

PolicyMatter introduces a new way to manage corporate policies

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02/12/2002, UK: PolicyMatter, a joint venture between leading law firm Morgan Cole and independent software vendor Extend Technologies, has been launched today to enable organisations to take a step forward in risk management and regulatory compliance via the electronic deployment of corporate policies and measurement of compliance.

PolicyMatter is a software-based framework for the electronic creation, deployment and management of all types of corporate policy. By combining legal expertise with the technology to reliably deploy information across the entire organisation, PolicyMatter improves the value and effectiveness of corporate policy and creates a strong positive message to employees about how their organisation wants to work.

The need for effective corporate policies has been clearly demonstrated by a number of recent high profile legal actions surrounding employee misuses of email and the internet. Analysts, IDC estimate that while some 9.7 billion emails are sent every day, only around 25 to 30 per cent of organisations have a communicated and enforced email use policy.

But, according to Nathan Millard of Morgan Cole, the importance of clear corporate policies goes far beyond regulating the use of technology: "Creating, communicating and affirming corporate policy is vital to shaping employee behaviour on a wide range of issues and achieving desired working practices and workplace culture.

"Risk management and regulatory compliance have become critical issues for organisations, and many are struggling under the pressure. PolicyMatter creates an alternative to paper-based policies which makes it much easier for organisations to maintain contemporary policies and ensure that these are both fully communicated around the organisation and understood by all employees."

PolicyMatter's e-policies have a number of benefits for large organisations. Unlike email, intranet and paper-based dissemination, which can easily be ignored or discarded, PolicyMatter uses log-in intercepts to make sure that all employees both read and understand policy. Because the whole process is handled by a single application, PolicyMatter also provides a single repository for the different areas of business management.

Mark Hobson of Extend Technologies added: "PolicyMatter is something completely new, but at the same time, a natural progression on current practices – which are often inconsistent, overly complex awkward and complex difficult to audit. PolicyMatter is the only solution to provide management of the complete lifecycle of a corporate policy electronically – right the way from accessing draft statements through to recording an individual employee's acceptance of the finalised policy and reporting on organisational compliance."

PolicyMatter comprises three components: Rule Pools, the PolicyCreator and the PolicyServer.

Rule Pools are resources of information on the latest legislative, regulatory, in-house and best-practice

guidelines, which can be accessed by organisations to create company-specific policies.

The PolicyCreator is where 'rules' are collated and transformed into company-specific policy, which can be deployed and understood across the organisation. As legislation changes, or policy requirements evolve, the PolicyCreator can be used to update or amend corporate policy.

The PolicyServer is the most visible part of PolicyMatter – distributing and presenting information to employees, auditing the understanding and acceptance of policy across the organisation, and preparing effective management reports.

PolicyMatter is already been successfully trialled across Morgan Cole's offices and is being considered by a number of UK organisations. More information can be found at www.policymatter.com.

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