RPI Consultants White Paper

An Introduction to OnBase

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Overview

This white paper aims to provide an overview of the OnBase suite of "Content Services" products to help current and prospective users gain a better understanding of OnBase's strategic value and functionality. This paper is perfect for any organization or business considering a new OnBase implementation, or a migration to OnBase from another content services or enterprise content management platform.
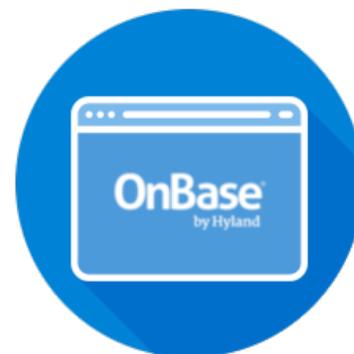
What is OnBase?

OnBase (by Hyland) is a market-leading Content Services solution providing functionality that includes document imaging, business process automation, case management, managed destruction of documents and data, and more. The OnBase ecosystem includes over 300 modules, customized to support almost every industry and every business process. For those familiar with other content services or ECM platforms, such as **Perceptive Content**, many of these concepts will sound familiar.

Figure 1: OnBase Platform Overview

What is Content Services?

Many are familiar with the term and concept of document imaging or enterprise content management (ECM). As these platforms and solutions have grown and expanded in terms of scope, technology, and business integrations, there has been a shift in how software like OnBase is

described. The current term, content services, is a broad term describing the technology and services used to capture, manage and distribute all types of business content.

Content services describes the capture, storage, management, and destruction of documents, data, processes, audit trails, and metrics used in day-to-day business operations. Content services software helps businesses streamline workflows and automate tasks, saving time and money.

As such, Hyland Software's vision for OnBase is to deliver an end-to-end content services solution on a single platform that allows all of a company's documents, data, processes, and rules to live in one place, while minimizing the need for custom code.

Complete end-to-end functionality

Capture and Indexing

Capture refers to the process of importing paper or electronic documents into OnBase. OnBase provides a comprehensive suite of capture options, allowing all business documents to be classified, indexed, and stored in one place.

Batch Scanning

The most common way to import documents is scanning, typically done in batches. OnBase includes support for Kofax, ISIS, and TWAIN compliant scanners and MFDs (Multi-Function Devices). Additionally, OnBase offers direct integration with many manufacturers including Canon, Lexmark, and Xerox.

Batch scanning allows users to scan batches of any size, from any device, directly from the OnBase Batch Scanning panel. Documents can be indexed either before or after scanning, with options included for barcode recognition, Intelligent Capture OCR, and both semi-automated and manual indexing.

Network Capture

Commonly used in Accounts Payable and Human Resources departments, or any department needing to process large volumes of documents, is **Document Import Processor (DIP)** and

Directory Import Processor (DrIP), two of the larger-scale network directory capture solutions for networked scanners. DIP captures documents with index files, such as CSV or XML. DrIP captures metadata from the directory tree where files are saved, as well as parsing file names.

Both methods provide automated pre-indexing of keyword values, help eliminate errors, and increase importing and indexing speeds.

Email and Fax Capture

Many processes and solutions rely heavily on communication and documents exchanged over email and fax. OnBase includes many options for capturing and indexing this type of content.

Outlook Integration

OnBase **Outlook Integration** is often used as its own user interface. Hyland has created an impressive interface that plugs directly into Microsoft Outlook, allowing users to perform nearly all OnBase functions and tasks without ever having to leave the familiar Outlook email interface.

Using OnBase Outlook Integration, users can easily import and index documents emailed to them, and set up email notifications for documents received, tasks to be performed with due dates, warnings for incomplete tasks, and requests for assistance from other users. These emails can even contain a direct link to the document or task.

Mailbox Importer

OnBase **Mailbox Importer** is a service that monitors one or more email inboxes and imports all messages and attachments received into OnBase. Mailbox Importer can be configured to monitor mailboxes on Exchange/EWS, IMAP or POP3 email protocols. Email messages are saved as HTML email messages, while attachments are imported in native file formats, and OnBase can be configured to identify and index them automatically.

Fax Suite Integration

Comprehensive integration with fax providers such as RightFax allows documents to be received via fax and pre-indexed based on fax header information as they are imported into OnBase.

Image Enhancement

Often, images and documents that are captured will need image enhancement for improved legibility. Many document imaging solutions require a separate application to interface with the scanner and scanner drivers to enhance images as they are scanned, such as Kofax VRS. However, OnBase includes this functionality natively within the **Production Document Imaging** module.

The Production Document Imaging module includes the ability to add water marks, perform image rotation, increase DPI, modify contrast, clean images, and add time stamps, among many other functions. Most of these functions can be configured to run automatically, or they can be performed manually by an end user from within the Production Document Imaging interface.

Indexing

Generally included as a function of capture, indexing refers to the process by which documents content are assigned relevant keyword values and unique identifiers. Depending on the solution, indexing can be automatic based on metadata, data files or integrations, or it may require a user to manually index against a separate business application. OnBase provides many flexible solutions for indexing content based on the format and source of the documents.

Indexing with Production Document Imaging

In OnBase, **Production Document Imaging** (better known as the **Scan Queue**) is the primary indexing interface. In addition to the image enhancement capabilities outlined above, the Scan Queue also provides highly flexible and efficient indexing functionality. Additionally, **Barcode Recognition Server** and **Intelligent Capture OCR** queues provide fully automated classification and indexing, and can be made visible or hidden as needed using role-based or user-based configuration.

For most users, the standard indexing interface is dynamic and presents the unique keywords and identifiers specific to the document type. There are also functions for:

+ Autofill Keyword Sets, which provides for semi-automated entry that can retrieve from both internal or external sources

+ Reverse Lookups, which retrieves keyword data based on non-primary values

+ Click-To-Capture and Drag-Through to Capture field verification

+ Keyword Locking to set the same value to all documents in a Batch

The indexing panel can also be suppressed in favor of a custom **Unity Form**, which is a configurable electronic form used for data entry, allowing for reverse lookups and auto-fills from both internal and external data sources.

Indexing in Workflow

Documents can also be indexed and re-indexed using the OnBase **Workflow** interface. Workflow is intended primarily for processing documents that have already been indexed, but the indexing panel and Unity Form options are still available for both verification and indexing. Indexing in Workflow is a convenient solution for many types of documents and business processes.

Capture Process Designer

The **Capture Process Designer** transforms document imaging into a fully customizable process that maximizes the benefits of automated classification and indexing. This makes it possible to fully customize the way documents are captured into OnBase.

Batches can be sent through an initial OCR, split and sent through multiple different processes, then brought back together for final review before sending to the business process workflow. Capture Process Designer is intended to create capture process flows that automatically index as many keywords as possible before presenting to a user, making the users' jobs easier and more efficient.

Manage

Once documents are captured, it becomes important for the end users to decide how they want to manage newly captured documents. Fortunately, OnBase has multiple ways to manage documents, business processes, and data, all from a single user interface.

Workflow

OnBase **Workflow** is one of the most robust and user-friendly document routing and processing engines in the world. Workflow not only gives users the ability to route, annotate, update, and interact with documents, it also allows users to request assistance from other users and update external applications. An AP invoice approver, for example, can evaluate and approve (or reject) an invoice with a single click, from any OnBase client, including the OnBase mobile client on their phone. The OnBase Studio configuration platform makes building workflows simple and intuitive, allowing admins to create and test solutions with less time and effort. Additionally, a wide array of "point-and-click" configurable workflow actions reduce the need for custom scripting. The **Workflow Approval Management** module also allows end users to update the approval matrices of workflow life cycles on the fly, reducing the need for IT admins to make workflow changes.

Case Manager

Formerly known only as **WorkView**, **Workview | Case Manager** provides a flexible engine for creating data-driven solutions for case-based business processes. Case management is crucial to for many businesses' and organizations' operations, including new business processing, customer relationship management, back office accounts payable and general ledger coding, and human resources processes, including onboarding and offboarding. Rather than businesses purchasing a separate case management software suite from their ERP or Content Services solution, OnBase can provide case management functionality as an "all-in-one" solution.

Business Rules Engine

OnBase's **Business Rules Engine (BRE)** provides an enterprise-scale business process decision automation platform. It has the same ease of configuration and intuitively designed user interface as both Workflow and Case Management. Once the foundation rule set is built, solution owners can modify rules on the fly. Workflow life cycles impacted by these business rules will update immediately to reflect the changes, reducing the need for IT admins to configure workflow changes.

Business Process Management

Another new addition to the OnBase product suite is the **Business Process Model and Notation** (BPMN) functionality for managing business processes. With the same intuitive interface used in Workflow, Case Manager, and Capture Process Designer, the BPMN Modeler allows business processes to be documented, optimized, and maintained in the same interface where the workflows, documents, and case management applications live.

Access

OnBase provides multiple ways to quickly and easily access documents and data. The functionality discussed in this section is available through any of the OnBase clients, via integration with line-of-business applications, mobile devices, or offline using **Unity Briefcase**.
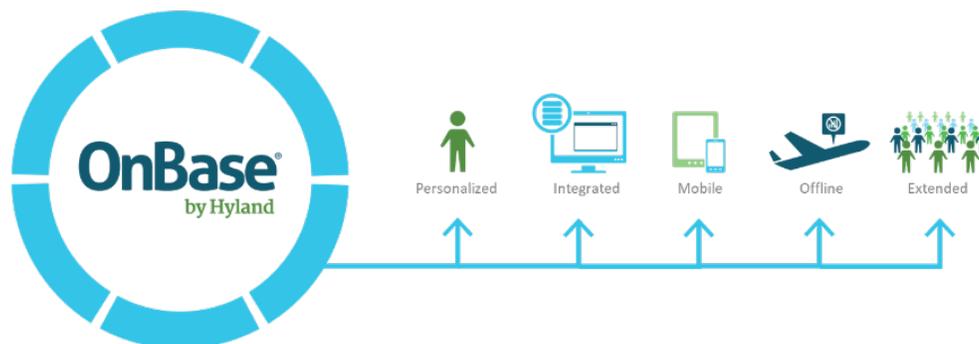
Document Retrieval

OnBase **Document Retrieval** allows keyword-based searching of all available documents to a user. The search criteria panel is dynamic based on which document type or document type group is selected, and of course the results are filtered based on the user's permissions and security.

Document Retrieval also has a configurable maximum number of returned documents, along with warnings to end users regarding unrestricted queries, which protects the database from becoming overtaxed by large queries. This provides an important control for network and application performance.

Custom Queries

OnBase administrators can create and configure **Custom Queries** that allow business users to search document types needed for specific business functions, simply by selecting commonly used keyword criteria. For example, a claims processor can search all documents related to a claim, regardless of the document type, simply by typing the claim number in a search field.

Cross References

Cross References can be used to link groups of document types together if one or more specific keyword values match. Similar to an inner join in a database table, these allow end users to quickly locate additional documents related to the document they are currently viewing. The document types configured in a cross-reference must all share a common keyword type, and that keyword must have the same value for those documents to be retrievable via cross-reference.

File Cabinets and Folders

In addition to Cross References, documents can be grouped together using File Cabinets and Folders. Based on common keyword values, File Cabinets and Folders organize documents in an intuitive, easy-to-use format, allowing business users to perform their duties more effectively. File Cabinets and Folders, like Cross References, are configured based on common keyword values across multiple document types.

Integrate

The OnBase platform is broad and capable enough to be used exclusively "out-of-the-box," and can effectively manage the capture, indexing, processing, and retrieval of content for most business processes and functions. This includes many configuration-based integrations, and occasional custom development, to maximize the value OnBase provides.

Service Oriented Architecture (SOA) Integration

The OnBase Application Server and Enterprise Integration Servers are **Service Oriented Architecture (SOA)** integration ready. Simply put, SOA enables business applications and databases to exchange information in a standardized format using centralized web services. Featuring both SOAP and RESTful service configurations, as well as screen-level and data-level interactions, OnBase seamlessly integrates into any organization's service oriented architecture.

Enterprise Integration Server

Enterprise Integration Server (EIS) provides real-time, data-level integration with other business applications using a configurable user interface that eliminates the need for custom code. Organizations can use EIS to publish forms, send and receive documents and metadata, and interact with OnBase workflows and case management applications. This ensures that your line of business applications remain updated in real time, with no coding required.

Host Application Integration Modules

OnBase provides and supports integration modules for a wide range of business host applications, including SAP, PeopleSoft, RightFax, Epic, FAST, and many others. Even if your organization has not adopted SOA for deeper data integraiton, OnBase still provides many ways to integrate with your host business applications.

Application Enabler

For screen-level interaction with host applications, **Application Enabler (App Enabler)** gives OnBase the ability to screen scrape data from host applications and pull keyword values and identifiers into OnBase. In addition, App Enabler can provide a lightweight but full-featured way to interact with documents stored in OnBase without ever leaving the host application.

App Enabler also provides automated document search and retrieval based on data presented on the host application screen. This includes flags for missing documents, a viewer to examine documents, and the ability to update documents while working in the host application.

OnBase Unity API

For rare occasions when custom development is still required to interface with an application, update an external database, or perform other business functions, OnBase provides a full-featured API development suite. From simple **Unity Scripts,** which are small custom scripts used to execute specific actions, to full integrations, the **OnBase Unity API** supports all necessary functions for OnBase to fit seamlessly into any architecture.

Measure

OnBase provides a comprehensive suite of reporting and monitoring capabilities with total visibility into document and/or work volumes, performance metrics, and long-term trends.
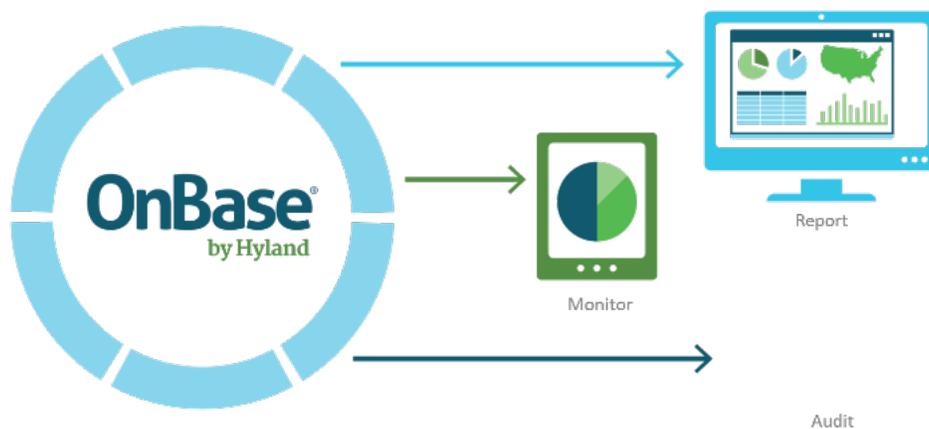
Report Services

For large volume data analysis, long-term trend analysis, and comprehensive historical reporting, OnBase has one of the industry's best reporting suites in its **Report Services** module. This module allows users to combine data from OnBase with data from external databases, and is fully configurable. Report Services includes a large selection of pre-configured reports, as well as a "Business Objects style" reporting interface for building and saving custom report configurations.

Dashboards

For real-time, easy to understand metrics on work volume, SLA performance, and more, **Dashboards** in the Unity Client are a perfect solution. Dashboards bring together data from multiple workflows, case manager applications, and external data sources, including visual representations to help spot trends and points of concern. Easily configurable and viewable from within the Unity Client, Dashboards contain both real-time and scheduled generation notifications and threshold alerts, providing crucial, immediate visibility into what's happening with your business processes.

Business Activity Monitor

Business Activity Monitor (BAM) provides up-to-the-minute work volume and performance monitoring. BAM dashboards are fully configurable through the OnBase web client, and can be set to auto-refresh minute-to-minute for the most current and accurate views of day-to-day business operations.

Store

OnBase offers best-in-class security and storage optimization, keeping your documents and data secure, stable, and accessible while protecting your organization by destroying obsolete data and documents.

Encrypted File Storage

For many organizations, security is absolutely paramount. OnBase has the capability of using **Encrypted Disk Groups** for an additional layer of file storage protection. All documents stored within OnBase's Encrypted Disk Groups are automatically AES 256-bit encrypted while importing into OnBase, making them indecipherable if retrieved outside the OnBase system.

Even within OnBase, files are only accessible to users with specific permissions for those files. This facilitates regulatory compliance with HIPAA Protected Health Information (PHI) and Payment Card Industry (PCI) data security standards.

Multiple File Formats

OnBase has the capability to store, retrieve and display the vast majority of file types in their native format, including Word, PDF, Excel, Outlook, and HTML/XML, as well as the imaging standards of TIFF Group 4, JPEG, PNG and BMP.

Retention Policy Compliance

OnBase's **Document Retention** suite allows for scheduling of documents and data to be kept for a specific period of time, as well as the ability to send documents scheduled for destruction through a final review process to ensure nothing is purged in error. Document Retention policies provide cost savings along with database performance optimization and business liability protection.

Summary

In today's data-driven marketplace, every organization needs to be mindful of how they are managing the content keeping their business running. Document imaging is merely the beginning of a comprehensive content management strategy, and every organization should consider how to continue evolving their strategy to create efficiencies, solve complex business problems, and integrate data.

OnBase's holistic, end-to-end approach to content services is a tremendous example of how a comprehensive enterprise platform can be deployed, configured, and customized to help organizations become more efficient and competitive. Simplified into the areas of Capture, Manage, Access, Integrate, Measure, and Store, OnBase can help any organization consolidate storage, processes, and security for its important content.

About the Author

Sydney Isle, Senior Solutions Architect

Sydney Isle is a Senior Solutions Architect at RPI Consultants and has over six years' experience supporting OnBase, including being an OnBase Certified System Administrator and OnBase Certified Workflow Administrator.

With passion, creativity, and discipline, Sydney delivers OnBase solutions to help clients' businesses run more efficiently and effectively.