

# Advanced Enterprise Search Case Study: Intralinks



*Intralinks (NYSE: IL) is a leading global provider of Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) solutions for securely managing content, exchanging critical business information and collaborating within and among organizations. Over one million professionals across a wide variety of industries have utilized Intralinks' easy-to-use cloud-based solutions.*

After rejecting a proposal from its legacy vendor for an exorbitant \$5M, 54-week work project, Intralinks selected Attivio.

*Attivio was implemented at a fraction of the cost in just seven weeks.*



Over 800 of the Fortune 1000 trust Intralinks Exchange®: a neutral, confidential online collaboration space to share highly sensitive business information. The legacy search solution embedded within Intralinks Exchange was not delivering the superior customer experience expected of an innovative high-growth company like Intralinks.

“We wanted to completely reframe our customer experience to exceed customer expectations, but we wanted a technology we could implement quickly and economically,” said John Landy, Chief Technology Officer for Intralinks. “Attivio stood out for its breadth of features as well as its rapid time-to-value.”

Replacing its legacy search with Attivio, a **unified information application (UIA)** platform, Intralinks now offers an *active* user experience. Users easily explore and discover all relevant information, whether structured or unstructured, while ensuring real-time security, availability and reliability.

“Attivio gives Intralinks a tremendous competitive edge,” said Fahim Siddiqui, Executive Vice President of Product Development and Operations for Intralinks. “At Intralinks we strive to ensure that every time a customer comes to our site, they are delighted. With Attivio’s help, we are providing the best-in-class user interface.”

## AN ACTIVE PLATFORM FOR “INFORMATION, NOT FILES”

Siddiqui noted that prior to working with Attivio, Intralinks’ legacy search vendor offered “a passive user experience,” consisting of document folders and sub-folders. “Traversing that file structure to hunt for needed information was a cumbersome, time-wasting process that required users to open files they didn’t want”, Siddiqui said. “People are looking for information, not files.”

“With an active interface,” Siddiqui added, “information is categorized, tagged, indexed and key concepts are extracted. When users want to traverse information to explore a topic, they are able to **see all the related concepts and discover all information that is relevant** to them. This is the ideal we wanted to attain.”

The legacy search security model also caused latency issues. Detailed user permissions were maintained in a separate database; to ingest it, the legacy search engine had to first “flatten” it. Before presenting query results, each matching document had to be compared with user permissions, noticeably slowing response times. Even worse, user permissions could not be updated in real time; permissions had to be updated for each document. “User permissions must be rapidly updatable as content is often sensitive and confidential. It is critical to user confidence,” Siddiqui said.

## AN ACTIVE PARTNER DEDICATED TO CUSTOMER SUCCESS

“We initially considered upgrading our existing enterprise search technology to improve our users’ experience, security, integration and navigation,” Landy said. “The incumbent vendor proposed a multimillion dollar, 54-week project that would not have significantly improved performance or provided a platform for innovation.”

“Attivio was clearly the company best suited to address all of our requirements. Remarkably, they implemented everything in a seven-week timeframe at a lower overall cost, with Attivio providing even more capabilities than expected.”

“What we had [from our legacy search vendor] was a passive user experience... People are looking for information, not files...”

Attivio gives Intralinks a competitive edge.”

- Fahim Siddiqui,  
EVP, Product Development and  
Operations

“Attivio gives Intralinks a competitive advantage... Previously, an analyst might have spent six or eight hours trying to dig through information; now they are done in five minutes.”

- Fahim Siddiqui



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## A UIA PLATFORM WITH UNBEATABLE TIME-TO-VALUE

It's no accident that Attivio was successfully implemented at a small fraction of the time and cost required by a large incumbent vendor whose \$5M, 54-week, work proposal was rejected outright by Intralinks.

**Attivio is a complete, fully integrated, agile UIA platform**, designed from the ground up to provide the very best capabilities of search, business intelligence (BI), data warehousing and workflow in a single, real-time platform. This includes schema-free indexing of all enterprise information, enabling the adding of new data or content at any time with no need to create or modify a data model or re-index content.

As a comprehensive UIA platform, Attivio enables rapidly deployed applications and active dashboards that manage, join and present unstructured content (documents, SharePoint, email, web, etc.), with structured data (databases) without restriction.

## A UIA PLATFORM FOR COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE AND COST SAVINGS

“With a UIA model, we can now provide a bridge between the unstructured content that we have traditionally hosted, as well as structured content, [enabling] different business processes and different user access,” Siddiqui said. “That upgrades our overall service platform and differentiates our service.”

Attivio replaced the legacy search solution's cumbersome file and folder structure with fast, intuitive, productive navigation and discovery of relevant information. This key transformation to the customer experience also yielded a dramatic drop in customer support calls, from an average of 200 calls per day to fewer than 20 with Attivio in place. Using conservative estimates, Attivio helped Intralinks recover over 9,000 customer support person-hours worth over \$225,000 on an annual basis.

“Attivio gives Intralinks a competitive advantage by helping us provide a user interface and application that is [now] the easiest to use and consume,” Siddiqui said.

“Previously, an analyst might have spent six or eight hours trying to dig through information; now they are done in five minutes.”

“Attivio helps us ensure we meet our service level agreements,” added Charlie Weiblen, Intralinks Director of Performance and Capacity Engineering. “This includes how documents are published and made available to end users, as well as the real-time query and response time.”

Finally, Attivio's integrated **Active Security** model fulfilled Intralinks' needs for real-time permissioning to put an end to latency issues. Unlike legacy search, Attivio normalizes and stores user permissions in tables, separate from document content, without “flattening.” Attivio will then JOIN documents matching a user's query with what the user is authorized to see, for fast, highly scalable performance that also allows for real-time changes to permissions with no latency.

“Everything we do depends on the utmost security, availability and reliability, including tightly managing access control lists (ACLs) and workspace-specific roles and permissions,” said Landy. **“With Attivio, we have greatly improved information access and findability, while maintaining a secure, fault-tolerant multi-tenant model.”**

Siddiqui sums it up, “We consider Attivio a key platform component.”