



813%

return on investment and
two-month project payback

\$25,000

saved in
annual labor costs

170 hours

of employee time saved



BIGELOW®
FAMILY TEA BLENDERS SINCE 1945

Case Study Summary:

Challenge:

Paper-based accounting practices slowed information retrieval and annual audits

Solution:

ImageSilo®

Results:

“With a \$25,000 annual labor savings and 813% ROI, ImageSilo has revolutionized information management—not only in the accounting department, but across the entire company.”

-Melanie McElroy,
Director of Finance

Digitech Systems Reseller:

SOURCECORP Boston

Bigelow Tea Achieves 813% ROI and Two-month Payback with ImageSilo®

R.C. Bigelow, Inc. is a \$100 million family business, selling tea worldwide. For decades, the Bigelow family has relied on automation in their factories, but most of the accounting and business operations were based on manual, paper processes. Without Enterprise Content Management (ECM), finding information was a recipe for inefficiency and preparing for annual audits brewed frustration.

After implementing ImageSilo, a Software as-a-Service (SaaS) ECM service, and coordinating imaging with SOURCECORP Boston, Bigelow achieved 813% Return on Investment (ROI) and received project payback within two months! The project is even contributing to the company's green initiatives by reducing paper use throughout their operations.

The Situation

In 1945, Ruth Campbell Bigelow started making tea from an old colonial recipe. She focused on making a fresh-tasting, flavorful product she could share with friends and family. Her recipe became known as Bigelow Tea's signature “Constant Comment” tea.

Every year, Bigelow produces about 1.3 billion tea bags at three packaging plants in Fairfield, CT, Louisville, KY, and Boise, ID. Today, Bigelow is still focused on producing innovative versions of traditional teas and offers a wide variety of specialty gourmet teas.

In order to meet federal and state requirements, the Bigelow Accounts Payable department saved five years of paper-based tax information at their headquarters in Fairfield, CT in a half dozen 5-drawer filing cabinets, and employees across multiple departments frequently accessed the files. Documents were misfiled, lost and costly to copy, fax and mail. Labor increased costs. Employees spent eight hours every month filing and re-filing documents.

At the end of each year, a temporary employee spent 40 hours preparing files for offsite storage, where documents were held for another two to three years and cost the company \$1,580 annually. During annual audits, files were manually located, retrieved, photocopied and re-filed.

When documents were archived at the Boise or Louisville plants, retrieval was more complicated, because a coordinated effort was required to access and share information.

To ease the burden of file management, Bigelow was looking for an electronic records system that would reduce human error, eliminate the paper chase and unify records across three locations into a single, efficient system.

The Solution

Bigelow's IT department contacted SOURCORP Boston, a Digitech Systems reseller and a 10-year Circle of Excellence member. SOURCECORP demonstrated how SaaS ECM with ImageSilo securely stores digital images online, eliminating the need for Bigelow to maintain onsite storage hardware and software. Bigelow chose ImageSilo because it satisfied the company's concern for internal security controls and helped them avoid the software purchase and additional support costs typical of traditional applications. As a document and imaging service bureau, SOURCECORP provided document scanning and indexing services. Within four hours, the Accounting department was trained and the system went live with its first users in 2002.

Recognized Benefits

In 2007, Nucleus Research, an independent analyst firm, performed an ROI study that calculated an 813% ROI and a two-month project payback on Bigelow Tea's ImageSilo project. The study stated, "Bigelow Tea was able to yield such significant returns because many of the company's manual and paper-based processes were eliminated by deploying ImageSilo. In addition, the SaaS model allowed Bigelow Tea to achieve an even greater ROI by not requiring the company to incur additional IT expenses.

The Accounts Payable department immediately recognized the advantages of using ImageSilo. Because employees can manage any file from the convenience of their desktop, filing that previously took eight hours is completed in just seconds. With an electronic system, lost or misfiled documents are no longer an issue. Online search and retrieval capabilities allow employees to search, retrieve and email images in seconds. As a result, they have saved hundreds of dollars in printing, mailing and copying. Plus, the department saves \$1,580 each year in offsite storage costs and no longer needs to hire a temporary employee to prepare documents for the archives.

Annual audits were a huge headache, but with ImageSilo, the Accounts Payable department reduced document search and distribution time, streamlined accounting procedures, and accelerated the auditing process. As a result, the department has seen a 5% increase in employee productivity that results in a \$25,000 annual savings.

Solutions originally intended for the Accounts Payable department have now been leveraged across other departments, saving the company 170 hours of employee time each year. Today, there are 50 ImageSilo users across six departments, including Accounts Receivable, Sales, Customer Service, Purchasing, Human Resources, Payroll and the Tea Division. In January 2010, the solution was also rolled out at the company's Charleston, SC Tea Plantation.

Substantial benefits for employees in those other departments include the elimination of meetings between Sales and Finance needed to close the fiscal year. Sales and Finance administrators spent months faxing and mailing seven sales people stacks of paper for review and approval. ImageSilo makes those documents conveniently accessible online, tracks document and user activity and facilitates accountability with the fiscal year closing process. In fact, the Sales Administrators who previously helped with this function have been reallocated to revenue-producing activities, and Accounts Receivable employees now manage this process.

The Customer Service department has also seen great improvements. Three hours of filing each week were completely eliminated. Since files are accessible from representatives' desktops, average call processing time decreased from 15 minutes per call to less than five minutes per call.

In response to a request from their VP to find a better way to manage files, Human Resources is using ImageSilo to manage personnel files.



"Moving to ImageSilo® has enabled Bigelow Tea to improve productivity, reduce costs, and streamline its business processes to support greater profitability."

-Nucleus Research ROI Report



Each employee has four subfolders within their electronic file (evaluations, confidential files, FMLA, and disciplinary), and employees with the right security permissions are able to access those files anytime right at their desks. This has eliminated the need to transfer paper records between departments for approvals and signatures. It has also improved their ability to control access to sensitive employee data in accordance with HIPAA and other regulations, a move which has pleased the company's legal advisors who supported the SaaS ECM implementation.

Human Resources and Payroll need to share information frequently as employee information changes. The Payroll department is managing several types of documents including payroll changes, ADP change reports, banking forms, salary changes, W2 and W4 forms, new hire information and records related to their employee bonus programs within the ImageSilo system. As Director of Finance, Melanie McElroy has to personally approve all payroll changes. Before, this required obtaining copies of the payroll and personnel files as well as the confirmation report from ADP (the company who processes payroll for Bigelow). Today, she can view the internal change request and the ADP confirmation side-by-side on her computer. "After viewing the document in ImageSilo, I can even attach a note to verify the change," she says. "It saves a ton of paper on my desk, and I like knowing that I am contributing to the company's green initiatives."

R.C. Bigelow is well-known for their environmental commitment to green initiatives. In fact, Connecticut Governor Jodi Rell chose to sign the Connecticut Energy Efficiency Bill at the company's headquarters on Aug 14, 2007. So, it's no surprise that "sustainabili-tea" was a core part of the ECM initiative for Bigelow. Thanks to ImageSilo, they now claim that all major departments are paperless and almost 100% of company reports are electronic only. In addition, departmental paper use is monitored and employees are encouraged to find creative ways to reduce their figures each month.

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In January 2010, Bigelow rolled out the ImageSilo system to manage information and records generated by the Company's Charleston Tea Plantation. The Tea Plantation is the home of "American Classic Tea", the only tea grown and produced in America. Accounting Manager, Noreen Clough states, "We used to send copies of information back and forth between the offices. Now, accounts payable records are scanned in Connecticut when they are received, and they are instantly accessible to our employees in Charleston. ImageSilo has already eliminated most of the inter-office phone calls, emails, and faxes concerning invoices and other Tea Plantation records. It's a huge win for the company."



Moving to ImageSilo has enabled Bigelow Tea to improve productivity, reduce costs and streamline business processes to support greater profitability, while also giving employees the ability to support the Company's green initiatives.

About SOURCECORP Boston

SOURCECORP Boston is one of the largest document imaging, scanning, conversion and document management service organizations in New England. They provide document management services, including document scanning, data entry, OCR, vault storage and the installation and support of document management systems. They also help businesses reduce operating costs, improve efficiencies, gain fast access to critical business information, stay competitive in the marketplace, comply with regulatory requirements and save money while increasing profitability.

Customer benefits:

- 813% ROI and two-month project payback
- Saved \$25,000 in annual labor costs
- Eliminated the need for a temporary employee to handle filing
- Streamlined annual auditing process
- Saved 170 hours of employee time
- Reduced customer inquiry time by 10 minutes per case
- All major departments are now paperless and almost 100% of company reports are electronic only