Laserfiche 8.1

Laserfiche®
Run Smarter®

BUYERS LABORATORY 2009 BLI ★★★★★ SOLUTIONS

Feature Set ....★★★★★
Value ....★★★★★
Ease of Use ....★★★★★
Ease of Administration ....★★★★⯪
Compatibility ....★★★★☆
Software Integration ....★★★★★
Security ....★★★★★
Dealer Support and Training.............★★★★★
Customer Support and Training ....★★★★★
Global Business Readiness..............★★★★★
Upgrade Path ....★★★★★

OVERVIEW

Laserfiche 8.1 is a unified, server-based document management solution designed to address complex business requirements. It enables companies to integrate legacy systems, third-party databases and information from critical business applications with paper and electronic documents. With the platform's search and retrieval, any information a user needs is right on his or her desktop. Full-text, index and other precision searches reduce time lost on hard-copy file retrieval. Users also get capabilities such as redaction and electronic "sticky" notes.

Laserfiche 8.1 supports both distributed and centralized capture models and both Microsoft and Oracle database platforms. It is also a scalable document management solution that offers a number of modules to enhance its capabilities. The core program archives scanned images, electronic documents, e-mail messages and digital audio and video files. The optional Quick Fields module enables batch processing of documents, with modules for forms processing and specialized capture hardware. With the Workflow module, documents are automatically moved, copied or deleted based on predetermined rules, while automatic notifications ensure prompt action and simplify supervision.

What is Document Management?

Document Management, which is part of content management (sometimes called enterprise content management, or ECM), enables users to organize and manage electronic documents created by a wide variety of applications. When used with scanners or MFPs, document management solutions help organizations convert paper documents into electronic files. This not only allows documents to be accessed far more quickly, but also enables users to much more easily collaborate on the information the documents contain.

Document management solutions are designed for companies that need to enable their employees to work collaboratively or handle document-intensive processes that require many people to access and edit documents. These solutions are designed to aggregate and share content created in nearly any software application and they often make files readable by users who do not have the associated software installed on their PCs.

New Features in Version 8.x

- Navigation toolbar, Quick Search toolbar and dockable panes for improved ease of use

- Expanded annotation abilities, including underline, strikethrough, text box, callout text and polygon annotation

- Basic Search includes updated user interface and new search types, including searching by field; searching sticky notes, annotations, text boxes and callout text also supported

- New management and design tools for the Workflow Module

- Scanning module interface now includes thumbnail view

- With Audit Trail, report configuration and generation is now done via a new Web interface

- Security for viewing audit reports is now Windows-based with closer integration with Windows Active Directory

- Whereas previously some form of client was needed to view the content from a Laserfiche repository, it is now possible to map a network location as the Laserfiche repository and access the content through Windows Explorer.

- Fields can now be enabled to select multiple values

- The Merge Fields feature prevents administrators from having duplicate fields after migrating a repository

- The revision history for all sticky notes can be tracked in a repository.

Product Profile

Product: Laserfiche

Version: 8.1

Software Developer: Laserfiche, a division of Compulink Management Center, Inc.

Server Requirements: 2-GHz Pentium 4-class CPU, 2 GB RAM, Microsoft Windows Server 2003 (Service Pack 2 or later)

Client Workstation Requirements:
2-GHz Pentium 4-class CPU, 512 MB RAM, Windows XP (SP2 or later) or Vista, Microsoft Office

Supported Devices: Any scanner or MFP can be integrated to scan directly into Laserfiche repositories

Suggested Retail Price: Pricing for Laserfiche 8.1 Avante starts at $1,500 for a Microsoft SQL Server Express version; named user licenses are $500 each. According to the company, a typical installation for a five-user office is estimated to be $4,000, not including any additional professional services such as installation and training, which are highly dependent on customer-specific circumstances.

Availability: Laserfiche mainly sells through the Value Added Reseller network, with more than 93 percent of its business done through the channel. Distributor-class resellers exist in key geographical regions to provide an additional layer of more in-depth sales and technical support locally (throughout the U.S. and worldwide, including the United Kingdom, Middle East, etc.) and all VARs are also supported by Laserfiche Corporate. A direct solutions group exists within Laserfiche for strategic sales and services for customers that require a relationship directly from the software manufacturer.

⚠ What We Thought   ★★★★★

Laserfiche 8.1 is a robust, scalable document management solution that offers a broad range of functionality, along with impressive ease of use and ease of administration. The platform's modular capabilities make it suitable for companies of any size, as it can scale easily from just a few users in a single workgroup to thousands of users across an enterprise. The system accommodates both hard-copy and electronic documents, and is unlike some competitors in that it supports both Microsoft and Oracle database platforms. The thick client user interface is very intuitive and simple to learn and use, and offers a number of enhancements over the previous version. A Web-based thin client is also available and features very similar capabilities and functionality as the desktop client software.

Search capabilities are robust, and now include entries owned by a specific user. Users can also search for data in sticky notes, annotations, text boxes and callout text. The intuitive WorkFlow module has been completely rebuilt, and features an easy-to-use interface that allows administrators to build complex workflows for users. Further, files from any scanner or MFP can be scanned out of network folders with Universal Capture, which is standard. In addition, eCopy and NSi have developed connectors to Laserfiche, offering control-panel integration from many leading MFP lines.

The product is truly global, with availability in U.S., Europe, Latin America, Australasia, the Middle East and Africa, as well as language support for English, Spanish, Portuguese, French, Arabic and Vietnamese, with additional languages in development. Support for both resellers and customers is also impressive.

Strengths

- Versatile system accommodates both hard-copy and electronic documents

- Support for both Microsoft and Oracle database platforms

- The system is completely modular, and buyers only pay for those capabilities they need

- Easy to use via client software and browser-based interface

- Excellent overall ease of administration

- Simple procedures for associating metadata to documents

- Robust search capabilities

- Simple importing and exporting of files into a repository

- Intuitive Workflow module allows administrators to easily build complex workflows for users

- The optional WebLink module opens up some of the Laserfiche database for public consumption

- Fully Department of Defense (DoD) compliant, and documents can be erased securely with deletion protocols compatible with DoD 5220.22-M

Weaknesses

- Like some other network document management solutions not developed by a hardware OEM for its embedded platform, Laserfiche requires a third-party scan-capture platform (such as eCopy ShareScan or NSi AutoStore) to enable control panel integration at the MFP

- Customers must provide and install their own compatible SQL database separately

- Runs only under Microsoft server and client operating systems

Feature Set ★★★★★

Laserfiche 8.1 and its associate modules deliver a very complete feature set. The platform can accommodate both electronic documents and hard-copy documents captured via a scanner of MFP, and documents can reside in the system in a range of file formats. Users can annotate documents with a number of annotation tools, and the system's search capabilities are particularly comprehensive. In addition to an intuitive client user interface, a Web-based user interface is available and features the same functionality as the client user interface.

Previously scanned images, PDFs, word-processing documents and other electronic files can be imported into a repository, and users can also send documents from Microsoft Office, Microsoft Outlook and Windows Explorer directly to a Laserfiche repository. When exporting images, users can choose to save in different file formats, including PDF. Users can also password-protect images exported as PDFs. Users can export images, text, briefcases, electronic documents and search results lists. Metadata capabilities are also supported.

For administrators, Laserfiche 8.1's Workflow module supports the creation and deployment of complex document workflows to automate business-critical tasks. OCR capabilities come standard with Laserfiche. Customers that wish to integrate with additional OCR engines can do so through the optional Quick Fields capture module. The Quick Fields module enables batch processing of documents, with modules for forms processing and specialized capture hardware.

The WebLink module is geared toward public access and features an interface similar to a search engine. It will often be embedded into a company's Web site to allow customers of that company to view various materials stored in the Laserfiche application. City organizations that are Laserfiche customers often use the WebLink application so that citizens can view agendas from government meetings and even traffic tickets.

Audit Trail capabilities are built into certain product line bundles such as Laserfiche Rio and our Records Management Edition, and available as an optional add-on otherwise.

The system is fully Department of Defense (DoD) compliant, and customers include the U.S. Congress and U.S. Secret Service. Laserfiche Records Management Edition is DoD 5015.2-certified going into its fourth term. Redaction is also available. In addition, Laserfiche 8.1 demonstrates regulatory compliance with Sarbanes-Oxley, HIPAA, and others.

Value   ★★★★★

The system is completely modular, and buyers only pay for those capabilities they need.

Pricing for Laserfiche 8.1 Avante starts at $1,500 for a Microsoft SQL Server Express version; named user licenses are $500 each. According to the company, a typical installation for a five-user office is estimated to be $4,000, not including any additional professional services such as installation and training, which are highly dependent on customer-specific circumstances.

For the enterprise level, Laserfiche offers the Rio package and the United Package. Pricing for the Laserfiche 8 Rio Enterprise Content Management (ECM) system depends on the number of users and modules, and can range from $100 to $700 per user. Laserfiche Team and United Pricing depend on the modules selected. The Workflow module is built into the standard server price in both the Avante and Rio packages.

The thin client, Web Access, is included in the Rio package at no additional cost. For Laserfiche Avante, Web Access can be added to the package for an extra 20 percent cost per full user.

The list pricing of the WebLink module depends on whether it is the Avante or Rio bundle. For Avante, the more retrieval users are purchased the cheaper the per-user cost. A good basis would be $25,000 for the WebLink Public Portal along with 50 concurrent users. In general for Laserfiche Rio, an unlimited public portal license is available for list price $45,000.

Basic Quick Fields for Avante costs approximately $600, and for Avante there are multiple packages of Quick Fields available. As an example, Laserfiche Quick Fields Basic (Quick Fields, Bar Code, Real-Time Lookup, Pattern Matching) offers a list price of $2,500 per Quick Fields station, while adding Zone OCR to that package would make the per Quick Fields workstation list price $5,000.

Ease of Use   ★★★★★

Thanks to Laserfiche 8.1's intuitive interface, end users within an organization should have no trouble learning how to navigate the system. To open a repository on the Laserfiche start page, users simply double click on the repository within the Available Repositories window or highlight the desired repository and select Open. While the Client automatically detects Laserfiche servers on the network, occasionally there are network configurations that prevent the Client from detecting the Server.

The Attach button allows users to put in the name/IP address of the Server machine and select the repository. This only needs to be the first time users run the Client.
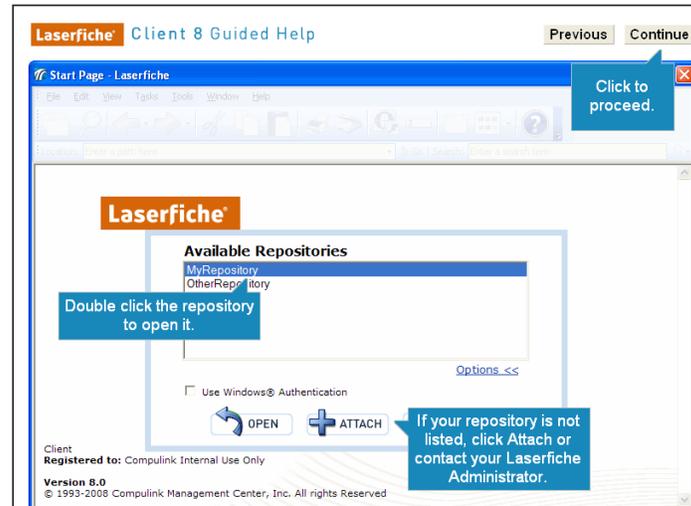
The Folder pane on the left allows users to access files and system resources. The Folder pane can be used much like Windows Explorer to locate and display file information. Users can view the hierarchy of their folder and drive contents, as well as the individual contents of each folder. Users can create a new folder and rename and delete folders by simply right clicking on the selected folders. When entries are deleted, they are moved to the Recycle Bin, a holding area created to prevent permanent deletion. To the right of the Folder pane is the Contents pane, which displays either the content of the currently open folder or the results of the last search performed. The files are clearly labeled within the Contents pane window, and also include the number of pages, whether or not the file is indexed, as well as file creation date.
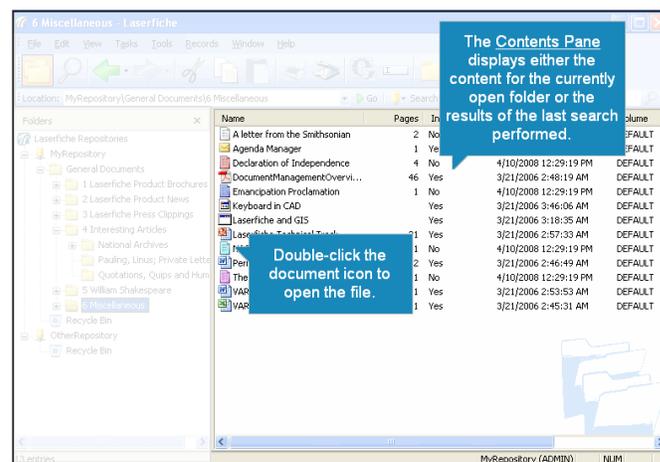
Above the Folder pane, the Location bar displays the path to the folder selected in the Folder pane. Users can also simply type the path to go directly to a folder or

item. The search window to the right of the search window allows users to search through text, entry names, fields and annotation text quickly without opening the Search pane. Users can also add new search types to the quick search list that are useful for specific needs.
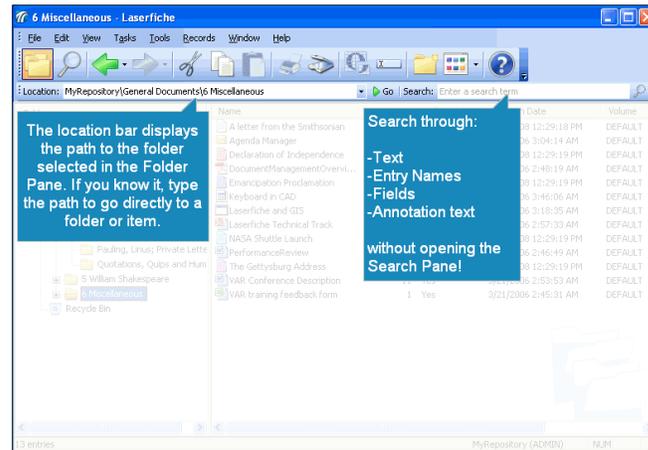
When a file is selected, it is opened within the Document Viewer, which allows users to work with a document's images, text, thumbnails, and field data, including annotations. The Document Viewer is made up of the Image pane, the Text pane, the Metadata pane and the Thumbnail pane. The Image pane displays the document image, and the Text pane allows users to add or modify searchable text. The Metadata pane allows users to add additional information to organize their documents, including category and date. For easier navigation, the Thumbnail pane displays the document's pages at a smaller scale. Each pane can be selected to be viewed or hidden with the four icons to the top right on this screenshot.
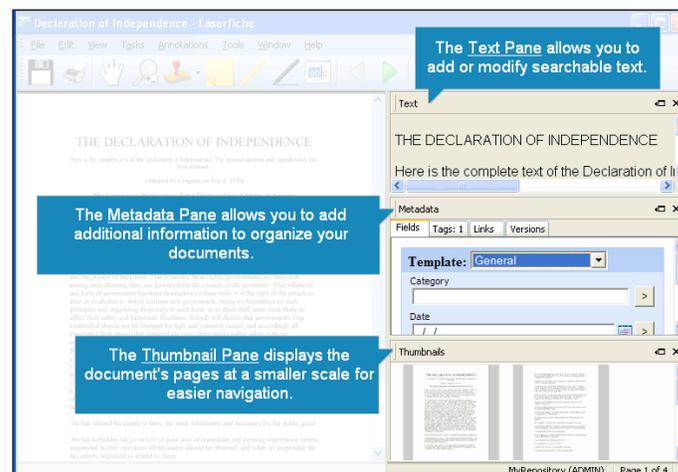

On the toolbar above the Location bar and Search pane are icons that allow users to easily toggle back and forth between the different capabilities of the system. Users can quickly access the Search pane by clicking on the magnifying glass icon on

the toolbar. The Basic Search features the same capabilities as the Quick Search window, allowing quick searching of text, entry names, fields and annotations.
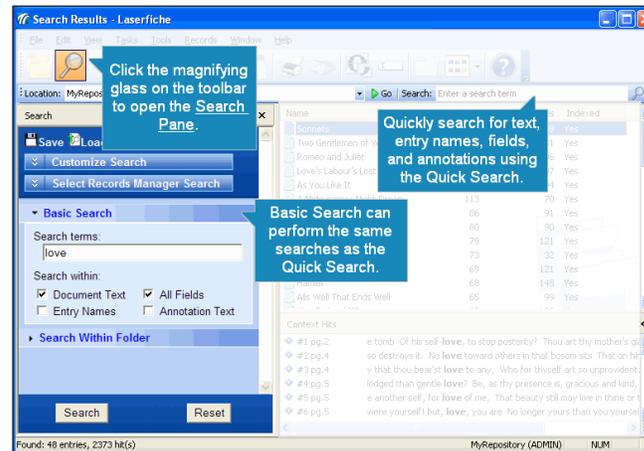
Users can choose from a variety of search types by clicking Customize Search. The custom search capabilities are robust, and include Modification Date, Document/Folder Name, Electronic Documents, Tags, Relationship, Version, Within Volume, Has Pages and Advanced. Entries created, checked out, or owned by a specific user can also be searched. Users can also search for data in sticky notes, annotations, text boxes and callout text.
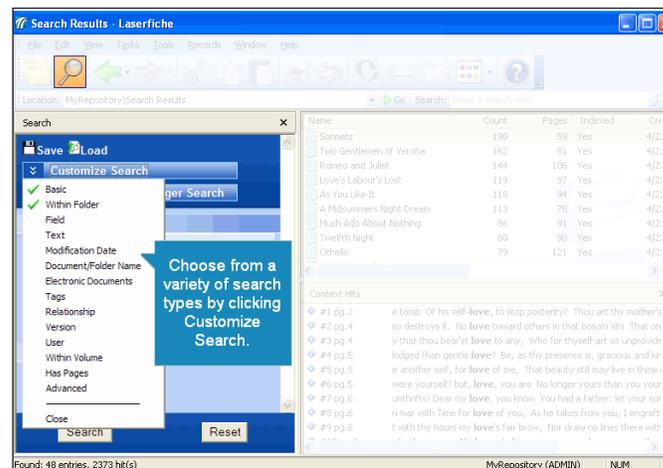

Importing of previously scanned images, PDFs, word-processing documents and other electronic files into a repository is simple overall. Users open the File pull-down menu and select Import. A window pops up allowing users to define basic document properties, including file name and the folder in which the user wishes it to be stored. Users can also easily select whether the document being imported will generate searchable text and if pages will be indexed by clicking on the respective checkboxes. Users can also send documents from Microsoft Office, Microsoft Outlook and Windows Explorer directly to a Laserfiche repository.
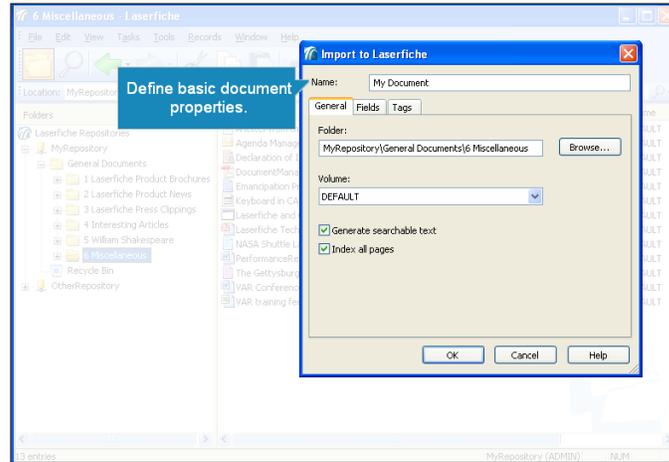
Exporting images is also simple overall. Users open the File pull-down menu and select Export. When exporting images, users can choose to save in different file formats, including PDF. Users can also password-protect images exported as PDFs. Users can export images, text, electronic documents and search results lists.
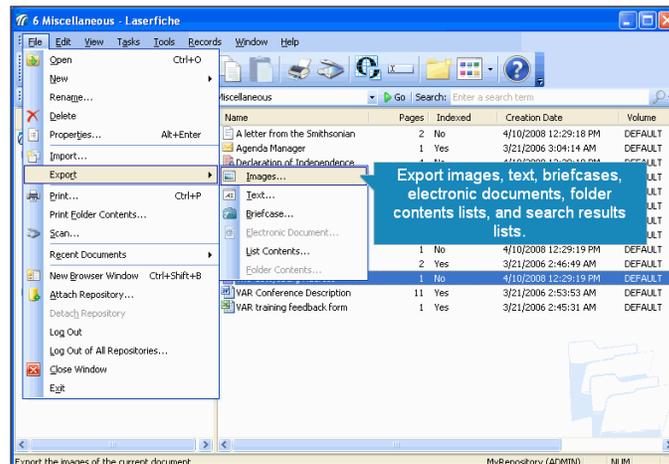
An array of annotations, accessed from the Annotations pull-down menu, can be applied to documents, some to either an image or text, and others to only an image. Highlight, Redaction, Underline and Strikethrough can be applied to an image and/or text. Sticky Note, Stamp, Rectangle, Text Box, Callout Text, Line, Freehand, Image and Attachment can only be applied to an image.

Associating metadata to documents is also simple. Fields, tags, links and versions are available on four separate tabs within the metadata window. Under the Fields tab, users can select a template, or add/remove fields independent of templates.
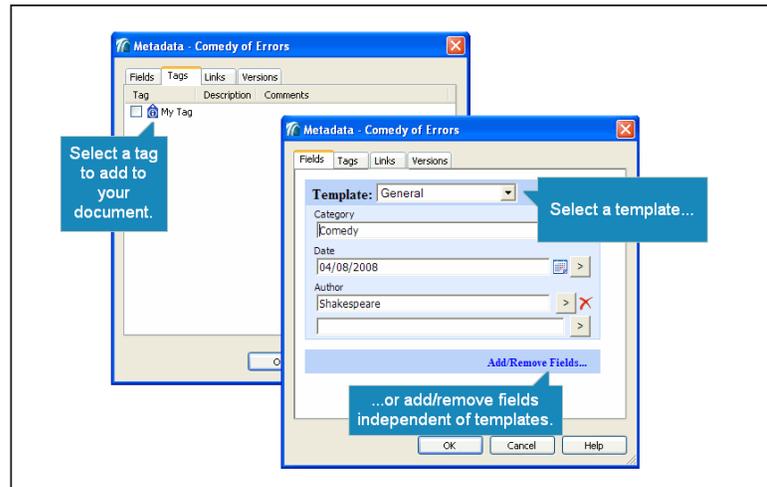
Via the Links tab, users can link to or delete another link to a document in the repository by clicking on one of the two icons. Via the Versions tab, four icons allow users to create, import, delete and view versions of a document.
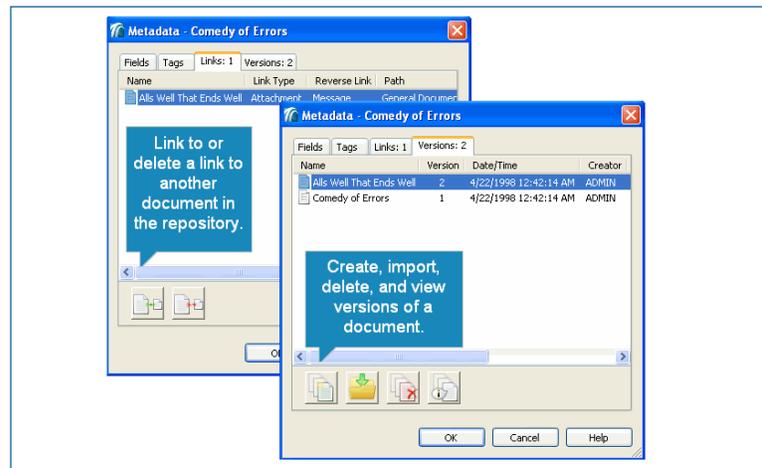
An array of icons on the toolbar allows users to modify the selected document. Electronic files stored as content keep their native application extensions (for example: PDF or Word Doc). The native application does need to be installed if a user wants to open a document in its native application from the Laserfiche repository. However, via Laserfiche Snapshot, a virtual printer, a shadow TIFF is automatically generated if the native application is not installed, so viewing is possible without any extra step. Also via Snapshot, users can save a file as a TIFF image in Laserfiche to start.

Searchable text can be edited by clicking on the edit text button on the toolbar or by right-clicking in the Text Pane and selecting Edit Text. Pages can also be rearranged by simply dragging the thumbnails to the new location. To create a new document from an existing page, simply right-click the thumbnail and select New Document. Pages can also be cut, copied, deleted, rotated and sent in e-mail by right-clicking the thumbnail.

To create a new document from an existing page, right-click the thumbnail and select New Document.
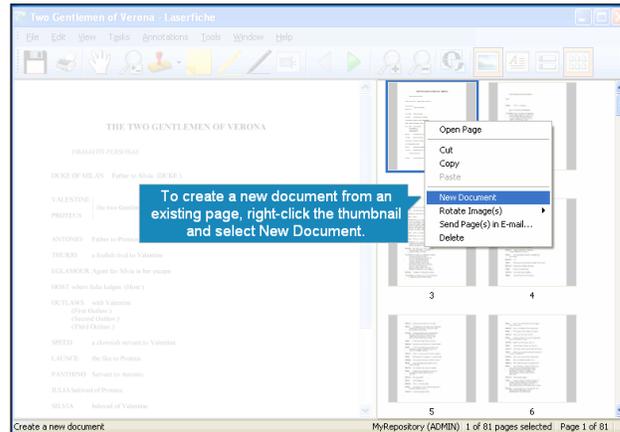
A Web-based user interface is also available and offers a very similar setup to the user interface, making it easy for users to switch back and forth between both types of clients. The Folder Browser consists of the Folder pane, the Preview pane and the Contents pane. The Folder pane provides an overview of the folder structure, allowing users to browse through folders and the recycle bin. Much like the Folder pane on the user interface, users can expand and collapse folders by clicking + or -.

Below the Folder pane, the Preview pane can display a thumbnail view of a document's pages and other information about a document or folder. Clicking preview displays the entry type, when it was last modified, how many pages the document has, the folder size, the author and path. The Contents pane displays the contents of the currently selected folder in the Folder pane or the results for the last performed search. Links are conveniently provided to each previous folder users navigated through to get to the current location. A quick search window is located above the Contents pane.

The Folder Browser consists of three panes.
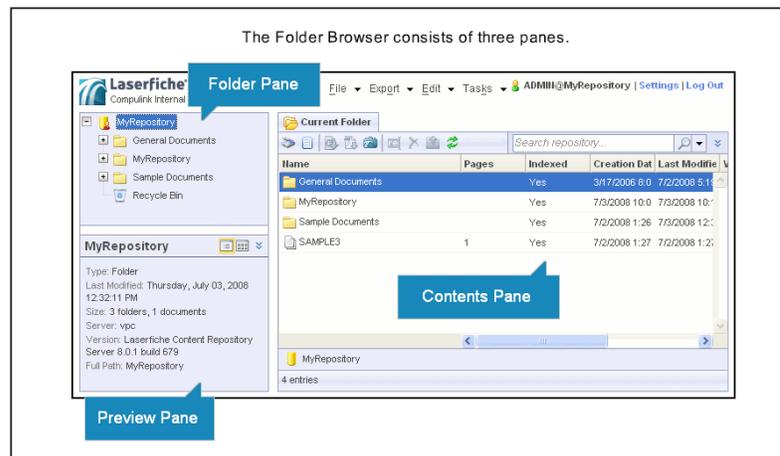
Like the user interface of the thick client interface, the Document Viewer of the Web-based interface is well laid-out and intuitive, and consists of the Metadata, Thumbnails, Image and Text panes, and operation is very similar. The Metadata pane allows users to view and manage field information, tags, links and versions assigned to a

document. Each Metadata type has its own section where changes can be made. The Thumbnails pane displays miniature representations of each image page in the open document, allowing users to preview a page before opening, copying, moving, rearranging, or deleting. The Image pane displays the document's pages and allows users to manage the document's annotations. The Text pane allows users to view and edit the text of their document. Users can also view and manage their text annotations.
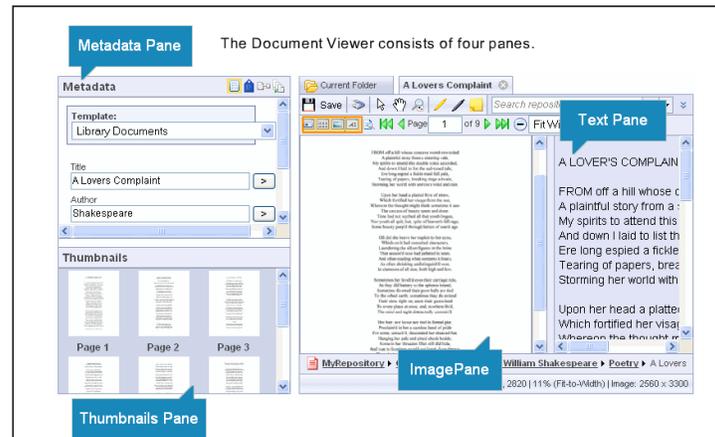
Ease of Administration ★★★★⯪

While Laserfiche says the best practice is for the Value Added Reseller to do the installation, configuration, and initial training of the application, installation of the server and client are simple enough that typical users can do it. Laserfiche also conducts regional training and holds an annual user conference hosted by the Laserfiche Institute for its users and customers.

Easy-to-follow quick-start and installation guides offer a step-by-step look and explanation at setting up the software at the server and client workstations and any optional modules such as Workflow, Quick Fields, etc. For Laserfiche Web Access or WebLink, only a Web browser is needed.

Before installing the Laserfiche Server, users should make sure the computer has access to a functioning network and to Oracle or Microsoft SQL Server. Customers must provide and install their own compatible SQL database separately. Many other solutions include a SQL database component as part of the standard install.

 Once the Laserfiche installation CD is inserted, a menu displaying Laserfiche installation options appears. When users or administrators click the Install Laserfiche Server link, the Laserfiche Server installation will launch. After users choose their preferred language, the Setup Wizard guides them through the rest of the install process.

If users are upgrading from the 32-bit installation of Laserfiche Server 8, their upgraded Laserfiche 8.1 Server will remain a Win32 installation. If users are on a 64-bit machine and want to use the x64 version of Laserfiche Server, they must uninstall their current 32-bit version of Laserfiche Server 8 and reinstall.

The Workflow module enables administrators to automate the routing and organization of entries in a Laserfiche repository. The process of building a custom workflow is simple overall. More than 30 common activities are organized into categories in the Toolbox pane. Available activities include routing documents to users, adding tags, adding sticky notes, sending e-mails, enforcing deadlines, assigning rights, making routing decisions and more. Activities in the Laserfiche Routing group are especially useful, as administrators can program the system to route documents, assign or remove tags, send e-mails, and use wait conditions in a single step, for example. Via the Scripting group, administrators can insert custom C# or VB.NET scripts into a workflow that can interact with Laserfiche repositories or third-party software and databases.

The process of building a workflow is now easier than ever with the introduction of activities.

There are over 30 activities organized into categories in the Toolbox Pane.
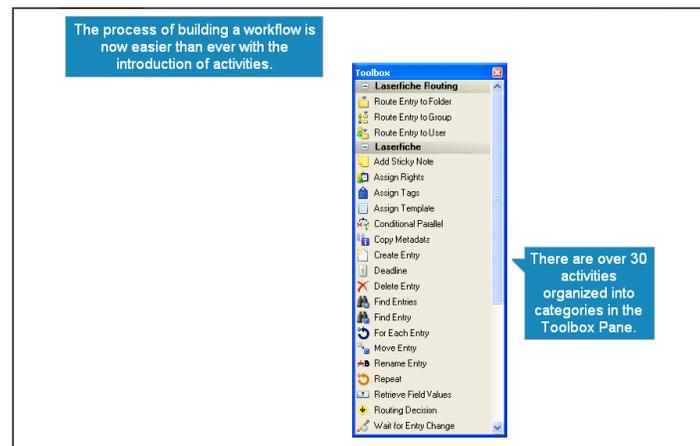
Administrators can open, close and rearrange panes in the Workflow module layout. The Toolbox Pane to the left contains all the Workflow activities, and administrators can simply drag and drop an activity onto the Designer pane, which is the canvas on which workflows are built. To the right of the Designer pane is the Properties pane, which is used to configure how activities will perform. The Properties pane is also used to specify a workflow's name, description and Laserfiche connection information. Below the Toolbox pane, the Minimap pane displays a zoomed out view of a workflow definition.
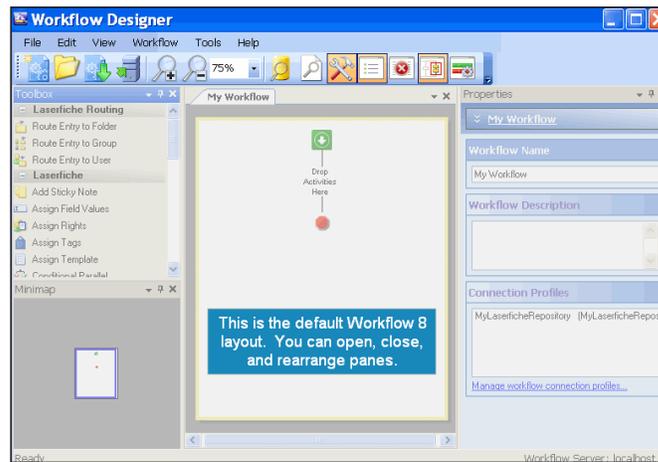
The Rule Manager pane, which is opened and closed via the right-most icon on the toolbar, allows administrators to view all published workflows and configure starting rules. Administrators simply select the desired workflow they wish to manage, and are given the options to add a rule, delete a rule, edit a rule, or disable a rule.
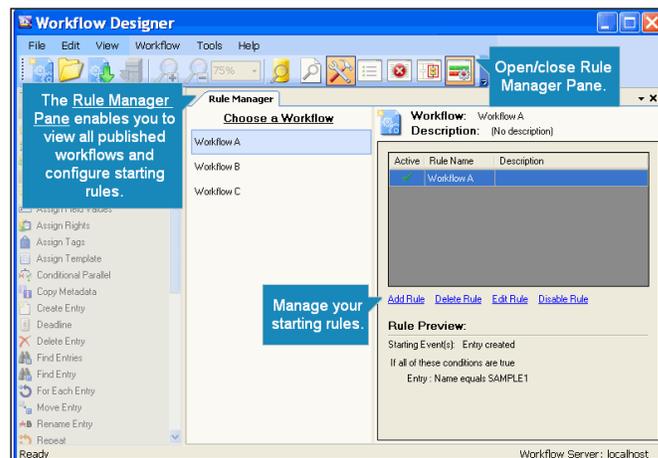

Users can open and close the Search pane via the magnifying glass icon on the toolbar. The Search pane allows administrators to search for specific workflow instances whose starting rule has been triggered. Administrators can search by workflow name or workflow status, and can also customize a search. When a search is triggered, the Search Results pane displays the results of a search performed in the Search pane. Each row of the Search Results pane represents a workflow instance matching the search criteria. Information displayed for each instance includes Starting Name, Entry ID, Original Path, Status, Start Time, Last Status Update and if any errors have occurred. Administrators can double-click an instance for additional information.

Via the Profile Editor, administrators can simply and quickly define a Laserfiche server, repository and user that the workflow will use. The user defined must have sufficient rights to perform all actions the workflow calls for. All activities can use the same default connection information, or administrators can assign it on an activity-by-activity basis.
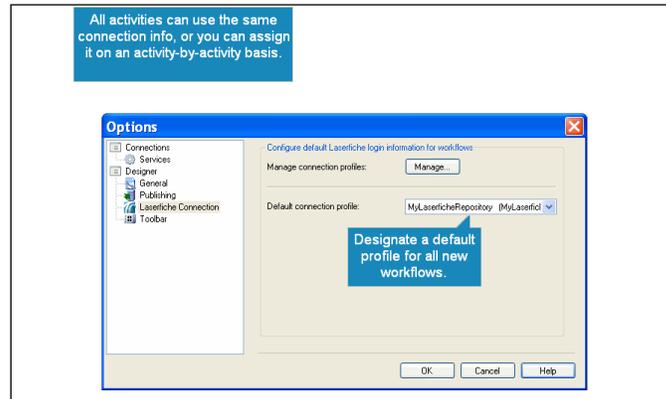
The Workflow Administration Console enables administrators to view running and suspended workflows plus all published items. The workflow publication history and starting rule publication history can also be searched. Windows users and groups that are allowed to create and manage workflows are also defined via the Workflow Administration Console. General permissions for users include Administrator, Publish Workflow, Publish Workflow Template, Create Starting Rules, Search for Workflows and View Runtime Information.

Building a Workflow

Step 2 of 3
Publish the workflow.
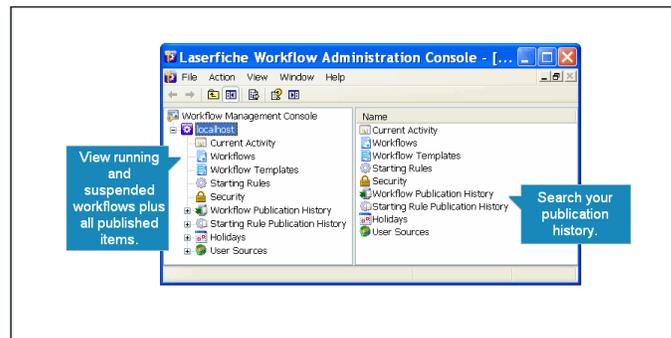
Step 3 of 3
Assign a starting to the published workflow.
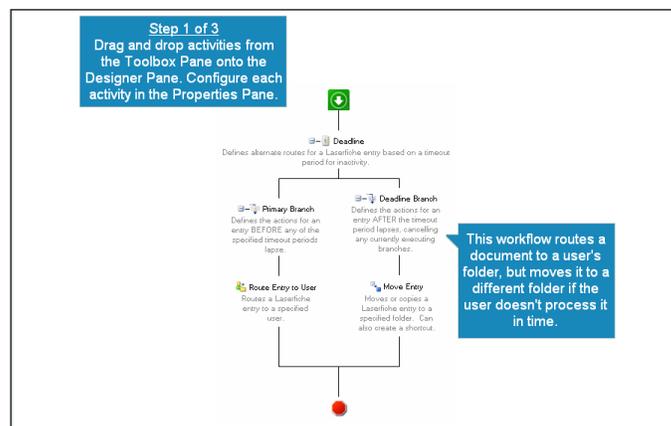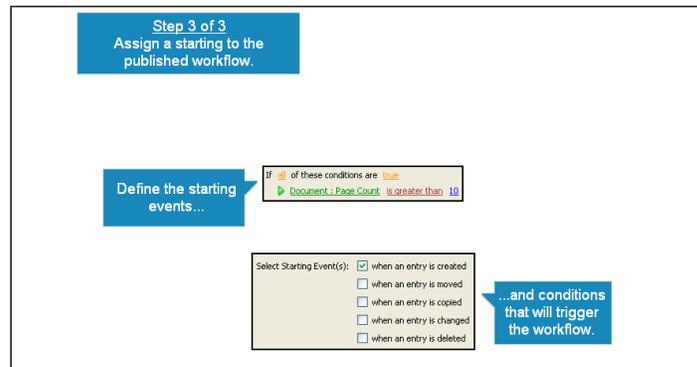
New to the Administration Console, all logged information is now stored in the Windows Event Viewer. This means that almost all errors, warnings and events relating to Laserfiche can be accessed in a single place. Customizations are now stored on the Laserfiche server inside a user's Attributes tab. This allows a specific user's customization settings to be available on any machine he or she uses. Whereas previously some form of client was needed to view the content from a Laserfiche repository, it is now possible to map a network location as the Laserfiche repository and access the content through Windows Explorer. Electronic documents can be saved directly into a repository as well.

Administrators can also now assign security, configure auditing and define attributes directly to Windows user and group accounts. It is also no longer necessary to link Windows accounts to Laserfiche accounts. Passwords can now be automatically generated, and specific users can now be excluded from a repository's password age policy. Specific users and groups can be limited to read-only licenses; therefore it is no longer necessary for users to define their license type when logging in.

New to metadata, a single field can be used by multiple templates. For example, if two templates need an Author field, administrators no longer need to create two separate fields, as both templates can share a single Author field. The Merge Fields feature prevents administrators from having duplicate fields after migrating a repository. Fields can also be merged during the migration.

Additional enhancements include the ability to export a Laserfiche 8.1 volume in Laserfiche 6 or 7 format. Also, the revision history for all sticky notes can be tracked in a repository. Entries can now be associated with an owner, thereby allowing a user to manage his or her own entries without the help of the administrator. Further, system managers are now authenticated using Windows credentials, so no extra password is needed. System managers can also be created without adding them to administrator's group by simply right-clicking on the System Manager's node and selecting New Manager.

Compatibility ★★★★

Laserfiche's open-architecture nature allows for easy integration with both software and hardware manufacturers, allowing any networkable scanner or MFP to be integrated to scan directly into Laserfiche folders and repositiories. Like some other network document management solutions not developed by a hardware OEM for its embedded platform, Laserfiche requires a third-party scan-capture platform (such as eCopy ShareScan or NSi AutoStore) to enable control panel integration at the MFP. That said, since Laserfiche can be set to watch and automatically process files that arrive in a network folder, administrators can set up a dedicated destination folder on MFPs that support that functionality to make it easy for users to scan directly to the Laserfiche repository

Lexmark and other MFP providers have developed touch-screen integration with Laserfiche. The Intuition line of products is an integrated Laserfiche document management inside a network scanner. For example, IntuitionMD is Kodak's ScanStation 520 with Laserfiche built inside as an all-in-one turnkey server, client, and scanning station. Laserfiche also maintains a "Support Scanner" list through the Scanner Certification department and has an active relationship with all major scanner manufacturers to certify new scanners with the latest version of Laserfiche.

Minimum server requirements are relatively modest, and include a 2-GHz Pentium 4-class CPU and 2 GB of RAM. Laserfiche 8.1 runs only under Windows Server 2003 (Service Pack 2 or later) and Server 2008. Client workstation requirements include a 2-GHz Pentium 4-class CPU, 512 MB of RAM, Windows XP (SP2 or later) or Vista, and Microsoft Office. While this reliance on Microsoft operating systems is not a huge drawback given the dominance of Windows in the workplace, it should be noted that other document management and ECM platforms support other operating systems, including Unix, Linux and Mac OS.

Software Integration   ★★★★★

The Laserfiche Professional Developer Partnership (PDP) program provides an opportunity for system integrators and technology vendors to develop custom integrations for Laserfiche with other back-end applications and certified solutions are offered on the Laserfiche Marketplace (www.laserfiche.com/marketplace).Third parties such as eCopy, NSi, EFI and IKON have developed connectors to Laserfiche. Laserfiche also has a very strong two-way integration with Microsoft SharePoint.

Active Directory integration is fully supported for security (log in, access rights, privileges, etc).

Security   ★★★★★

Laserfiche is non-proprietary, and users can normalize all file types under TIFF Group 4, which is the standard for secure and unalterable images for most governments. According to the company, anyone with a full copy of the Adobe suite can open a PDF and modify it. Redaction is available.

Laserfiche runs over HTTP or HTTPS unaffected, making it firewall-friendly. Laserfiche uses WebDav as its communications protocol. With all communication being on a single port, it is very easy to open that one port on the firewall for communication between the Laserfiche server and one of its modules, such as WebLink. Administrators can assign security and define attributes directly to Windows user and group accounts. Administrators can also specify depth of access in the file tree—for example, to a general folder, but not to its subfolders. Passwords can be automatically generated. In addition, user accounts can be locked out from login after a specified number of failed attempts or a period of inactivity. Specific users and groups can also be limited to read-only licenses. Access to records can be defined and restricted with security tags. Repository content can be secured by folder or volume, and access can be restricted to metadata or annotations.

Security for viewing audit reports is now Windows-based with closer integration with Windows Active Directory. The comprehensive Audit Trail functionality requires users to submit reasons for printing, e-mailing and exporting documents, as well as enforce the application of watermarks to authenticate printed documents. All interactions can be audited with the document repository, and events can be specified to record per group or user.

The system is also fully Department of Defense (DoD) compliant, and customers include the U.S. Congress and U.S. Secret Service. Documents can be erased securely with deletion protocols compatible with DoD 5220.22-M. The DoD-certified

Records Management Edition provides integrated records management tools to simplify the management of documents and records. Laserfiche 8.1's features help organizations meet compliance with Sarbanes-Oxley, HIPAA, and others.

The Laserfiche Server can be configured to have SSL encryption on data transfer, and the client can be told to use the same SSL encryption through Windows TLS settings or whatever their trusted root authority that created the certification is configured for. For Web clients, configuration is done through browser options (for example, Internet Explorer advanced settings where you can disable the different versions of SSL and TLS). Winhttp is used for the SSL connection].

Laserfiche uses AES 128-bit encryption for archived volume (file storage) encryption (older, read-only documents). Through the Professional Developer Partnership (PDP) program, Laserfiche has integrations with digital signature vendors such as ARX / Co-sign.

Company Profile

Vendor:	Laserfiche, a division of Compulink Management Center, Inc. Long Beach, CA
Phone:	1-800-985-8533
Web:	www.laserfiche.com
Status:	Private
Founded:	Incorporated in 1987, Laserfiche has retained same executive management team for more than 20 years.
2008 Revenues:	Laserfiche is a privately owned corporation and does not make publicly available its revenue and/or other financial statistics. However, Laserfiche has been profitable each year since 1994, and further uses internal revenue to fund future growth, and currently as of June 2009 enjoys a 16 percent YTD growth.
Employees:	200+

Dealer Support and Training ★★★★★

Laserfiche's software support engineers are dedicated to just this solution and work out of the company's corporate office in Long Beach. All Laserfiche VARs undergo extensive training provided through the Laserfiche Institute. Basic VAR Training, a prerequisite for Advanced Training, is required for all new VARs. Requiring a full week, it is conducted at Laserfiche's Long Beach, CA headquarters at no charge. Training is divided into sales and technical tracks. Further Advanced VAR training is offered once a quarter at Long Beach. Laserfiche also takes its training on the road in its Regional Training series—typically one major city a month.

The Support Site is a comprehensive resource including an extensive knowledge base, as well as educational resources such as white papers, best practice guides and training videos. An active forum for the Laserfiche Community to ask questions and exchange ideas and chat directly via the Web with Laserfiche software support engineers is available during normal hours of operation. In addition, all Lab courses offered from at the Laserfiche Institute are available for download.

Normal hours of operation for telephone support is 6 AM to 6 PM PST. On a case-by-case basis, telephone support can be provided outside of normal hours of operation either via extended support engineers' hours at Laserfiche corporate office or calls routed to Laserfiche's Shanghai, China development office or regional call centers (United Kingdom, Middle East, etc).

While not required, VARs are encouraged to apply the same problem-solving methodology that Laserfiche Software Support Engineers go through as training (Kepnor-Tregoe Logic/Deduction). Also, VARs with strategic enterprise accounts are trained by Laserfiche's Support and Escalation teams to be able to provide a level of support that meets the standards for these customers; i.e., debugging, performance tracing, etc.

Distributor-class resellers exist in key geographical regions to provide an additional layer of more in-depth sales and technical support locally (throughout the U.S. and worldwide, including the United Kingdom, Middle East, etc.) and all VARs are also supported by Laserfiche Corporate. A direct solutions group exists within Laserfiche for strategic sales and services for customers that require a relationship directly from the software manufacturer.

Customer Support and Training ★★★★★

For new customers, Laserfiche's vendors typically provide training. The length of training depends on the scope of the project and how many people are involved,

but typically the three primary user types—general users, scanner operators, and administrators—can all be handled in a single day.

The Laserfiche Software Assurance Plan (LSAP), which provides support and free upgrades, costs approximately 20 percent to 25 percent of the solution price, depending on whether customers are purchasing the basic or premium package. LSAP members get new releases, product updates and technical support from their reseller.

The Basic version of LSAP allows for rapid-response telephone technical support (aggressive SLOs correlated with case priority and severity); free access to the latest hotfixes, product updates and patches; 100 percent credit toward product upgrades; and 24/7 access to the Knowledge Base articles, discussion forums and educational resources on the Support Site. The Premium version of LSAP includes all that's offered by the basic but includes a higher priority SLO, direct Web-chat with Laserfiche engineers with customers' designated support personnel, fast-track escalation for rapid resolution of urgent support cases, and preferred pricing on Laserfiche user education programs, including regional training and the annual Laserfiche Institute Conference. Diamond level support and VIP contracts can be customized by resellers to provide additional maintenance.

Documentation ★★★★★

Over 150 guides are available for the latest version of Laserfiche, and are provided in paper, PDF and HTML formats. Help files and manuals average around 200 to 300 pages. Quick Start Guides are typically available in 24-page formats. White papers can range from 12 to 24 pages.

Global Business Readiness ★★★★★

Laserfiche 8.1 is sold in the U.S., Europe, Latin America, Australasia, the Middle East, and Africa. The software comes in English, Spanish, Portuguese, French, Arabic, and also Vietnamese versions. Several other languages are currently in translation. Simplified and traditional Chinese, Japanese and Korean language support now includes linking text and images, thereby enabling search hits and linked text annotations. Laserfiche 8.1 is localized in Italian as well.

Upgrade Path   ★★★★★

Laserfiche 8.1 can be scaled from just a few users to thousands of users. For the workgroup level, Laserfiche offers the Avante package and the Team package, with the key difference being that Avante is offered with named user licenses whereas Team is offered with concurrent user licenses. For the enterprise level, Laserfiche offers the Rio package and the United Package.

When a new version of Laserfiche is installed, a migration utility wizard is also installed, which automatically runs the migration to the new version. If the Laserfiche Server (version 8.0) is currently installed, the installation process will automatically update it in place. If the Laserfiche Server (version 7) is currently installed, the installation process will automatically remove Laserfiche Server 7 and install Laserfiche Server 8. If the Laserfiche Server (version 6) is currently installed, users will need to uninstall Laserfiche Server 6.

New to the Administration Console, the Merge Fields feature prevents administrators from having duplicate fields after migrating a repository. Fields can also be merged during the migration.

Minor versions of Laserfiche are released on an as-needed basis and the upgrade process is simple and straightforward. Typically there are one or two of these each year. Major upgrades of Laserfiche typically occur in three-year development cycles, depending on a number of factors but most importantly relative to market needs and trends. Software update services are free with active LSAP. Additional professional services may be required at the customer's discretion such as test deployment prior to production rollout, etc.