drive performance improvements in the collection of current support.

"We were able to see a correlation between how well people were processing their tasks, and how much support they were actually collecting. It was a real eye opener for our staff when we were able to compare case managers who were doing like duties, and being able to overlay that with our performance percentages," explains Watkins.

Enhanced case monitoring and improved support collection

In addition to streamlining workflows, Lexmark solutions give supervisors a better way to monitor cases and supervise staff workloads. Managers utilize dashboards to generate reports on daily business activities to determine if caseworkers are behind, allowing for easy reallocation of resources. Lexmark technology is also used to drive performance improvements in the collection of current support.

"We were able to see a correlation between how well people were processing their tasks, and how much support they were actually collecting. It was a real eye opener for our staff when we were able to compare case managers who were doing like duties, and being able to overlay that with our performance percentages," explains Watkins.



Simple Tools to Close Information Gaps

Easy-to-use tools within Perceptive Content, including annotations, stamps and checkmarks, have simplified routine tasks and accelerated processing at CSEA. For instance, electronic stamps help the agency comply with IRS rules on blocking sensitive federal tax information on forms. The highlight function, along with electronic sticky notes and text boxes, allow caseworkers to flag relevant information in lengthy court orders for faster review, and electronic signatures can be automatically applied to customer notices generated within the solution. In addition, one key area of improvement was the elimination of hard copy faxes. Rather than manually sending and receiving faxes, CSEA now uses Perceptive technology to capture faxes directly into workflow queues for immediate processing and linking to the appropriate case.

Saving 74% on rent

Leveraging electronic workflow and tools has reduced paper usage at CSEA, which translates to reductions in physical storage space. Earlier this year, the agency downsized from a 10,000 to a 3,000 square foot office space, and realized a 74% savings in monthly rent. Improved collaboration and instant access to documents and information from any location means more employees can work remotely, for even greater savings.

Helping Families, Improving Satisfaction

Perhaps the greatest advantage of deploying Lexmark solutions was the improvement in service to Wayne County's CSEA customers. Before the solution was implemented, it was difficult for CSEA staff to keep up with referrals; at one point, the agency was over 1,000 referrals behind, and was unable to meet mandatory timeframes for opening and processing cases. Since the technology upgrade, the agency has established child support orders in over 97% of cases, up from 89% of cases before the solution was deployed. The customer service unit has reduced wait times for customers, and is able to instantly access case files through the Lexmark solution.

According to Watkins, "We went from being unable to handle the work to having the highest support order establishment rate in Ohio, which we thought was pretty impressive." The improved ability to establish paternity and process child support orders has made a measurable difference in the lives of families in Wayne County receive services from the CSEA.

"Children need to receive this support," explains Watkins. "Parents who receive this support need to be able to rely on the fact that it will come in consistently, because they are meeting very real and very relevant needs for children: housing, food and clothing. So it's important that our agency is able to operate efficiently, and react quickly to changes."

"We went from being unable to handle the work to having the highest support order establishment rate in Ohio, which we thought was pretty impressive."

Deborah Watkins,
Director of Wayne County CSEA

Read and watch more stories of success from our global customers at www.lexmark.com/success

