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Deloitte's SecureRelease™ Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and Privacy Act (PA) Management Platform

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Re-envision Your Agency's Approach to Disclosure

Government agencies face an increasing demand for information disclosure, from internal agency components, Congress, the general public, or through litigation. Additionally, the amount of data that needs to be identified, collected, and reviewed to respond to these requests is growing exponentially. For example, the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) provides one of the most-used avenues for the public to make disclosure requests of the government. Many FOIA requests are not simple and involve high volumes of material from multiple locations as well as other layers of complexity. In Fiscal Year 2020, federal agencies received almost 800,000 Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests. At the same time, fewer than 6,000 full-time staff were devoted to the administration of FOIA related services[1]. Under such circumstances, processing time can stretch to a year or longer.

The linear and manual nature of traditional case management tools is not keeping up with the pace, volume, and complexity of FOIA and other disclosure requests. This is because these systems make subsequent revisions difficult and have the potential for human error leading to rising backlogs as well as unmet expectations.

The disclosure challenges government agencies face can be addressed by a combination of people, process and technology that transcends and transforms the most common approach of simply throwing more bodies at the problem. Not only are agencies budget- and time-constrained, but the current disclosure approaches also often divert resources away from priority activities and impact agencies' ability to fulfill their core mission and commitments.

Take Error-Prone Manual Work out of the Information Disclosure Equation

When case management applications first appeared on the scene, they provided a much-needed boost to organizing disclosure requests. But they did little to enhance efficiencies and reduce the need for manual work, including:

✓ **De-duplication:** Record and document searches can turn up repetitive information leaving large data sets left to be manually reconciled and creating the risk of inconsistent responses.

✓ **Line-by-line reviews:** Each potentially responsive record requires time-consuming, line-by-line review to confirm responsiveness and identify portions that are exempt from disclosure.

✓ **Redactions:** Sensitive or confidential information is individually redacted increasing the risk of manual errors or inconsistencies
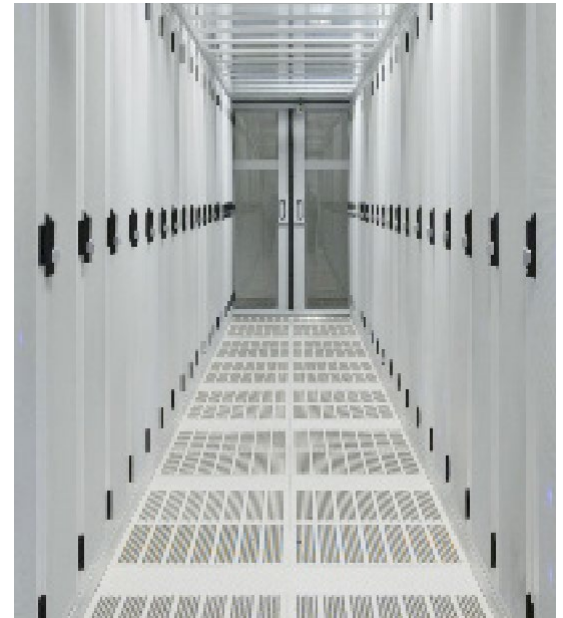
Deloitte's SecureRelease™ Platform

Deloitte built a disclosure workflow and management platform – SecureRelease™. Our platform is built on Relativity's eDiscovery tool to help organizations handle large volumes of electronic data. SecureRelease™ is offered as a Software-as-a-Solution (SaaS) in Deloitte's FedRAMP-authorized Moderate cloud. SecureRelease™ combines security, disclosure workflows and compliance features. It also has sophisticated eDiscovery functionalities, such as machine learning and Artificial Intelligence (AI) assist agencies to respond to their information disclosure obligations with more efficiency, accountability, and accuracy.

SecureRelease™ is a software application that starts with case management functions that match and exceed other existing systems. It is hyper-scalable and allows several thousand users to access it concurrently and can accommodate petabytes (PB) of data with no performance degradation. SecureRelease™ is also designed to be a highly configurable end-to-end disclosure request processing, tracking, and reporting platform. It supports the full disclosure lifecycle from intake to review, release, and appeals.

✓ **Intake:** Agencies can intake requests directly through the SecureRelease™ portal or integration with the national FOIA portal on FOIA.gov.

✓ **Data De-Duplication:** During data ingestion, SecureRelease identifies documents for potential de-duplication, gleans searchable text, and uses analytics to organize the data. Our de-duplication features are built into the platform and not as a separate add-on tool at additional cost.

✓ **Accelerated Review through Advanced Search Techniques and Analytics:** SecureRelease™ leverages the analytics capabilities of leading eDiscovery industry platforms that are not present in standard disclosure case management systems.

✓ **Accurate Redactions with AI and Automation:** SecureRelease™ uses a template of commonly exempt terms. It also "learns" from manual modifications, expanding the accuracy and completeness to redact the material under review.

The Practice

The Deloitte Discovery & Disclosure practice has a strong commitment to combining the best people, process, and technology to assist with the important dual responsibility of providing appropriate transparency while safeguarding private and protected information. Our practice is led by a group of highly skilled industry professionals with extensive backgrounds in disclosure, records management, and eDiscovery support.

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Requestor → Identified Records → Reviewed & Redacted → Sent to Requestor ⇢ Annual Report Delivered to DOJ

Case Management System
SecureRelease™

Apply Clustering, Analytics, & Assisted Redactions

Deloitte is a FedRAMP Authorized Hosting Provider

Deloitte's SecureRelease™ platform currently meets the security requirements of FedRAMP Authorized Moderate[2], FISMA, NIST 800-53 Rev. 4, and DoD MAC II sensitive security baselines documented in our System Security Plan (SSP). Our Government and Public Sector Technology Center (GPSTC), which houses the infrastructure supporting SecureRelease™, is physically and logically isolated from any other Deloitte commercial infrastructure. It is managed in accordance with both the NIST 800-series requirements and DoD Instruction 8500.1/.2 in relation to information assurance processes and employs FIPS 140-2 compliant encryption technologies. We also configure our SSP and tailor it to agency-specific requirements and perform a series of tests to confirm the platform performs as expected.

Our cloud services have an Authority to Operate (ATO) with the following agencies:

- Department of Labor
- Department of the Navy
- Department of State
- Immigration and Customs Enforcement
- Internal Revenue Service
- Department of the Treasury
- Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation
- Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives
- Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation
- National Institutes of Health

Let's Talk

Do more with less: That is today's reality for the nation's FOIA offices. Between ever-increasing disclosure requests and calls for greater transparency, analysts have a pivotal role in providing citizens with information about their government. Show them the value of public service and take control of disclosure request processing with advanced technology solutions from Deloitte.

www.deloitte.com/foiaservices

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[1] "Summary of Annual FOIA Reports for Fiscal Year 2022." Office of Information Policy. U.S. Department of Justice. https://www.justice.gov/oip/page/file/1393381
[2] https://marketplace.fedramp.gov/#!/product/evidence-management-system-ems?sort=productName&productNameSearch=Deloitte