

Life Technologies Finds It's Easy—and Efficient—Being Green on Serengeti

CASE STUDY

Life Technologies Corporation

Life Technologies Corporation is a global biotechnology tools company dedicated to improving the human condition. The company's systems, consumables and services enable researchers to accelerate scientific exploration. Life Technologies customers work across the biological spectrum to advance personalized medicine, regenerative science, molecular diagnostics, agricultural and environmental research, and 21st century forensics.



► The Challenge

When two biotech giants merged to form Life Technologies, senior paralegal Julie Schwartz had an ambitious, two-part goal: (1) She needed to replace two different legal invoice routing and approval processes with one streamlined system; and (2) It had to be paperless. "Our old processes wasted so much paper, which was unacceptable to me personally and didn't fit with our company policy of environmental responsibility," Schwartz said.

But wasted paper wasn't the only problem; the old systems were labor-intensive and inefficient. Either the accounting staff would scan invoices and email them to approvers, or the legal staff would route hard copies. Attorneys had trouble keeping track of invoices, so it could take months before bills were paid, causing headaches for AP. Also, because firms sent accruals—unbilled time and pending invoices—in different formats, it was difficult for Schwartz to manage everything on screen. As a result, she spent hours every month reconciling accrual amounts on paper.

► The Serengeti Advantage

Serengeti helps companies reduce their environmental footprint. Law departments that switch to e-billing can reduce paper consumption by hundreds of reams a year, and their law firms save paper, toner and ink, envelopes, and the fuel required to mail bills. Sustainable practices such as these "not only help the environment, but also improve profitability [through] greater efficiency, reduced waste, less liability exposure, improved community relations and more," according to "The Business Case for Environmental and Sustainability Employee Education," a 2010 study by the National Environmental Education Foundation.

► The Solution

Now that Life Technologies and its firms are on Serengeti, the law department has all but eliminated paper from its financial workflows. Vendors submit electronic bills, and the system automatically routes them for approval. Using Serengeti's simple interface, attorneys can get online and quickly find the invoices they need to review, from anywhere that has an Internet connection. Also, markdowns, changes, and comments are saved in Serengeti, providing a secure and auditable electronic record, without producing paper.

After invoices are approved, the integration between Serengeti and Life Technologies' ERP system is fully automated. According to Schwartz: "Every Monday I just hit the button and it's all wrapped up"—again, no paper required.

Accruals have also gone paperless. Firms now submit unbilled time through Serengeti, and Schwartz monitors the process with an online report. This saves paper, and it saves Schwartz about 10 hours a month. To sum it up, she says: "It's been a life-saver."

"By using Serengeti for just one year, we can avoid printing and copying some 24,000 pages of legal invoices. That's smart and sustainable."

Julie Schwartz
Senior Paralegal
Life Technologies

"Serengeti is proud to play an integral part in so many corporations' sustainability initiatives. Not only are these programs good for the environment, but studies show that they're also good for business—they can boost employee morale and loyalty, generate goodwill in the community, and lower costs. With Serengeti, the same best practices that help law departments save time and reduce legal spending are also sustainable business practices that reduce environmental impacts."

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