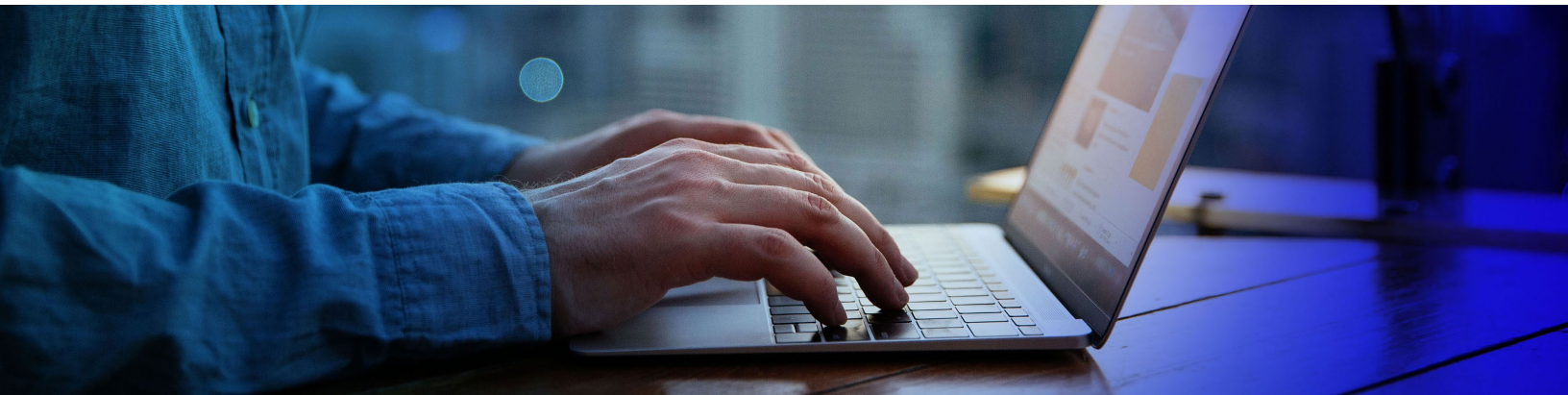![iManage — Making knowledge work]

Rio Tinto makes institutional knowledge more accessible and actionable with iManage

Global mining company delves into 150 years of specialist expertise with a user-friendly platform and powerful search

RioTinto

Industry:

• Corporate: Mining

Headquarters:

• London, UK

iManage footprint:

• iManage Work 10 in the Cloud

• iManage Share

• iManage Threat Manager

• iManage Drive

Rio Tinto, the world's second largest mining company, is dedicated to continuous improvement, so when its digital transformation team turned its attention to document management, great things happened. Swapping SharePoint for a suite of iManage solutions empowered employees with fast searches, an intuitive user interface, and a wealth of institutional knowledge at their fingertips.

Rio Tinto is a British-Australian metals and mining company with global operations. Its business purpose is Finding better ways™ to provide essential materials like copper, iron ore, and lithium while supporting the energy transition to net zero carbon emissions. Rio Tinto relies on technology such as automation and artificial intelligence to help it run safer, more efficient operations that leave a lighter footprint.

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Christopher de Waas
Manager of Digital Transformation, Rio Tinto

The business challenge

Continuously improve, update, and innovate the employee experience

Rio Tinto has continuously improved, updated, and innovated new methods to do its work for more than 150 years. As you'd expect from a venerated specialist in its field, the company has gained more than mining expertise in that time.

"Institutional knowledge is extremely valuable, particularly to the legal team," explains Christopher de Waas, Manager of Digital Transformation at Rio Tinto. "We work on complex and specialist legal matters, often collaborating with external counsel. Keeping that knowledge actionable and accessible is vital to ensure our business runs smoothly."

The company hires curious and creative people with a thirst for continuous improvement. To help legal professionals dive deeper into institutional knowledge, the digital transformation team wanted to equip them with the very best document management platform.

While the prior approach had been serviceable (a third-party SharePoint overlay), the team recognized that a more flexible platform would be needed to meet evolving needs, and de Waas knew it could be done better. He saw the potential to turn the document management system from something people had to use into something proactively helping them work more efficiently.

"We have a diverse legal team, and some people are more confident with technology than others. If we don't have a system that works well for everyone, it's harder to create a central knowledge resource and to put proper governance in place," de Waas explains.

When Rio Tinto analyzed its requirements for a better solution, the employee experience was its biggest concern. They wanted a cloud-based platform that the digital transformation team could manage themselves, high levels of built-in security, an intuitive user interface, and, crucially, a powerful search function capable of surfacing relevant insights quickly and seamlessly.

The solution

Easy-to-use interface makes knowledge work for everyone

Rio Tinto considered three main players before selecting its new platform — iManage, NetDocuments, and making further customizations to its existing SharePoint environment. The team quickly decided against customization to avoid adding unnecessary complexity and pressure on the IT team.

De Waas turned to the legal team users to help them choose between iManage and NetDocuments. After testing both platforms, he says iManage was the clear winner.

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"After the NetDocuments and iManage show-and-tell, our users expressed a strong preference for the clean, intuitive layout of iManage, which many felt enabled them to get up and running with minimal training," says de Waas. "Many colleagues appreciated the simplicity and clarity of the iManage interface, expressing confidence in its ease of use from the outset."

The company implemented iManage Work 10 in the Cloud, iManage Share, iManage Drive, and iManage Threat Manager, rolling out the platform to 210 staff on the legal team and migrating 4.5 million documents. They kept the same naming conventions to simplify change management and integrated the iManage platform with their bespoke platform for managing matters to enable automation, intelligent reporting, and seamless data flow across systems.

"Our change management was very straightforward," de Waas reports. "After some onboarding sessions and a bit of training, everyone just took to using iManage."

The digital transformation team took ownership of the platform, further lightening any expectations for IT staff.

"With iManage we can directly manage the environment, from optimizing design and configuration to controlling permissions, without specialized technical skills," de Waas explains.

Now the lawyers, secretaries, and support staff in offices across Australia, Singapore, the UK, and North America have a trusted, high-performing knowledge work platform for document management and a safe, easy way to share documents externally. The company ran the training and kept its staff involved throughout the rollout to encourage buy-in. After four months, adoption is at an impressive 80 percent.

Threat Manager enables de Waas to monitor adoption and to gain insights around platform usage, such as how often people use iManage and what they're doing. This helps him continually adjust the platform configuration to respond to user needs as well as to identify anyone who needs more training to get the most out of the solution.

"Threat Manager provides a window into what's going on in our organization. We've not had any malicious incidents so far, but the notifications reassure us that we can act quickly if we need to," adds de Waas.

The business outcomes

No wasted effort: Tapping into a massive wealth of data

Employee feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.

"iManage Work caters to advanced users and beginners alike. It offers a common language that everyone can get behind," says de Waas.

He adds how staff love the ease of filing emails, linking to folders, and the ability to drag and drop documents, as well as to access iManage directly from their Microsoft 365 apps. Those who work remotely or while traveling can stay productive on the move using iManage Drive, which allows them to work on documents offline, without an internet connection, and automatically upload the latest versions when they reconnect.

"iManage is so intuitive that everyone feels comfortable using it, which helps win over people who are reluctant to try new ways of working," says de Waas. "It's responsive and reliable, so lagging and crashing are a thing of the past."

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"The search capabilities of iManage are a significant improvement over our previous SharePoint-based solution. Lawyers are ecstatic that they can find what they're looking for so easily and there is no risk of duplicating effort," says de Waas. "But just as important is how iManage breaks down silos — enabling Legal to collaborate more effectively, share institutional best practices, and strengthen its partnership with teams across the company."

With some legal assets going back 20 years, that's a massive wealth of data the company can tap into. And, by centralizing data in the cloud, information from staff inboxes or when employees change roles is never lost.

Looking ahead

The legal team's transformation has caught the attention of the wider business. Senior stakeholders are impressed, and the company is considering onboarding the ethics & compliance and risk management teams on iManage to help them govern and manage their own data.

"The interface completely won us over. Many people in our department came from law firms that used iManage. Those with experience across platforms consistently remark on how well the polished and focused design of iManage aligns with the professional expectations of our legal environment," remarks de Waas.

Rio Tinto also has a strong foundation in place for artificial intelligence (AI). It's considering rolling out Ask iManage so staff can make queries across multiple documents in natural language, helping them tap into corporate knowledge to make more informed decisions on current matters.

And, while the team is no longer using SharePoint for document management, they're still big Microsoft 365 users and plan to use the native iManage integrations for Teams and co-authoring, enabling them to derive full value from each platform.

About iManage™

iManage is dedicated to Making Knowledge Work™. Our cloud-native platform is at the center of the knowledge economy, enabling every organization to work more productively, collaboratively, and securely. Built on more than 20 years of industry experience, iManage helps leading organizations manage documents and emails more efficiently, protect vital information assets, and leverage knowledge to drive better business outcomes. As your strategic business partner, we employ our award-winning AI-enabled technology, an extensive partner ecosystem, and a customer-centric approach to provide support and guidance you can trust to make knowledge work for you. iManage is relied on by more than one million professionals at 4,000 organizations around the world. Visit www.imanage.com to learn more.