

## What Worldox Will Do for Your Firm

Human beings have always organized documents—from the great library at Alexandria to the 17th-century undertaking by Gottfried Leibniz to organize all the knowledge in the world using a coded language that we would recognize today as a computer program. Such grand schemes resurface now in the form of “universal search,” including the ability to search cloud repositories and social media—but on a practical level, how do you organize your documents?

In this digital age, the volume of information is an avalanche that many computer users spend hours vainly attempting to escape. Multiply this by the number of lawyers in a law firm, and the mountain of documents is enormous. It is not unusual for a 25-user law firm to have a half-million documents. Entropy reigns.

If you think of your entire document store as an enormous book and you want to find something in it, there are three ways to proceed:

1. You can read the whole book. Obviously, this is very slow.
2. You can look through the table of contents. This is like scrolling up and down, in and out, of a directory structure, which is the standard method of many firms. Better, but still slow and somewhat hit-or-miss.
3. You can look up what you want in a hyperlinked index. This latter is what Worldox provides. It is much faster and more efficient than older methods. You don't really need to know anything about the directory structure. LexisNexis, Westlaw, and Google don't use directory structures (or at least they are not exposed to end users), but they get the job done.

A computer is not a filing cabinet. You need a new paradigm. Think of Worldox as a structured Google for your documents.

## What Do Firms Actually Do Right Now?

In the pre–document management system world, people were accustomed to using a table of contents (the directory structure) in that giant book containing documents. Or, to use a legal format, looking through Chapter 1, 1.1, 1.1.1, 2, 2.1, and so on.

Many firms that have not adopted a document management system (DMS) attempt to mimic the client-centric organization that a DMS would impose. A drive letter pointing to the server is set to `\\server\client-docs`, and users are instructed to store documents under some variant of `client\matter\doctype\yyyy-mm-dd-name.doc`. In some cases, the information technology (IT) department is even responsible for creating a default empty structure when a new matter is opened. To retrieve a document, users scroll through the directory tree. The amount of time spent opening subdirectories, scrolling up and down, and poking around to try to determine where something has been filed makes this grossly inefficient. Virtually all larger firms have a DMS due to their enormous volume of documents. A single person might be able to manage his or her own documents, but there is no way millions of documents generated by dozens or hundreds of individuals can be managed manually. Large firms have no choice but to use a DMS.

Smaller firms have been able to successfully compete in other areas by using advances in legal technology to be quicker on their feet. Why should this not extend to document management as well? Some of my best clients have been lawyers who came from larger firms and started or joined smaller firms where they insisted on having the advantages of the DMS they had enjoyed at the larger firms.

## The Fatal Flaw in Manual Systems

Any manual or store-and-forward system for managing documents has fundamental weaknesses and limitations. First, it is difficult to impossible to guarantee that *all* your electronic data—such as faxes, emails, and

scans—are stored properly. Second, such repositories are searchable only in very limited ways. For example, you can't use Boolean operators to search for all the pleadings done from six months to a year ago that contain certain language.

But aside from these systems' weaknesses and limitations, the fatal flaw in all of them is reliance on people to follow the prime directives faithfully. In addition to staff or lawyers who "can't be bothered" or "are too busy" to put things in the right place, there is human error and procedures for scans or emails that are incompletely defined or not defined at all. Worldox helps prevent these failures, and the search function compensates for them if they do occur.

The losses inherent in this kind of manual setup are considerable: the time it takes to find something; misplaced files; not being able to locate that old contract that had just the language needed for a new one; retyping missing documents. The turning point in favor of a DMS at one firm that implemented Worldox came when, for the *n*th time, the office manager had to spend hours searching for a lost directory that had been dragged and dropped who knows where.

A common workaround is to have computer shortcuts to some of your most frequently used forms and documents. When I go into a firm and see someone's computer with a dozen or more shortcuts to specific forms or documents on the desktop, I know the person is making a valiant effort to fight chaos. But this should not be an individual responsibility.

## **What Worldox Will Do for Your Firm**

Worldox is the traffic cop on your information highway. It organizes, stores, and retrieves all your electronic data. All documents and the profiles describing them are full-text indexed with advanced searching capabilities. Thus document management is a standardizing and centralizing force that maximizes the efficiency of your system. Worldox also enhances your firm's ability to meet regulatory compliance and e-discovery requirements, which may become increasingly important.

Most significant is the fact that Worldox has its own enforcement mechanism: staff and lawyers have no choice but to work with the DMS, whether they are using word processing, spreadsheets, presentations, PDF

files, scans, or emails. Firms sometimes want to implement Worldox for occasional use. But Worldox is an all-or-nothing proposition.

A number of practice management programs with document management features and other document management programs (such as SharePoint or NetDocuments) are “store and forward”—users are not obliged to use them—or have to take an extra step to store files. This means that the integrity of the data store is compromised: the firm cannot guarantee that *all* its files are stored within the DMS. This can be very expensive when it comes to discovery issues or when trying to be absolutely certain that documents can be located internally.

## How Worldox Will Make Your Life Easier

**Client-/matter-centric approach.** Many individual lawyers use the Outlook inbox as their “DMS,” often storing 10,000 or more emails there. The problem is that emails in Outlook are organized by each individual user; there is no automated way to locate all the emails across the firm relevant to a particular matter. DMSs like Worldox, in contrast, tend to be client- or matter-centric: everything is organized around clients and matters. Thus it is easy for the system to answer the command “Show me all the documents, scanned items, and emails” for client X or matter Y.

**Greater speed of document retrieval.** In a manual system, the user must know where an existing document has been stored and what its name is. While most users are fairly efficient at finding their own documents, searching for one created by someone else can take a significant amount of time, which is bound to be greater than the two or three seconds (or less) it takes Worldox to find something. To repeat: Think of Worldox as Google for your documents.

The fact that profiles and the full text of all documents are indexed means that you can define a search using Boolean operators to see at a glance all files of a particular type that satisfy certain conditions (e.g., all briefs done in 2018 that contain the term *amputation* within ten words of *reckless*). Full-text indexing also helps in conflict checking, for example, by searching on all documents that refer to a particular business or person. When you do a full-text search and then view a file in the list of search results, it is opened at the specific text you searched for. Some DMS programs, such as Metajure, offer full-text indexing of all your documents,

including documents on individual PCs and cloud repositories, locations that Worldox does not touch. However, they do not provide as granular and detailed searches as Worldox does.

**Avoidance of human error.** The time lost in a manual system due to human error is substantial. A user may have stored a document in the wrong place by accident, forgotten what a file was named, or dragged and dropped an entire directory to some new location without even being aware of it. Worldox eliminates these errors because users are not responsible for creating a file structure in Windows Explorer when saving a document; they simply fill out a profile form with the appropriate information. When all users are obliged to use the same system, all documents are organized the same way. With Worldox, you will never lose another document.

**Email integration.** As more and more communications and file exchanges take place via email, integration of your email system into your DMS is increasingly important. With the current rules on e-discovery, one could even argue that it might be crucial. Having all the firm's emails in Worldox provides a good e-discovery base and is certainly more efficient than having some emails in Worldox and some in Outlook. In addition, putting emails into Worldox overcomes many of the problems associated with personnel turnover: new lawyers on a case have easy access to all materials.

**Control over document access and ethical walls.** Worldox typically gives a firm much better control over document security and access than does a manual system. Confidential documents can be made available only to the people who need to see them, whether they are responsible for accounting, human resources, trusts and estates, or highly confidential client matters. In addition, Worldox can create ethical walls if needed.

## What Will Worldox Cost (Save) the Firm?

A manual system is frequently justified on the grounds that it is "good enough." From a business perspective, this claim implies that the cost of a manual system's inevitable lost time and productivity is less than the cost of implementing a DMS. For example, consider a firm where the average lawyer bills \$200 an hour and loses an hour each week to inefficiency (over and above the time that would be lost even using a DMS).

The firm's dollar-value losses are about \$10,000 (50 hours) per lawyer per year. The cost of implementing a DMS, including installation, customization, and training, will be at most \$1,000 to \$1,500 per user. When analyzed this way, it becomes clear that the "good enough" argument is actually costing a firm tens of thousands of dollars per year. The failure to make this kind of return-on-investment calculation is testimony to the fact that many law firms are still not run as if they were businesses in a time when good business practices are critical to their survival.

## **What's New Since the Release of Worldox GX4**

The initial release of Worldox GX4 featured a number of major improvements over Worldox GX3: the ability to type in just the client or matter name to fill in profile information; combined metadata and text search with "snippets" displayed à la Google; enhanced Favorite Matters; the ability to use Categories as added metadata "tags"; and more.

Since GX4 was released, Worldox has continued to make major improvements, apparently following the Microsoft model: no new Windows version after Windows 10, just improvements. In addition to more routine bug fixes and minor back-end improvements, here are some of the new features.

WDU 10 (Worldox Update 10, released in June 2016) implemented the Indexer as a service. While this does not affect end users directly, it offers a major improvement in Indexer security, reliability, and functionality. It can now be monitored from anywhere on the network by anyone with the proper permissions.

WDU 14 (released in early 2019) offers major new options:

- Task and Notify functions have been moved from the Productivity Suite to the main program (i.e., they are now available at no extra cost).
- Web 3.0 provides brand-new web-based access to the main Worldox document store. This is available at no extra charge (previously web access cost about 15 percent on top of the main program expense), although it does require a fair amount of setup.

- Major improvements have been made to Outlook integration and heuristics, which enable the Outlook-Worldox link to be automated, including the ability to mark any Outlook folder that provides the ability to file emails to Worldox in a single drag and drop. You can now file emails from smartphones whether Outlook is running on the desktop or not.
- You can now drag and drop individual files to Worldox from within a zip file.
- Worldox Connect, in conjunction with Workshare, offers full-fledged Client Portal and metadata scrubber options.

## Cloud-Based vs. On-Premise

In the last several years, cloud-based programs have become very fashionable. In the document management area, NetDocuments in particular has made significant inroads. But fashion aside, what are actually the relative advantages and disadvantages of cloud-based and on-premise software? It turns out that the key characteristics of the respective programs are both their main strength and a central weakness.

Cloud-based programs mean that you can work from anywhere. Many attorneys value the ability to access their system from a hotel or courtroom. It also tends to have advantages in terms of scalability and the ability to share documents with clients or others (albeit in a limited fashion). Lastly, cloud-based programs can roll out bug fixes and make adjustments automatically for all clients.

On-premise programs tend to be more customizable and full-featured (although cloud-based programs are catching up in this area as they become more mature). However, remote access can be a problem and/or entail additional cost for third-party portal programs to share documents with clients.

### Cost and Response Time

The bottom line is that cloud-based programs will *always* be significantly slower than on-premise systems, simply because the best on-premise response time is currently about ten times that of the fastest Wi-Fi speeds.



Sure, it's great to access your documents from a hotel, but do you want to have those response issues every day for the entire firm? And, of course, any time a senior partner starts uploading vacation photos or streaming video (even if they aren't supposed to), the entire staff may take a performance hit.

The start-up cost for cloud-based SaaS (Software as a Service) programs is significantly lower than for on-premise systems. However, over a three- to five-year period, rental SaaS programs will always be more expensive than purchase, even when additional factors such as IT costs are factored in.

Ease of access to cloud versions and the ability to access from any device can also pose issues of product integration and data leakage (with documents on several personal devices).

Different firms have different needs, so it is important to weigh pros and cons carefully for each type of system. Although this book deals with the on-premise solution, Worldox also offers a cloud solution with functionality virtually identical to the on-premise solution. In addition, with Web 3.0, Internet access to the on-premise Worldox gives you the best of both worlds.

## Conclusion

All manual and semi-manual ways of organizing documents suffer from the fatal flaw that they are to some degree voluntary. If you take advantage of the powerful searching capabilities that the Worldox index offers, you can dramatically increase your productivity. The amount of time that a DMS will save even a small firm will easily amount to tens of thousands of dollars a year. As one partner told me just a few hours after he returned from Worldox training, "I did this search and everything came up just the way you claimed it would." A lawyer at another firm noted, "I looked for this document all day yesterday and still could not find it. Today with Worldox I found it in seconds."

So the question is not whether you can afford to implement document management but whether you can afford *not* to. One way or another, increased pressure from clients for business efficiency will either force law firms to rationalize their practices or drive them out of business. Sharon Nelson, co-author of the annual *Solo and Small Firm Legal Technology Guide*, puts it concisely: "The raw choice is that lawyers must choose between adaption and extinction."



## How to Use This Book

There are three types of comments on the point-by-point instructions in this book.

**NOTES**

Limitations and restrictions on how Worldox operates or variations in the tools and procedures described.

**TIPS**

Suggestions that can make your use of Worldox more efficient or that apply to particular situations.

**BEST  
PRACTICE**

Conventions and configurations that firm members will probably regret not following, even if they initially think there are overriding considerations for doing so.

## Scope and Limitations

This book is intended to enable end users to configure Worldox in ways that will make the DMS most productive. It is not intended to be a full-fledged manual and does not deal with every possible function and option. Thus it does not generally deal with options that would have to be implemented by a Worldox administrator (referred to by Worldox and in this book as a Worldox Manager; several people in a firm can have Manager status), although some of these features are referred to in the Advanced Topics lesson. The good news is that the answer to the question “Can I make Worldox do . . . ?” is almost always “Yes” (with inevitable limitations). If you need a feature, ask your Worldox consultant. Some of the terms used may not be familiar to all users, but your IT people or consultant will know what they mean.

This book reflects what over the past 25 years I have come to consider the best way to configure Worldox, so some of the options and screenshots may not reflect exactly how Worldox installs out of the box.

For readers who want full-blown manuals and instructions, Worldox has more than 1,200 pages of manuals and configuration and administrative guides available online. These include user manuals (Worldox GX4 Pro User Guide Basic and Worldox GX4 Pro User Guide Advanced) and a list of keystroke shortcuts (Worldox GX4 QuickKeys), as well as shorter manuals for newer functions such as Categories, Web 3.0, Worldox Connect, and various other add-ons.

The Worldox website includes more than 50 short (three- to five-minute) videos on specific topics; see <https://www.worldox.com/support/how-to-videos>. Registered Worldox users also have access to a knowledge base for detailed tech support issues. And, of course, Worldox provides unlimited free tech support for technical issues (as opposed to training or “How do I . . . ?” issues).