

The logo for DBL Law, featuring the letters 'DBL' in a bold, sans-serif font, followed by 'Law' in a larger, elegant serif font. A horizontal line is positioned below the 'DBL' text.

The Practice of Excellence

Executive Summary

Client Challenge

Prevent data breaches and keep information secure over email.

Send only the information intended by removing hidden metadata.

Comply with strict industry data protection regulations.

Resolve stability issues in Microsoft Outlook caused by a legacy software add-in.

Find a comprehensive email solution that won't negatively impact staff email workflow.

cleanDocs as a Solution

Removes more than 100 types of hidden metadata from attachments that could contain sensitive or confidential information.

There is minimal interruption to users since cleanDocs only prompts to clean attachments when required.

The cleanDocs add-in is built to best-practice guidelines and works with Microsoft Outlook to eliminate performance or stability issues.

Easy deployment for administrators.

More granular administrative control with the easy-to-use Configuration Manager graphical utility.

Business Value

A firmwide metadata cleaning solution to prevent accidental data breaches.

Customizable metadata cleaning policies optimized for the firm's own workflows.

Mitigated risk associated with hidden information in litigation documents.

Fast and efficient emailing workflows that reduced user frustration.

No associated Microsoft Outlook stability issues.

Privacy by Design implemented as a key compliance strategy for industry regulations.

Processed email attachments are as secure as information printed on a piece of paper.

About DBL Law

Dressman Benzinger LaVelle psc, also known as DBL Law, is a full-service law firm with offices located in Cincinnati, Ohio, Crestview Hills, Frankfort (KY) and Louisville (KY). Their attorneys provide a high level of valuable legal services to private individuals, institutions and companies in many industries and areas of law.

Challenge: Find a stable solution to stop hidden information being sent out through email

Every document contains metadata. This information is embedded in the file and is different to what is visible on the page – such as Track Changes or comments. It can tell the reader who created the document, how long was spent editing it, and where the document is saved. Cleaning a document of metadata effectively means that the recipient will only be sent what would be printed.

DBL Law recognized the risk in not removing hidden metadata from email attachments and files in general and purchased a metadata cleaning program in 2010. Their chosen product was, however, causing major stability issues in Microsoft Outlook 2013. The software slowed down Outlook start-up and Outlook automatically disabled the add-in to fix performance issues. Since the add-in was being disabled many users weren't prompted to clean attachments of metadata at all. The investment DBL Law was making to protect against accidentally releasing sensitive and often hidden document metadata was fast turning into money wasted.

The IT Director at DBL Law, Rob Andres, needed to find an alternative metadata cleaner that didn't impact the performance and stability of Microsoft Outlook. The new add-in would need to fit seamlessly into the existing emailing workflow, rather than become a major pain point for staff. Rob also prioritized finding software that offered granular control and customization to better cater to the different document and email workflows of each department.

Solution: cleanDocs to prevent data breaches in emails sent through Microsoft Outlook

Unique processing that won't impact email speed or productivity

In cleanDocs the firm found an add-in for Microsoft Outlook that wouldn't cause instability or performance issues since it uses a unique method to clean metadata. cleanDocs separates the add-in from the cleaning engine to minimize the impact on Outlook. Additionally, cleanDocs works with documents at the binary level, without needing to open the authoring application. It does not use Visual Basic automation (VBA) to clean attachments, so it is incredibly fast. cleanDocs processes multiple files concurrently at sub-second speeds. This means that Outlook is not locked up, and users can continue working without interruption.

Staff keep working in email as normal – but with added protection

Staff at DBL Law can continue to work productively in Microsoft Outlook since they are only prompted to clean attachments as needed. The cleanDocs User Interface displays only when cleanable email attachments and/or external recipients are detected. Users will be prompted to clean un-seen information, convert spreadsheets to PDF to remove hidden cells or tabs but keep the displayed data intact, or add a password for additional security where DBL Law sees potential for inadvertent data breaches. DBL Law also have the option to disable cleanDocs metadata checking for users within a department or within the business at-large – meaning even fewer interruptions to staff each day.

Better administrative control with the Configuration Manager

DBL Law were frustrated with the lack of control available to them in their legacy metadata cleaner. IT and Administration staff were looking for a way to customize cleaning policies according to the unique emailing workflows of many different departments. The user-friendly Configuration Manager graphical utility in cleanDocs Pro (versions 2.0 and higher) allows administrators to easily tailor and customize the program themselves, in order to strike a perfect balance of user productivity and security. The firm is able to provide greater protection against accidental data breaches over email without frustrating staff by imposing unnecessary checks.

A key solution for regulatory compliance

Law firms face a challenge of keeping the sensitive information they hold secure, without compromising on efficiency or the level of service they deliver to their clients. Staff at DBL Law send countless emails per year, and each email sent outside the firm could be at risk of leaking sensitive information through hidden document metadata or email mis-sends. As data protection regulations continue to become more strict, firms need to focus on preventing breaches rather than on PR and damage control. DBL Law uses cleanDocs to eliminate the risk of data breaches caused by metadata and emails in general and to ensure they stay compliant with regulations like The Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act (GLBA) and state data breach regulations.

About DocsCorp

DocsCorp designs easy-to-use software and services for document professionals who use enterprise content management systems. The DocsCorp product suite is built to drive business efficiency and increase the value of existing technology investment. DocsCorp is a global brand with customers located in the Americas, Europe, and Asia Pacific. More than 3,500 organizations rely on DocsCorp software every day.

Conclusion

DBL Law switched to cleanDocs to stop accidental data breaches over email without impacting productivity. The whole firm has benefited from increased usability since they switched from their legacy product to a metadata solution that doesn't cause Microsoft Outlook to crash. DBL Law now has comprehensive protection against data breaches integrated seamlessly with their best-practice emailing workflows.

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