

12 Point Executive Summary Version of the Evaluation Checklist for Document Management Systems

| Questions to Ask the Providers | Answer you want to hear | Supplier: businessfitness™ DMS: HowNow® | Supplier: DMS: | Supplier: DMS: |
|--|-------------------------|--|-------------------|-------------------|
| <p>1. Does the Document Management System connect directly to your existing client database(s)?</p> <p>The DMS should connect to your existing client database so that you don't have an additional database to maintain. Advanced DMS's can connect to <i>multiple databases</i> for pulling data into letters and reports.</p> | Yes | Yes | | |
| <p>2. Are they Document Management Specialists?</p> <p>Is the supplier a specialist or is their Document Management module just one module/tab among many, not their core focus? A DMS is a crucial system for a knowledge intensive business such as an accounting firm. It pays to use experts.</p> | Yes | Yes | | |
| <p>3. Is their DMS based on a <u>ZERO LOCK-IN</u> design?</p> <p>Has their Document Management System (DMS) been designed with zero lock-in features? The worst kind of lock-in is a DMS that saves the documents and files into its own database. Another type of lock-in is a DMS that saves files with obscure file names that don't make any sense when viewed in Windows Explorer. In other words, they are making it difficult to stop using their system – they are 'locking you in'. Such DMS's increase your firm's risk, in the medium term should you wish to switch to another DMS in the years to come, and your risk in the short-term is also increased because a system down or 'go slow' with their DMS will mean your staff will not be able to access their documents and files. A DMS should save the documents and files into Windows Explorer with plain English file names so that you are <i>not locked in</i> to using the DMS.</p> | Yes | Yes | | |
| <p>4. Do they provide a service to include all of your firm's pre-existing documents into the DMS and is this service provided at a low <u>FIXED PRICE</u>?</p> <p>Most DMS providers will tell you it's too difficult to incorporate your pre-existing documents into their DMS. They'll use phrases like "it's best just to draw a line in the sand" with excuses such as they can't predict how large or complex a job it will be for them, so they will scare you off the idea by offering to provide the service at an hourly rate with no cap on the number of hours. There is only one DMS provider in Australia—and the world as far as we know—who will do this 'records cataloguing' process on a fixed fee basis.</p> | Yes | Yes | | |
| <p>5. Do they offer an integrated Content Update service that automatically publishes updated templates directly into knowledgebase area of the DMS?</p> <p>Most providers of best practice templates and standards to the accounting profession rely on you visiting their web site, downloading the new templates, deciding where to save them and what to call them, and then manually importing them into the DMS. It is far more efficient to work with a provider with 'content push' technology that automates this download-the-latest-templates process for your firm so you can be assured of staying up-to-date.</p> | Yes | Yes | | |

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| <p>6. Does the DMS integrate with Microsoft® Outlook® to prompt for the saving of Sent and Deleted emails?</p> <p>An email management system without reminder prompts for saving emails will result in only a small fraction of emails that should be saved, being saved. In line with point 3 earlier regarding zero lock-in, the emails should get saved into a folder structure outside of Outlook, and not into the DMS's own database.</p> | Yes | Yes | | |
| <p>7. Is the Document Management System designed with the bigger picture of knowledge management in mind?</p> <p>Document Management—electronic filing and retrieval—is a sub-set of Knowledge Management (KM). KM is about capturing, sharing and leveraging the know-how within your firm about how things are to be done. An effective DMS manages your 'knowledge documents' (templates, precedents, procedures, policies, reference material) equally well as it manages your 'records' (correspondence, emails, invoices, returns, statements, etc.), plus it provides integration between the two areas with automation of filing protocols.</p> | Yes | Yes | | |
| <p>8. Can the DMS manage <u>all documents</u> that flow into, are created within, are stored within and sent by the firm?</p> <p>This includes received mail (paper correspondence) scans, emails and their attachments, client accounting data files (such as MYOB and QuickBooks files), file notes, Word, Excel, PDF, multimedia files, etc.</p> | Yes | Yes | | |
| <p>9. Does the DMS integrate with scanning automation software?</p> <p>If your firm receives large quantities of correspondence on behalf of clients and you wish to be a 'less paper office', scanning automation software such as ATO Paper Buster is essential. So is a DMS that integrates with it.</p> | Yes | Yes | | |
| <p>10. Do they offer a <i>Successful Implementation Guarantee</i>?</p> <p>If a specialist DMS supplier is confident they will deliver what they promise, they should offer you a guarantee that the DMS will work as you expect.</p> | Yes | Yes | | |
| <p>11. Does the provider offer ongoing education and training about all aspects of 'going paperless' and running the firm more efficiently?</p> <p>The DMS is one part of 'going paperless'. Other aspects include scanning hardware and software, digital signatures, designing Word and Excel templates to more easily facilitate on-screen completion, the use of multiple and/or widescreen monitors to encourage on-screen rather than on-paper work, and so on. Does the provider not only understand all these related pieces of the puzzle, but also provides ongoing free monthly training in these aspects?</p> | Yes | Yes | | |
| <p>12. Is the document search tool lightning fast and easy to use?</p> <p>Bottom line, if the DMS doesn't make life easier for your team, they won't use it, or they will resist using it. The DMS should provide per-keystroke search speed so that it is a quantum leap ahead in terms of speed and ease of use compared with 'browsing' through folders and links in Windows Explorer or a 'Documents' tab in another piece of software. The DMS should be designed in a way that not only is staff take adoption instantaneous, but they <i>love</i> using it.</p> | Yes | Yes | | |

Summary Evaluation Checklist for Document Management Systems

If you would like the full version of this checklist please email efficient@businessfitness.net.

| Feature or Question to Ask | Supplier: businessfitness™ DMS: HowNow® | Supplier: DMS: | Supplier: DMS: | Importance to your firm Your comments |
|--|--|----------------|----------------|--|
| The Supplier | | | | |
| 13. Are they specialists in Document Management Systems (DMS)? Or is their Document Management module just one module/tab among many, not their core focus? | | | | |
| 14. Are they specialists in DMS for accounting firms? | | | | |
| 15. Are they experienced in DMS or are they new to it? | | | | |
| 16. Does the sales person actually <i>use</i> the DMS regularly in their everyday work, not including the demo version? | | | | |
| Design and Structure of the DMS | | | | |
| 17. Does the DMS save documents into a normal folder structure that could be accessible in Windows® Explorer if the firm stopped using the DMS in later years? | | | | |
| 18. Can the DMS connect to your existing client database, such as your Practice Management System? | | | | |
| Getting Documents into the DMS Part 1 – Scanning | | | | |
| 19. Does the DMS connect to scanners? | | | | |
| 20. Does the DMS provide a 'watch folder' function where it checks a folder location for PDFs awaiting filing? | | | | |
| 21. Does the DMS integrate with scanning automation software such as ATO Paper Buster? | | | | |
| Getting Documents into the DMS Part 2 – Your Pre-Existing Electronic Files | | | | |
| 22. Can the DMS import or retrieve your firm's pre-existing electronic files so that when the DMS goes live, all documents are in there, old and new? | | | | |
| 23. Does the supplier offer you a fixed price quote for cataloguing your pre-existing files into their DMS? | | | | |
| Getting Documents into the DMS Part 3 – Email Management | | | | |
| 24. Does the DMS integrate with Microsoft® Outlook®? | | | | |
| 25. Does the DMS prompt the user save emails? | | | | |
| 26. Does the DMS automatically select the Contact during the filing process, by recognising their email address? | | | | |

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| 27. Does the DMS save the emails into Windows® Explorer under the client's folder structure <i>outside</i> of Microsoft® Outlook®? | | | | |
| Getting Documents into the DMS Part 4 – Client Accounting Data Files | | | | |
| 28. Can the DMS save and manage your clients' accounting data files such as MYOB, QuickBooks, etc? | | | | |
| 29. Does the DMS record the type of software (e.g. MYOB Premier) and the version of the software (e.g. v17) when an accounting data file is saved so that all a user has to do to open it is double-click it? | | | | |
| Creating Documents | | | | |
| 30. Does the DMS allow templates such as standard letters to be created with optional paragraphs and optional wording so that a wizard appears allowing the user to select which options apply and don't apply? | | | | |
| 31. Does the DMS efficiently create batches of merge letters by (1) creating an individual Word document for each letter and (2) automatically filing each Word document under each client's appropriate subfolder? | | | | |
| 32. Does the DMS automatically file documents created using templates (such as workpapers) so that the document is filed before it is opened and edited? | | | | |
| 33. Does the DMS make it one-click easy to start an electronic File Note when speaking with a client? | | | | |
| 34. Does the DMS manage internal documents equally well as it manages client-related documents? | | | | |
| Integration with Knowledgebase – Template Management | | | | |
| 35. Does the knowledgebase of the DMS display only the approved 'master version' of each template? | | | | |
| 36. Is the DMS designed so that the file name of the current approved 'master version' is always the same? | | | | |
| 37. Does the DMS prompt for a Revision History note to be documented each time a new version is created? | | | | |
| 38. Does the DMS provide each user with a 'My Procedures' view that lists only their procedures? | | | | |
| 39. Does the DMS allow users to create their own 'My Favourites' list of their commonly used templates? | | | | |
| 40. Does the DMS allow you to specify which users are allowed to create, edit, review and approve templates? | | | | |

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| 41. Does the DMS automatically apply filing protocols such as where workpapers should be saved under clients? | | | | |
| 42. Does the DMS have a knowledgebase function? | | | | |
| Integration with Content Providers – Outsourcing Updating of Templates | | | | |
| 43. Does the DMS integrate with a Content Update service for templates and precedents? | | | | |
| 44. Does the DMS protect your existing documents from being overwritten by the new downloaded documents? | | | | |
| 45. Does the DMS provide a Review function for efficiently reviewing the documents in a Content Update before making the new versions available to users? | | | | |
| 46. When your firm edits a template supplied by a Content Provider, or adds their own templates, are such documents automatically flagged as “Our Firm’s Content” so this list can be brought up with two clicks? | | | | |
| Securing Documents | | | | |
| 47. Does the DMS allow you to control which team members see which documents so that sensitive documents can be safely saved into the DMS? | | | | |
| 48. Can the DMS encrypt sensitive documents to also lock them down in Windows® Explorer? | | | | |
| Retrieving Documents | | | | |
| 49. Is the keyword search extremely fast and convenient? Does it provide ‘per keystroke’ search speed? | | | | |
| 50. Is the search speed is maintained regardless of how many documents are stored into the DMS? | | | | |
| 51. Can the DMS search simultaneously across all clients or is it necessary to first select a client? | | | | |
| 52. Does the DMS allow keyword searching on <i>any part of</i> a client name, client code, title of document, etc.? | | | | |
| 53. Can a search list be filtered down to only show the desired file type, such as emails, Excel files, PDFs, etc.? | | | | |
| Managing Document Flow | | | | |
| 54. Does the DMS allow you to search and filter on the status of a document – e.g. Draft, Review, Approved? | | | | |
| 55. Does the audit trail automatically record who changed the status of a document and when this was done? | | | | |
| 56. Does the DMS allow you to search and filter on who created, reviewed or signed the document? | | | | |

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| 57. Does the DMS allow users to 'check out' and 'check in' documents so they can be worked on offline? | | | | |
| Managing Tasks and Workflow | | | | |
| 58. Does the DMS allow you to attach a task to a document whether for your list or delegated to another person? | | | | |
| 59. Does the DMS allow you to see a list of tasks you have delegated, and then filter based on any combination of who is to complete the task, who the client is, when the task is due, whether tasks are overdue, etc.? | | | | |
| 60. Does the DMS Tasks function provide reminders to the person who is complete the task and to the delegator? | | | | |
| 61. Does the DMS include a Job Tracking ('workflow') system that allows a view of all current jobs? | | | | |
| 62. Does the Job Tracking function allow you to filter based on any combination of who is to complete the job, who is to review it, who the client is, when the job is due, whether jobs are overdue or due soon, etc.? | | | | |
| Quality Assurance | | | | |
| 63. Does the DMS automatically create an audit trail recording every event that happens in the creation, approval and dispatch of each document? This should include who created it and when, when it changed status and who changed the status, who opened it and when, who printed it or emailed it and when, etc. | | | | |
| 64. Does the DMS allow you to specify who is allowed to progress documents to certain stages such as Approved and Final? Such QA measures are vital. | | | | |
| 65. When a batch of merge letters has been created, can the list of documents in that batch be displayed quickly and easily so that they can each be checked? | | | | |
| Getting Documents Out the Door | | | | |
| 66. Does the DMS allow a user to quickly and easily email a document to a client? | | | | |
| 67. Is a PDF converter built into the DMS? | | | | |
| 68. Does the DMS allow combining of multiple PDFs? | | | | |
| 69. Does the DMS offer options for emailing documents, such as original format, PDF, or ZIP (compressed)? | | | | |
| 70. Can documents be emailed internally as a hyperlink rather than as an attachment? | | | | |
| 71. Does the DMS allow a batch of letters to be processed—via print and/or email—in one step? | | | | |

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| 72. Does the DMS provide an export to web function? | | | | |
| Archiving Documents | | | | |
| 73. Does the DMS allow you to archive an entire year's documents across all clients in one step? | | | | |
| 74. Does DMS retain information about where the documents were archived to (e.g. which DVD or tape?) | | | | |
| Reporting | | | | |
| 75. Can the DMS provide utilisation reports regarding use of the knowledgebase and templates? | | | | |
| 76. Can the DMS provide reports on the electronic filing activity of each team member? | | | | |
| The Support | | | | |
| 77. When you call the Help Desk, do you speak with the programmers who can actually <i>fix</i> the problem? | | | | |
| 78. Is the organisation renowned for their customer service and responsiveness? | | | | |
| 79. Does the supplier offer a successful implementation guarantee? If so, what are the conditions of the guarantee? | | | | |

If you would like the full version of this checklist please email efficient@businessfitness.net.

Please email us at efficient@businessfitness.net if you are interested in having
A Demonstration of the HowNow® Document Management System
 HowNow®: The Document Management System developed by businessfitness™,
Australia's only specialists in Document Management Systems for accounting firms.

