



Customer Highlight: Shell

The little Dutch boy with his finger in the dyke – the image is drastic but clear. What began as a stop-gap measure to remedy a very pressing problem has become the model for best practice in Shell's contract automation process.

In 2001, Shell undertook several strategic initiatives that left its Retail Real Estate group with the daunting task of quickly processing a very large number of property sale transactions. The Real Estate group needed a way to triple its output with no new internal staff, using new outsourced partners instead of previously held field positions and all in a short time frame.

A major objective of the property disposition program was to find a way to utilize real estate brokers as outsourced partners in several capacities including preparation of contracts in addition to finding buyers. The challenge to this objective was that contract compliance and review of outsourced work would put an even heavier burden on the internal legal staff responsible for making the deals happen in a compliant and consistent manner. The group had to do more volume, with less manpower, in a shorter time frame, while improving the quality of the output.

Therefore, the project objectives were to:

1. Find an easy, intuitive way for brokers and limited field staff to prepare contracts;
2. Find a way to protect and secure template contracts from unauthorized changes by the brokers, purchasers or field staff;
3. Find an efficient (both cost effective and time sensitive) way in which the contracts could be reviewed and approved as to form; and
4. Ensure the long term integrity of template contracts for contract compliance, tracking, and reporting.

The search was on for an automation tool that was easy to use, fast to implement, cost effective, and secure. Several options from the contract lifecycle management arena were reviewed and AccuDraft's DocsEngine solution was chosen. It was simply the only automation tool in the market that could meet all of Shell's objectives.

DocsEngine:

- Used Shell's business rules to create an easy-to-use interview for the brokers and field staff to create intuitive contracts. To the users, it was as easy as answering questions that they understood with answers that they knew. Behind the scenes, the complex logic of the software allowed Shell's detailed, state-specific, legal contracts to remain compliant while supporting the intricacies of each deal.
- Delivered a customized portal and password secure server so that access to the system wasn't limited by time or location. Anyone with a secure password and an internet connection could create a contract, anytime. Limitless access was provided to those approved, while the templates and contracts created were secure and protected.
- Provided a cost effective approach with its software-as-services model. Shell

DocsEngine from AccuDraft helped Shell's Real Estate Group meet its sales goals, and save more than \$2.5 million.

paid a monthly services fee based on the number of users, with no up-front software costs and no long-term commitments. It also allowed the Real Estate group to move forward quickly on the project without burdening their IT infrastructure.

- Offered a time sensitive way for contracts to be reviewed and approved by legal. With the legal and business rules logic component of the DocsEngine offering, the laws surrounding complex real estate transactions were captured in the automation process and duplicated each time a contract was created. This allowed the lawyers to focus on those elements of each transaction that were unique, minimized review times on standard language, and maximized total lawyer output.
- Gave Shell confidence that the contracts created from Shell's own master templates would contain all necessary disclosures, mandatory compliance language, and state-specific requirements each time they were produced in the system. Since the creation process was automated instead of manually manipulated, the errors in the previous "cut and paste" method of contract terms and clause libraries were eliminated. This also allowed Shell to track contract terms and obligations and produce reports.

With DocsEngine, the group handles more output, with less manpower, in a shorter timeframe, while improving output quality.

Shell's Retail Real Estate group met its sales goals for 2002 and 2003, and saved an estimated \$2.5 million dollars in the process. And the group still uses the system today to increase productivity and improve efficiency. The property disposition project resulted in improved financial performance, increased compliance, successful project cost management, technology implementation and best practice for contract processes.

And that is, as someone famous likes to say, the rest of the story.

About AccuDraft

AccuDraft is a leading provider of Web-based Contract Lifecycle Management solutions built on unique, leading-edge rules-based capabilities. Since 1992, AccuDraft solutions have helped hundreds of clients – from small organizations to Fortune 500 companies – increase efficiency and reduce costs and risk by transforming the way they create, track, and manage their most critical business documents.

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