



## KKE Architects

### Architectural Firm Uses Fortis Email Management™ to Build a Better Email Archiving Strategy

#### Organization

KKE Architects is recognized as one of the top 30 architectural firms in the U.S. The company provides a broad range of design, creative and strategic consulting services. KKE is based in Minneapolis, Minnesota with offices in California, Nevada and Arizona. Founded in 1968, the company has 180 employees. From urban planning and mixed-use communities to retail spaces, hospitals, municipal buildings and schools, KKE uses their design skills and technical know-how to help their clients expand their vision and achieve their objectives.

KKE designs innovative, efficient and beautiful environments for its clients. Yet the company was spending about \$12,000 per year on storage space for boxes of archived documents – not an efficient use of space. The company “goes green” whenever possible and reducing the amount of paper produced by copying and sharing documents manually was in keeping with their environmentally-friendly policies as well. In addition, KKE was looking for a software solution that could manage emails and archive paper documents such as architectural drawings, plans, estimates and correspondence.

#### Solution

KKE chose **Fortis** because it is scalable and easy to use. “It was also reassuring to us that **Fortis** met government standards for digital media management,” says Jah Akeem, director of records management. Many companies are monitoring changes to the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure that affect legal requirements for retention and retrieval of paper and electronic records. Document management solutions, such as **Fortis**, help organizations ensure that they’re in compliance.

Because new projects are initiated everyday, Akeem appreciates that there is no cap on the number of documents that can be stored in the **Fortis** repository. “Scanning capacity is unlimited as long as there is server space available,” he says.

Administrative assistants scan project documents into **Fortis** rather than saving and filing paper documents. “We’re moving toward archiving all of our records electronically,” says Administrative Assistant Susan Trousdale. “We’re using **Fortis** to save and index project-related emails as well. I like where we’re going with

**Industry:** Architecture-Engineering Construction

**Organization:** KKE Architects

**Location:** Headquarters: Minneapolis, Minnesota

**Westbrook Partner:** Imaging Path

#### Return on Investment:

- Annual savings on storage
- Reduced amount of file space needed on exchange servers speeds up system performance
- Savings of paper and time spent printing and filing emails
- Increased efficiency in retrieving emails and attachments
- Ensures compliance with Federal Rules of Civil Procedure

document management, and it will be easier once all of our documents can be retrieved at our desktops.”

KKE began using **Fortis** SE in their Minneapolis headquarters, and recently upgraded to the flagship version of Fortis to expand its use to their branch offices. KKE captures between 25,000 and 30,000 documents per month in **Fortis**. “At this point much of what we’re archiving is emails,” Akeem explains. “When you save an email to a project file, you know it’s always going to be there. Users can easily find, export and print email files. The emails are fully searchable. It’s so much easier to find things in the digital domain.”

With **Fortis**™ Email Management, authorized users with KKE email accounts can view emails associated with each project directly from Outlook®. “Our staff uses Email Management all the time because people are working in Outlook about 80% of the day,” Akeem says. Users drag and drop emails into the appropriate public folder in Outlook and **Fortis** Email Management automatically indexes and archives them every 10 minutes.

**Fortis** Email Management frees up space on the KKE Exchange servers by importing thousands of messages into **Fortis** every day. A stub is created in the project folder, and users click on a link to log into **Fortis** where they can access the email and print it, forward it or reply to it. The email itself no longer takes up space on the local drives.

Associate Lora Grgich has found **Fortis** Email Management to be a valuable tool. “Before Fortis, we would get a

tremendous amount of project-related email and archive it manually. At the end of the week, I would go through and batch print all emails related to a project,” she says. “If there was a thread of emails, I’d try to find the most recent one and only print that in order to save paper.” Grgich estimates she spent about two hours a week printing out emails that she would then give to her administrative assistant to file.

It was a time consuming, error-prone process. Grgich could miss including an important email or her assistant could misfile it. Additional time was spent going through folders when an email had to be retrieved.

Today, the process is much improved. “I still get a high volume of email. But with **Fortis**, when it’s time to archive it, I just drag and drop the email into a **Fortis** folder which is organized just like other project folders at KKE,” Grgich says. “I’m not printing anything. When I have to go back to email records, I can search the text and attachments by keyword. I can always find what I’m looking for quickly. It could not be simpler.”

Grgich notes that email has become the preferred method of business communication. Architects capture plans from AutoCAD and save them as email attachments. “With the increased use of email for business communication, I can’t see how someone could not have electronic email management and be efficient.”



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