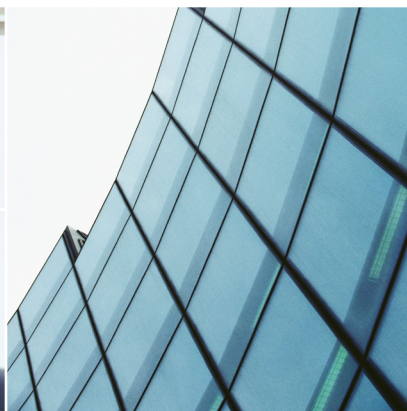
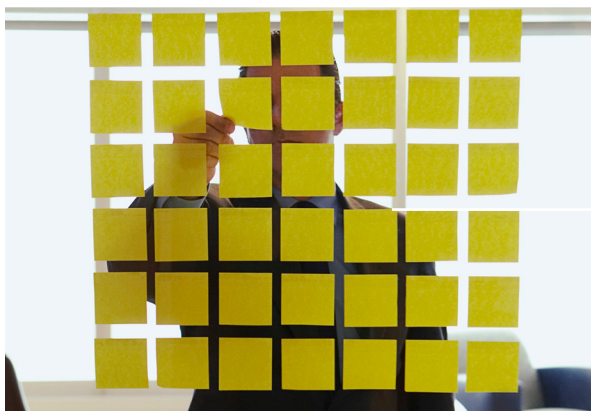




“Last year, it took one staff member 3 months to process the economic data forms required by the state for 2,200 students, this year with Formatta and ImageSilo, we were able to process all of the survey forms in less than 2 weeks without adding staff.”

Quick Facts

Focus: Online high school education

Location: Colorado

Sites: 20 educational centers & two administrative offices

Integration: Digitech ImageSilo, Microsoft SQL

GOAL Academy is a publicly funded online charter school that offers students a flexible option for completing their high school education. GOAL Academy combines an accredited curriculum delivered via high-tech methods with personalized attention and tutoring made possible by a low student to staff ratio. In addition to utilizing the latest offerings in remote learning technology, GOAL operates 20 student “drop-in centers” across the state of Colorado where students can come to receive additional face-to-face academic and technical support. GOAL Academy’s IT department is continually looking for ways to improve processes and efficiency so that the school can fulfill the vision of being the “premier provider of high-tech quality education.”

GOAL Academy used to send enrollment forms that students had completed from each of its 20 education centers to its central records office. This incurred high postage costs, risked document loss and delayed information availability. When forms arrived, staff manually processed them, stored hard copies and updated the student information system (SIS).

As the first step to overcoming this inefficiency, GOAL Academy consulted with RMMI (Rocky Mountain Microfilm and Imaging), who recommended the ImageSilo ECM suite from Digitech Systems.

“We’re a decentralized organization, so finding a cloud-based ECM system like ImageSilo, which didn’t require new servers or hardware and has redundant backup, was huge for us,” says Rick Harper, Information & Data Systems Coordinator at GOAL Academy. “There’s nothing comparable to ImageSilo, particularly at its reasonable price point.”

Implementing ImageSilo enabled the organization to easily scan student forms into a secure, central electronic repository, from which they’re easily accessible to authorized users at GOAL Academy sites across Colorado.

“ImageSilo is simple to use, has a great interface for quickly uploading new documents and has all the security features we need,” Harper says.

E-forms + Database + ECM Integration = New Efficiency

To go one step further and create a fully paperless forms process, Harper recognized the need for an electronic forms (e-forms) management system that could feed e-forms directly into the ImageSilo repository without scanning or manual effort, and share data with the SIS and external databases. RMMI recommended Formatta from Access and upon seeing the solution in action, Harper was sold.

formatta



The Business Problems

Scanning student forms into Digitech ImageSilo is error-prone and it can take up to 2 weeks for forms to be processed

Need a forms management system that can work with external databases

Manually processing enrollment forms for 2,100 students takes three months

Meet state auditing requirements for academic records management

The Solutions

Electronic forms automatically interfaced into ImageSilo for instant availability, no more errors

Formatta securely sends data to and from SQL databases, automatically updating the student information system

Electronically processed forms for 2,800 students in less than a week

Security features convince state auditor to allow electronic forms management process for the first time

“The Formatta ECM Connector made it simple to integrate with ImageSilo,” he says. “I was uploading forms within 10 minutes.”

Each student that enrolls at GOAL Academy submits seven forms. Previously, these were sent via FedEx from all 20 of the organization’s sites to the central records office for processing. Now, each student completes their forms online, applies a secure electronic signature via a signature pad or tablet when they and their parents come to the site for enrollment, and the forms are sent directly into ImageSilo – a fully electronic process. Customers who are not governed by requirements for electronic signatures, as is GOAL Academy, can securely authorize forms using secure Formatta’s digital signature functionality.

“The logistics of getting signed pieces of paper from one of our sites to our office was a nightmare,” Harper says. “Now, with Formatta and ImageSilo, there is no more paper, and we’ve eliminated mailing costs.”

In the first stage of its move toward electronic documentation, GOAL Academy removed paper files but was still scanning and manually indexing hard copies. With Formatta, the scanning and indexing steps have been eliminated, saving time and boosting accuracy.

“Last year we had a 9% scanning error rate,” Harper says. “With Formatta eliminating most of our scanning, we’ve reduced that to 0.35%, which is a huge improvement. We’ve also removed human error from the process.”

Simplifying Online Student Enrollment, Meeting State Compliance Requirements

GOAL Academy enables its students to apply online. This creates a new record in the SIS, and drives the automatic mapping of student demographics onto the seven required forms, such as the Colorado Residency document, to speed completion. From a master form web page, the student just enters their ID number and a list of links to forms is displayed. They open the forms, verify the details and click “submit.” The forms are then sent into the ImageSilo online repository, each field is searchable, and data sent to a SQL database updates a required documents checklist in the SIS.

This simple approach worked for six of the forms required by the State of Colorado, but not for the economic data survey form. Because this is a complex document that parents and students often struggled to fill out, Harper created a customized form in the intuitive Formatta Designer, and made it available via the web-based component of the Formatta suite, iFiller. The family of a new student fills out this questionnaire, which then automatically writes the information to the economic data survey.

“With Formatta, we’ve made it a lot easier for families to complete the economic data survey, which was previously a hassle for many people,” Harper says. “And because we added formulas on the back end, we’ve eliminated the need for our staff to perform manual calculations once they receive this form.”

One of the other challenges regarding the economic data survey is that the State of Colorado requires educational organizations to submit this form within 10 days of it being



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signed. When GOAL Academy used hard copies this was difficult, due to the time taken to prepare, mail and process this form. With Formatta, the survey is instantly available via ImageSilo once the student has applied their secure electronic signature. Once forms are submitted, they are also automatically routed to families and staff members that need to see them via secure, electronic workflow.

“Formatta and ImageSilo have been huge in helping us meet the state requirement of submitting the economic data survey within 10 days of it being signed,” Harper says. “And we’ve convinced the auditor to allow our first fully electronic forms process because he is satisfied with the security and checks and balances that the solution provides.”

Removing Paper and Manual Steps

At some of GOAL Academy’s education centers, site coordinators often spent at least one month of each year scanning documents. It could also take up to three months for all the documents to be processed at the administrative offices. The combination of Formatta and ImageSilo has liberated staff members from this tedious process, and helped GOAL Academy manage a 33 percent increase in enrollment without adding administrative staff.

“Last year, it took one staff member 3 months to process the economic data forms required by the state for 2,200 students, this year with Formatta and ImageSilo, we were able to process all of the survey forms in less than 2 weeks without adding staff.”

Harper believes that Formatta’s ability to integrate and share data with GOAL Academy’s ImageSilo suite, external databases and SIS have been one of the factors contributing to the success of the organization’s e-forms initiative.

“With Formatta, you’re not just getting static forms like many products offer,” Harper says. “They’re dynamic, go straight into ImageSilo, and provide instant, usable data via integration with our SQL databases. That ability to share data across systems without user effort is huge for our business.”

Looking to the Future – Going Paperless with Human Resources, Exit and Special Education Forms

GOAL Academy is planning to extend the joint Formatta-ImageSilo solution to other student-focused and administrative forms. One of the next student forms that will be managed by Formatta is the exit document that is completed when a student leaves GOAL Academy. When this form is completed, it will trigger the SIS to delete the student’s record. Harper also intends to extend Formatta to individual reading plans for at risk and special education students. In addition, GOAL Academy will soon begin using Formatta and ImageSilo to remove paper, cost and hassle from its human capital management (HCM) processes.



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