

Case Study

federal

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Federal Government Agency

Ricoh helps a federal government agency tackle FOIA requests and eDiscovery with ease

To help meet a court-ordered deadline, Ricoh reviewed 500 gigabytes of electronic information for the agency — and finished ahead of schedule.

ABOUT THE CUSTOMER

This U.S. cabinet level agency has many sub-agencies to oversee and manage. It has a broad range of responsibilities and many of its programs touch the daily lives of citizens. As a result, lawsuits can be commonplace. Depending on the size and scope of a lawsuit, agency staff sometimes needs help with eDiscovery to meet court and Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) deadlines.

CHALLENGE

- Increasingly large FOIA requests
- High-profile lawsuit by a large group of plaintiffs
- Understaffed for time-consuming discovery and production schedule
- Court-mandated deadline to produce records

The U.S. cabinet-level agency wasn't staffed to handle big FOIA requests and time-consuming discovery that arose from large lawsuits. It had just enough staff to tackle the challenges of everyday agency business.

The FOIA requests shortcoming came to a head when one very high-profile lawsuit caused the agency significant public embarrassment and potential costs because it couldn't produce records requested by a large group of plaintiffs. As part of a court order, the agency was required to produce these records on a very tight and strict schedule.

With too few staff to handle the intricacies of the FOIA request, the agency was not going to make the deadline. And the court ratcheted up the pressure to produce the information — which required reviewing each document and redacting personally identifiable information (PII). In this case, the agency needed fast, experienced outside help.

Case Study

RESULTS

- Beat the court deadline to produce records
- Avoided additional litigation costs and potential fines
- Future access to proven scanning and discovery services

Originally seen as a nearly insurmountable task, the agency was able to produce the records within the court deadline. In fact, with our eDiscovery services, the agency was able to beat the revised deadline to produce the records — avoiding additional litigation cost and potential fines.

Now, the agency has a proven partner and process to handle new FOIA requests and eDiscovery work in the future.

When the agency got bombarded with a heavy caseload that required huge amounts of information to be produced, they weren't staffed to meet court-mandated deadlines.

HOW WE DID IT

- Leveraged existing contract to act quickly
- Enlisted a cloud-based review tool and established a workflow
- Reviewed and deduplicated 500 gigabytes of electronic information
- Provided 800 man-hours of contract attorney support to produce records for the court

With deadlines fast approaching, the agency needed a partner to help them cull down the FOIA request information into a manageable data set. Fortunately, this type of engagement is extremely well suited to Ricoh's extensive experience providing eDiscovery services.

Once we became involved in this specific FOIA request, we reviewed 500 gigabytes of electronic information — emails, policy documents and incident reports — to process the data and comply with the order to produce for the court. To cull down the large data set, we first deduplicated and filtered information by date and put it into our cloud-based review tool. We then established a workflow to determine if each document was responsive to a request.

Once we had a targeted set of responsive documents, we manually reviewed each document for PII and redacted that information on records produced for the court. All totaled, we provided the agency with 800 man-hours of contract attorney support — beating the court deadline to produce and submit the information.