

FAQ on AutoClassification By Client Matter (Law Firms specific)

What's the difference between AutoClassification and manual efforts? At present, do people really sit there and manually enter metadata about each document?

Yes, sadly, people in many firms are forced to enter manual metadata as part of emerging IG policies. However, many of them take the easiest way out they can, by skipping the metadata part, or worse, just entering the easiest thing they can, regardless of whether it is accurate!

The difference between AutoClassification and manual efforts is that AutoClassification is automated. It is a software program that runs in the background, outside of the user's efforts. AutoClassification is far more accurate and consistent than users and can include other aspects that manual efforts cannot, such as dynamic assessment of content security levels and AutoRedaction of sensitive info.

Autoclassification utilizes a predefined taxonomy to capture the necessary information related to identify a file, document or email. Our software, PowerHouse, extracts the necessary text (in this case matter, name and number) and classifies according to those fields.

How does AutoClassification help? What is gained from implementing it?

AutoClassification increases both efficiency and effectiveness. Time is saved for the user to move on with their next tasks, and auto solutions don't slow the users' progress. The increased accuracy and consistency make the ECM system that is used to store the information work in a more effective manner, since the records are properly classified. Reduced risk of missing documents that are needed for retrieval for purposes such as: ordinary business needs; litigation; and compliance, is a great benefit associated with the use of auto classification.

AutoClassification helps justify the cost and expense of implementing a DMS in the first place. Many DMS's are in place, but user adoption is slow and painful... AutoClassification helps make the on-ramp simple, almost invisible to users. It also helps bring the massive amount of stored information up to modern "code" by easily incorporating it into the newer DMSs, without having to manually account for thousands (millions) of files.

How does AutoClassification work?

AutoClassification uses pattern-recognition technology to understand the type of documents and files in question, and then pulls out salient data elements from each file to create client-custom metadata. The three step process goes like this: Data Mine (Index), Disposition, Display. Data mining extracts out all the DNA of each file, Disposition uses a custom-configured Rules engine to decide what to do with (how to treat) each file, and Display determines where and how the file will live henceforth.

AutoClassification essentially crawls through a document looking for text that supports the classification taxonomy. For law firm clients, many specifically want files classified by client matter name and number.

PowerHouse looks for these "identifiers" in the text and pulls out the necessary field information. It is applicable to files, documents, emails, media...just about every type of communication. PowerHouse sits between your server and DMS system as a "middleware" of sorts.

What if the set of cases matters and clients is constantly changing?

PowerHouse can use its polling features to poll or query other databases that store input/feeder information. For example, PowerHouse can query the Conflicts database to see what new case matters have been created. It can poll the billing database to learn client names, matter numbers and associated attorney names. These queries (polling) can be configured to whatever frequency makes sense for the firm – every 5 seconds to once a month.

What DMS's (document management systems, or hosted repositories, etc.) can AutoClassification be used with?

All of them. We usually deal with the more common ones iManage, NetDocs, LegalKey, OpenText, Worldox, Sharepoint but the unique and flexible nature of our product allows a high degree of customization to other systems. For those clients who do not have access to a DMS, Valora offers its BlackCat hosted repository as a low-cost, Automation-aware option.

How can a law firm get started with AutoClassification?

Multiple ways. Typically, we provide Proof of Concepts that allow for a subset of files (many firms focus on departing attorneys to prevent interruption) as a testing phase. We usually grab files from a multitude of sources and doc. types (outlook, specific drives, pst, current DMS system) and run our auto-classification tools on those. Often times, we allow clients to see these on our hosted platform, BlackCat once they have been "cleaned and classified." This is often a testing phase that allows them to see their documents, files, emails in graphical charts and lists and allows us to make an update, changes to doctypes as they develop their taxonomies.

The other way is for firms to directly install Powerhouse behind the firewall right at the onset. Because some clients have an immediate need around sensitive information, perhaps having suffered a financial setback or failed audit, they need us to help them immediately. Once installed, Powerhouse sits as "middleware" acting as a go between server and DMS system. Lastly, Powerhouse can be used as an offsite service for specific projects. In this scenario, clients send us data and load files for specific matters, and we "classify" and send back as needed.

What size law firm would benefit from AutoClassification?

Any law firm, regardless of size or practice area, can benefit from AutoClassification. Larger firms benefit by assuring their corporate clients that they know where all of the client ESI in their possession is located within the firm's I.T. environment. In addition, both large and small firms benefit by the automated aspect of classifying their information, through the aforementioned increases in efficiency, cost control and reduced risk.