



Dechert Uses DocXtools “Traffic Signal” to Reduce Document Corruption, Avoid “11th Hour” Crises

Dechert LLP engaged with Microsystems to develop and implement a “green/yellow/red” DocXtools solution that is used by lawyers and paralegals to quickly quality check any Microsoft Word document in order to reduce document corruption and identify issues in advance of the “11th hour” – when client and filing deadlines are imminent.

Firm Overview

With 1,000 lawyers in 18 offices around the globe, Dechert LLP provides clients with services in a variety of practice areas, including corporate and securities, complex litigation, finance and real estate, and financial services and asset management.

Situation

Like their counterparts at other law firms, Dechert partners, associates and paralegals experience quality problems with their documents on a daily basis. These problems, including documents not printing, failed document comparisons, and broken or inconsistent numbering, are commonly a result of copying and pasting from Web pages or other documents, document collaboration with clients and co-counsel, and the round-tripping of documents between different versions of Word. Often, these problems arise as deadlines approached for filings or client deliverables – the “11th hour” – leading to document “fire drills” and emergencies involving Dechert’s Word Processing and Help Desk groups, which triaged the documents in order to meet client and court deadlines. The frequency of these document escalations led to a level of apprehension among the firm’s document authors.

Michael Shannon, Dechert’s CIO, and Gloria Webber, Dechert’s Development Engineer, knew the answer was not eliminating document issues from ever occurring. In addition, Mr. Shannon and Ms. Webber felt that providing additional Word training was not sufficient, as Dechert’s lawyers and paralegals did not want to become “Word processors”. Instead, they wanted to empower each document author with a quick, simple and automated way to proactively measure a document’s health and, based on that check, to direct the user to the proper next step in advance of looming deadlines.

Solution

Dechert contacted Microsystems to collaborate on a solution. Ms. Webber and a Microsystems Consultant developed Michael Shannon’s vision to configure DocXtools – Microsystems’ document quality control, clean-up and restyling software – and create a document check “Traffic Signal” for the firm’s end users to use in advance of the “11th hour” in order to measure the quality of a document and receive guidance on how to proceed.

Solution Overview

Company

Dechert LLP

Customer Profile

Dechert is a Philadelphia-based law firm with more than 1,000 lawyers located throughout the United States, United Kingdom, Continental Europe and Asia.

Business Situation

Dechert experienced document corruption issues on a daily basis, including:

- Document will not print
- Document will not compare
- Numbering inconsistencies

Dechert needed a solution that enabled its document authors and the groups that support them to proactively identify document issues in advance of a filing date or client deadline without the need of highly-technical people.

Solution

Dechert and Microsystems developed a DocXtools “Traffic Signal” to quality check a document and identify document issues.

Benefits

- Reduced Overall document corruption
- Early Warning System prevents downstream problems
- Empowered Users/Peace of Mind

Software

DocXtools – Microsystems document quality control, document clean-up and restyling software helps document intensive organizations insure the health and quality of their documents.

To establish the criteria for the “Traffic Signal” colors, Ms. Webber and Microsystems interviewed Dechert’s Word Processing and Help Desk groups. Next, Microsystems provided ideas and recommendations on document issues to flag and how to determine the proper tolerances to determine whether a document earns a green, yellow or red “color” rating. Microsystems also provided expertise about which document best practices could be violated with no ramifications and which could never be broken. The Word Processing team at Dechert tested the rules and tolerances, and Microsystems made the necessary adjustments.

As a result of the Dechert/Microsystems collaboration and testing, the firm rolled-out its “Traffic Signal” firm-wide. DocXtools enabled a simple workflow for Dechert’s lawyers, paralegals and secretaries: by clicking on “Am I a Bad Document?” within its Word desktop, the user instigates a document quality check and receives one of the following three results:

- Good Document (green light) – The document is stable and can continue to be used.
- Potential Problems (yellow light) – The document may have stability issues of a non-critical nature. The user is urged to send the document to Word Processing before continuing to use it.
- Bad Document (red light) – The document has corruption issues and needs to be sent to Word Processing.

“It was important for our lawyers and paralegals to have an easy-to-use solution that didn’t require them to be too technical or have styles knowledge,” said Gloria Webber, Development Engineer at Dechert. “The DocXtools ‘Traffic Signal’ meets that criteria, and adoption has been high.”

Business Benefits

Reduced Document Corruption

Dechert’s deployment and usage of the DocXtools “Traffic Signal” has significantly reduced the number of document emergencies escalated to its support groups.

“Since we deployed the ‘Traffic Signal’, our Word Processing and Help Desk groups are out ahead of document issues and their end users’ needs ,” said Webber.

Reduced Risk with an Early Warning System

The DocXtools “Traffic Signal” provides Dechert’s document authors with an early warning system that identifies document problems and instability in advance of filing and delivery deadlines. This capability mitigates the risk of missing a filing date or client deadline due to common document issues.

“It is extremely beneficial for a user to be able to check the health of a document before it gets to the point where it won’t print or file properly. It puts our lawyers, secretaries and support staff at ease knowing that there is a quick quality check that can be done in advance of the 11th hour,” said Webber.

Empowered Users, Peace of Mind

With the DocXtools “Traffic Signal”, users are empowered to check the health of their documents and, as a result, have the peace of mind that document issues are identified and fixed in advance of the filing or delivery moment.

“With the ‘Traffic Signal’ on their desktop, our lawyers now have the confidence that their document issues will be caught and fixed early, no matter how many fingers are in a document,” said Shannon.

About Microsystems

Microsystems is the leader in providing complete, “first draft to final delivery” document lifecycle solutions to the legal and life sciences markets and other document-intensive businesses. The company provides more than 650 clients with an innovative combination of software products, consulting services, and training designed to improve the total document creation, quality control, and delivery processes. Microsystems is headquartered in Downers Grove, IL.

To see a demonstration of how DocXtools can help you improve your document quality, clean-up and restyling efforts, call Microsystems Sales at 630.598.1100 or e-mail sales.inquiry@microsystems.com