

# Implementing Transparent Records Management

*White Paper*

May 2009

**Laserfiche®**

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# Summary

Laserfiche Records Management Edition (RME) contains both document management and records management tools. In order for Laserfiche to be a success in your organization, it is important that you consider the needs of both disciplines.

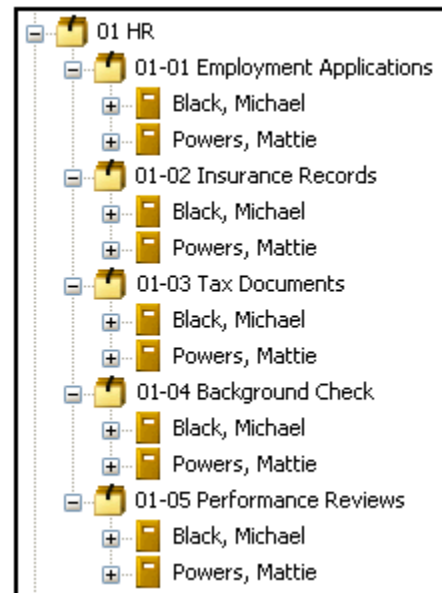
## Understanding Records Management Users

The primary responsibility of a records manager is to manage records according to a formal file plan set forth by a governing body. Due to their job responsibilities, records managers are often forced to be more interested in the rules (i.e., published retention schedules) they must follow and less interested in the importance of records from a business perspective. They also must be less concerned with designing a repository layout that allows them to quickly find records and more concerned with designing a structure that logically satisfies the retention schedule.

Because records management solutions are designed to meet a formal set of rules, most systems require a great deal of structure. A records management solution is based around the concept of a record series that describes the way the records in that series must be handled. The sum of the record series and required metadata makes up the file plan of a records management system. Categorizing every piece of information within the bounds of the file plan is the key to following the rules.

In many cases, the layout of a formal records management file plan is related to the fact that different retention schedules apply to different *types* of documents (e.g., insurance records, tax documents, employment applications). For example, a records manager might be required to organize HR documents by type.

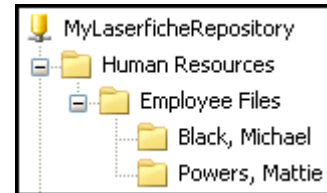
In this screenshot, the records manager has organized HR documents in a way that both satisfies the retention schedule and is easy to use from a records management standpoint. Unfortunately, this type of layout is cumbersome for users who are primarily interested in Laserfiche's document management tools. For example, a user who wants to print all documents for a specific employee would have to open over a dozen different folders in different locations to access each employee's documents.



## Understanding Document Management Users

In virtually all organizations, the majority of users are not records managers. These users need quick and easy access to documents, they don't want to learn an unintuitive records management layout, and they don't want to be concerned with records management processes. For this reason, most document management users want to organize documents based on *content*. For example, a Human Resources representative might argue that employee documents should be organized inside folders whose names correspond to the employee in question.

In this screenshot, documents are organized by employee name, which keeps all of an employee's records in a single location. This structure is easy to use from a document management standpoint, but will not work for records managers.



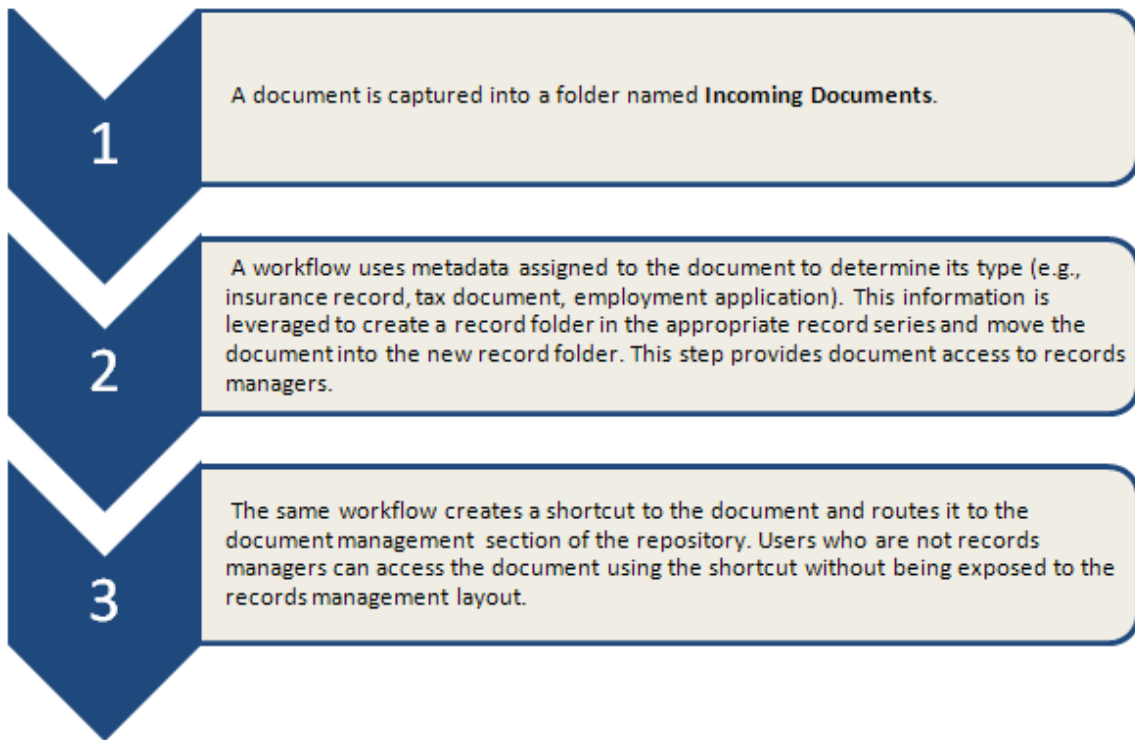
## Satisfying Both Types of Users

We need a repository structure that can satisfy both records management and document management needs. Due to the flexibility and power of Laserfiche, this is possible. Using a method known as Transparent Records Management, both the records management and document management users will be able to organize the *same* repository in the manner they each prefer, simultaneously. The process is "transparent" because it enables document management users to see-through the cumbersome records management layout to the layout of their choice.

## How Does Transparent Records Management Work?

A broad overview of this process is given below.

- Separate folder structures are created in the repository: one for records managers and one for non-records managers. Record series are created inside the records management folder structure.
- Using entry access rights, the records management layout will only be visible to records managers and the document management layout will only be visible to non-records managers. Administrators will be allowed to see both.
- Using Laserfiche Workflow 8, we can automate the process of classifying and filing records and providing document access to both types of users. The following diagram explains the workflow.



## Automatic Classification and Filing

Due to the amount of time it takes, the process of classifying and filing records is typically the most expensive component of a records management solution. In many organizations, this issue stems from the following problems.

- The records management group is understaffed and unable to manually classify all of the content created by the organization.
- Users responsible for creating content aren't concerned with records retention policies and aren't interested in or able to learn a non-intuitive classification scheme.

Transparent Records Management solves this problem by automatically classifying documents as they are created. Users responsible for creating content define the document's type using a required field. Workflow 8 uses this information to automatically classify the document (i.e., to determine what records management settings should apply) and moves it to the appropriate record series/record folder. As a result, cutoff and disposition eligibility dates are automatically calculated and assigned.

**Reminder:** In order for a document to be tracked using Laserfiche's records management tools, it must exist in a record folder, which in turn must exist in a record series. In most cases, the user assigns records management settings (e.g., cutoff instruction, retention schedule) to the record series, which are

inherited by the child record folder, which are inherited by all child documents.

## Requirements

In order to implement Transparent Records Management, you will need the following.

- Laserfiche Records Management Edition 8.0.x.  
**Note:** The information provided below also applies to Laserfiche 8.1. The only exception is that, unlike the Laserfiche 8.0.x server, the 8.1 server considers a Record Series or Record Folder's code to be part of the entry's path. To implement Transparent Records Management on an 8.1 server, make the necessary adjustments to the workflow.
- Workflow 8.x.
- A strong understanding of Laserfiche's records management and document management tools, terms, and concepts, especially with regard to Laserfiche security.
- A working knowledge of Workflow 8.x.

This paper will describe the implementation process using Laserfiche Records Management Edition 8.0.2 and Workflow 8.0. The instructions may differ if you are using alternate versions of the software.

# Setting up Transparent RM

The steps below explain how to implement Transparent Records Management for the employee documents scenario introduced earlier. Use this example scenario as a blueprint for implementing this technique in your organization. The instructions may differ depending on your situation.

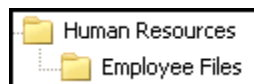
## Create the Repository Layout

Since both records management and document management users will each be able to use the repository layout they prefer, the first step is to create each of their respective top-level folders. These folders will contain the sub-folders that will be created later by the workflow.

1. At the root of the repository, create a record series named **01 HR**  
**Note:** For both this record series and those associated with the steps below, the number (e.g., **01**) is the entry's code and the name (e.g., **HR**) is the display name.
2. Inside **01 HR**, create one record series for each type of HR document: **01-01 Employment Applications**, **01-02 Insurance Records**, **01-03 Tax Documents**, **01-04 Background Checks**, and **01-05 Performance Reviews**.

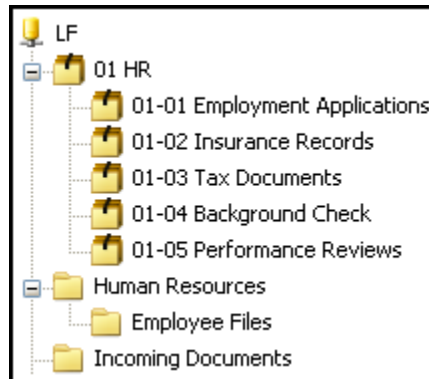


- Note:** Assign records managements settings to each record series as you see fit (e.g., cutoff instruction, retention schedule, vital record status, etc.).
3. At the root of the repository, create a folder named **Human Resources**.
  4. Inside **Human Resources**, create a folder named **Employee Files**.



5. At the root of the repository, create a folder named **Incoming Documents**.

After completing the steps above, your repository's tree structure should look like the screenshot below.



## Create Users

We must configure our repository's entry access rights so the records management layout will only be visible to records managers, the document management layout will only be visible to non-records managers, and administrators will be able to see both. However, before we can assign entry access rights, we must create the users/groups they will apply to.

1. In the Laserfiche Administration Console, create the following groups: **Records Managers**, **HR**, and **Admins**.

**Tip:** In most cases, it is best to assign security to groups versus directly to individual users. Since all users in a group will inherit the group's rights, this is the easiest and most consistent method of assigning security. We will follow this best practice in this paper.

2. Add at least one user account to each group.
3. Create a user account that will be used to run workflows. For this paper, we will create a user named **Workflow**.

**Note:** Assign each user/group rights and privileges as you see fit. These settings will not directly affect Transparent Records Management, which specifically relies on entry access rights to show/hide entries. Be careful not to grant a privilege that overwrites an entry access right specified in the **Assign Entry Access Rights** section below (e.g., if you grant a group the **Bypass Browse** privilege, you won't be able to prevent its users from seeing a folder by denying them the folder's **Browse** entry access right). At the minimum, the **Workflow** user must be able to create folders and shortcuts, read the related metadata, and create and move entries. In addition, ensure your repository's **Everyone** group has not been granted the **Bypass Browse** privilege.

4. If you are currently logged into the Laserfiche Client, log out then back in. This will ensure the group memberships and security configured in the steps above take effect before continuing to section below.



## Assign Entry Access Rights

Follow the steps below to ensure each group sees the appropriate entries in the Laserfiche Client.

**Note:** To minimize confusion, this paper will suggest either granting all rights or denying all rights for all situations. Realistically, this is not a valid approach—when setting up Transparent Records Management, you should be more specific as to which rights each user/group has. Ensure that each user/group has enough rights to perform the actions specified in this paper.

**Note:** Ensure no security settings you assigned prior to reading this paper create conflicts with or override the following instructions.




1. On the root of the repository, grant **Admins** and **Workflow** all entry access rights. The scope for these rights should be **This folder, subfolders, and documents**.

Trustee	Inherited From	Scope
 Admins	<Not inherited>	This folder, subfolders and documents
 Workflow	<Not inherited>	This folder, subfolders and documents

2. Assign the following access rights to the **01 HR** record series.
  - a. Deny the **HR** group all entry access rights. The scope should be **This entry only**.
  - b. Grant the **HR** group all entry access rights. The scope should be **Subfolders and documents only**.

**Note:** By denying entry access rights to the top-level folder, but allowing rights to the subfolders, we are using a security concept known as *tunneling*. Tunneling enables us to hide the records management folders from the HR group without denying this group access to the HR documents via shortcuts. It also allows both groups to find the appropriate documents via a search.

- c. Grant the **Records Managers** group all entry access rights. The scope should be **This folder, subfolders, and documents**.

Trustee	Inherited From	Scope
 HR	<Not inherited>	This entry only
 HR	<Not inherited>	This folder, subfolders and documents
 Records Managers	<Not inherited>	This folder, subfolders and documents

3. By default, all entries inside the **01 HR** record series should be configured to inherit entry access rights from their parent. Ensure this is the case.
4. Grant the **HR** group all entry access rights to the **Human Resources** folder. The scope should be **This folder, subfolders, and documents**.

5. By default, all entries inside the **Human Resources** folder should be configured to inherit entry access rights from their parent. Ensure this is the case.
6. Test the security settings: log in to the repository as a user in each respective group and ensure the appropriate entries are shown/hidden.
  - a. The **Records Managers** group should only be able to see the **01 HR** record series and its contents.
  - b. The **Human Resources** group should only be able to see the **Human Resources** folder and its contents.
  - c. **Admins** and **Workflow** should be able to see everything.

## Create the Human Resources Template

In the Administration Console, create the template shown in the screenshot below. Not all of the fields in the template are required; some have been listed to provide context for the sample scenario.

1. Ensure the **Employee Name** and **Document Type** fields are required.
2. For the **Document Type** field, which should be a list field, the drop-down options should be: **Employment Applications, Insurance Records, Tax Documents, Background Checks, and Performance Reviews.**

**Note:** The names of the record series created in a previous section and the **Document Type** list items created here must exactly match. For example, if a record series was named **Background Check** (singular) and the list field item was named **Background Checks** (plural), the workflow would not perform correctly.

3. The **Hire Date** and **Scan Date** fields should be date fields.
4. All other fields should be character fields.
5. Change the width of any fields that may need to facilitate a large amount of text.

The screenshot shows a form window with a title bar that says "Template: Human Resources". Below the title bar, there are five fields arranged vertically. The first field is labeled "Employee Name (required)" in red text and is a text input box with a right-pointing arrow button on its right side. The second field is labeled "Employee Number" and is a text input box with a right-pointing arrow button on its right side. The third field is labeled "Document Type (required)" in red text and is a dropdown menu. The fourth field is labeled "Hire Date" and is a date input box with a calendar icon on its right side and a right-pointing arrow button on its far right. The fifth field is labeled "Scan Date" and is a date input box with a calendar icon on its right side and a right-pointing arrow button on its far right.

6. Ensure all users/groups have appropriate template and field access rights for the tasks they need to perform (e.g., ensure **Workflow** can read field data).

## Create the Workflow


The workflow we will create should look similar to the screenshot below. Examine this screenshot before proceeding to the step-by-step instructions.

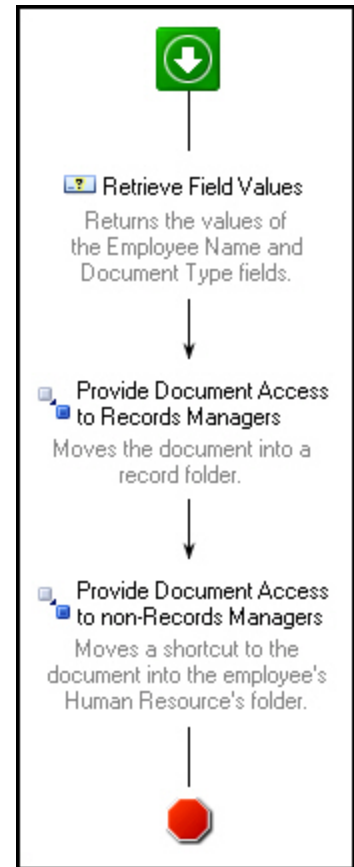
**Note:** This paper was distributed inside a zip file available on the Laserfiche Support Site. Also inside the zip file is a sample workflow (.wfi). Import the workflow into your Workflow Designer to use it as a template.

In the Workflow Designer, follow the steps below to create this workflow.

1. Create a new workflow that uses the **Workflow** user to interact with the repository.
2. Add a Retrieve Fields Values activity. Configure it to retrieve the values of the following fields: **Employee Name** and **Document Type**.
3. Add a Move Entry activity as the next step in your workflow.
4. When configuring the Move Entry activity's **Action** option, select **Move Entry**.

5. When configuring the Move Entry activity's **Destination** option, specify where Workflow 8 should move the document. Keep the following in mind.

- a. Manually type the destination path; you cannot use the  button when working with Record Series and Record Folders.
- b. The first portion of the destination path will be defined using regular text while the rest of the path will be defined using tokens. The **Document Type** token will define the name of the Record Series that the document should be moved into and the **Employee Name** token will define the name of the Record Folder that will be used/created. Based on the repository structure we created in a previous section of this paper, we will define the destination using `\HR\%(RetrieveFieldValues_Document Type)\%(RetrieveFieldValues_Employee Name)`. This path tells the workflow to: use the Record Series named **HR** as the top-most Record Series; inside **HR**, use a nested Record Series that corresponds to the **Document Type** token value; inside the second Record Series use/create the Record Folder that corresponds to the **Employee Name** token value.

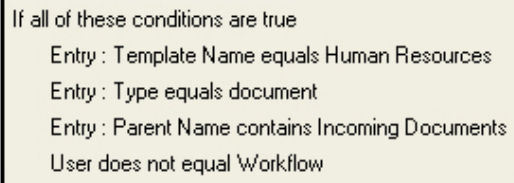


- c. If the activity encounters a destination path that does not exist, it will attempt to create it before moving the document. For example, if the activity needs to move a document into `\HR\Employment Applications\Black, Michael` but the **Black, Michael** Record Folder does not exist, the workflow will create the folder then move the document into it. Keep in mind that Workflow 8 cannot create a Record Series (though it can create a record folder).
- d. When defining paths in Workflow 8, do not start with the name of the repository; start with the first folder off the repository's root. Also, for Laserfiche 8.0.x servers, paths should not include the code assigned to a Record Series or Record Folder; paths should only include the entry's name.

**Note:** Unlike the Laserfiche 8.0.x server, the 8.1 server considers a Record Series or Record Folder's code to be part of the entry's

path. If you are using Laserfiche 8.1, make the necessary adjustments.

6. Add a second Move Entry activity as the third step in your workflow.
7. When configuring the second Move Entry activity's **Action** option, select **Create Shortcut**.
8. When configuring the second Move Entry activity's **Destination** option, specify where Workflow 8 should move the document shortcut. The first portion of the destination path will be defined using regular text while the rest of the path will be defined using the **Employee Name** token. This token will define the name of the regular Laserfiche folder where the shortcut will be moved to. Based on the repository structure we created in a previous section, we will define the destination using **\Human Resources\Employee Files\%(RetrieveFieldValues\_Employee Name)**. This path tells the workflow to move the shortcut into a folder that corresponds to the employee's name. In addition, it tells the workflow that the employee name folder should exist inside the **Employee Files** folder, which should exist inside the **Human Resources** folder. As mentioned above, if the activity encounters a destination path that does not exist, it will attempt to create it before moving the shortcut.
9. Publish the workflow and assign a starting rule that meets the following criteria.
  - a. The starting event must have **entry created**. Other events are optional. If you select multiple events, ensure this will not cause multiple workflows to be triggered by the same document.
  - b. For the sample scenario described in this paper, use the starting conditions shown in the screenshot below. You may modify these settings as you see fit, but ensure you exclude the user associated with the workflow's connection profile (e.g., the **Workflow** user) from being able to trigger a workflow.
10. Test the workflow by creating a document that satisfies your starting rule in the **Incoming Folder**. Ensure you assign the **Human Resources** template to your document and populate the required fields correctly. If successful, the workflow should:
  - a. Move the document into the correct record series and record folder.



If all of these conditions are true

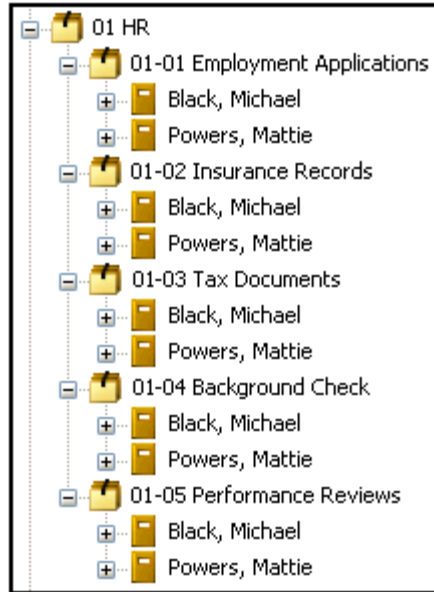
- Entry : Template Name equals Human Resources
- Entry : Type equals document
- Entry : Parent Name contains Incoming Documents
- User does not equal Workflow

- b. Create a shortcut to the document and route it to the appropriate location in the **Human Resources** folder.

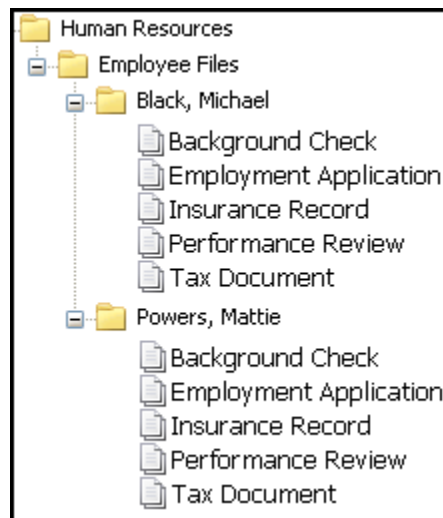
**Note:** The workflow described above did not take advantage of Workflow 8's ability to assign both entry access rights and security tags to documents. You could use this functionality to define different rights to different types of documents.

# Conclusion

After following the steps above and creating the appropriate documents, your repository should match the screenshots below.



**Figure 1: As seen by the Records Managers group.**



**Figure 2: As seen by the HR group.**



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