

# CCLA

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## Introduction

CCLA is a UK-based fund management group that specializes in providing investment services for Charities, Churches, and Local Authorities (hence CCLA). CCLA is owned entirely by its 45,000 clients and has the largest share of the charity market – judged by either number of clients or fund under management – in the UK. CCLA was founded 50 years ago and has always worked very closely with its members to provide them with the broadest investment opportunities in keeping with the clients' goals and convictions. Although CCLA is well-positioned, there is growing competition in this market niche, and CCLA launched an Efficiency and Effectiveness Initiative in 2008 to assure that its processes provide its owners with the best possible results in effectiveness, efficiency, transparency, and scalability.

## The Problem

Prior to its EEI effort, CCLA processes were, in essence, paper processing activities. The clients would submit instructions on paper. These instructions might involve changes in basic information, changes in investment strategies, instructions to acquire or liquidate various positions, or requests for accounting information or documentation. Once received, the documents would be routed to the appropriate CCLA team. In many cases the documents would need to go to one team and then to another. Often, one team would make copies of documents so they could retain the information while waiting for responses to queries they made to clients or agencies. In the meantime, the originals would be sent to another team that might initiate its own queries, making and storing its own copies of the case documentation. Eventually, the original paper instructions and supplemental records and documents, would be assembled and stored and the client would receive notification of the results achieved. This arrangement imposed a kind of rigidity on the overall process but limited CCLA's ability to scale quickly in response to new opportunities. Equally it made it difficult to provide a quick or transparent look at what was going on, since everything seemed to depend on finding paper copies.

Figure 1 provides a very high-level overview of the flow of the work. This overview ignores the frequent queries to clients, to outside agencies, or tasks like the duplication of forms. Nor does it suggest the complex flow that might be involved if a set of documents needed to go from one team to another, then back, then to a third team, and so forth.

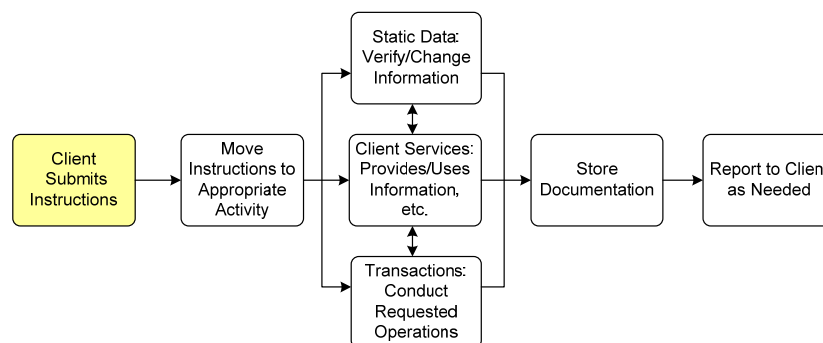


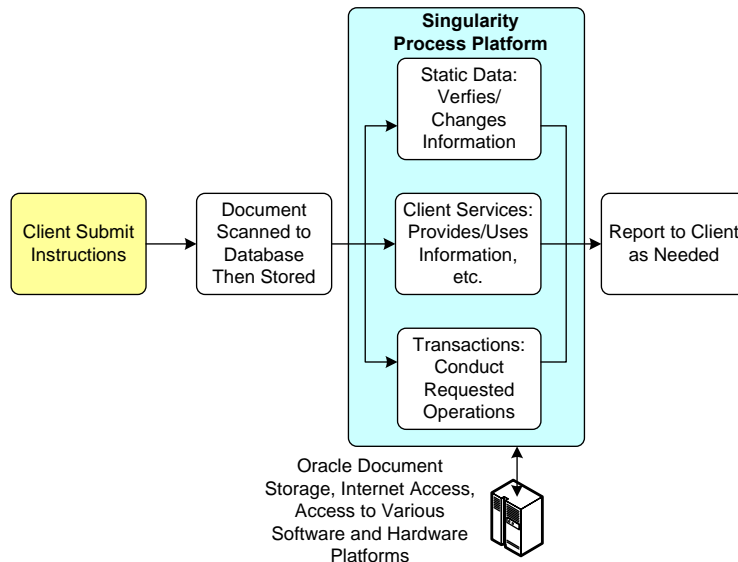
Figure 1. An overview of the process flow.

CCLA was determined to remove the paper from the process to avoid the time and flow limits it placed on the existing process, to provide more transparency, and to avoid the associated environmental impact of extra photocopying, multiple storage, and printing. It was also assumed that electronic storage of the information would increase transparency, speed the overall process, provide for rapid scaling, and also reduce various types of human errors.

## The Approach

After analysis of options, the CCLA staff elected to rely on a workflow solution. Specifically, they selected Singularity to help them improve their process. A major reason for choosing Singularity was their belief that Singularity would provide them a very agile development process that could be developed by means of iterations and then subsequently changed to accommodate increased business. Singularity provided the software package that CCLA now uses to manage the entire client instruction process.

Clients still submit instructions on paper, but the information on the instruction documents is now scanned, indexed, and placed in a database. Then information about the new instruction is forwarded to all of the teams that may be involved with the case. As the “document” is now maintained in electronic form, it can be sent to multiple teams simultaneously. Any team can access the data via the Singularity Process Platform, and any changes made by one team are immediately made available to others. Moreover, team members can now access the Internet and send email to gather additional information. This increase in transparency results from the many different windows into the process that Singularity provides.



**Figure 2. An overview of the process flow with Singularity.**

In essence, the Singularity Process Platform orchestrates CCLA’s client instruction process to assure that the various elements respond efficiently and effectively to new Client Instructions. Each step in the revised and automated process is managed by the Singularity Process Platform. It begins when an employee signs on and indicates that a new client instruction document has arrived. Although the actual data from client instructions are held in another software program – Oracle Capture – it is the Singularity Process Platform that calls the Oracle Capture software and, once the data is saved, arranges to alert appropriate employee teams that a new action request is pending. Similarly, whenever an employee, interfacing via Singularity Process Platform, makes a change in a record or initiates an action associated with a client, then that information is stored

with the client's record. At the same time, the system maintains employee permissions to control the specific types of changes or actions any given employee can initiate, and provides an audit trail of all changes and who made them.

The Singularity Process Platform also arranges access to the Internet or email so that CCLA employees can look up information on the Internet for compliance with other Client Instruction processing requirements (for example to verify that a Charity's trustee is officially registered by the regulating Government authority), or to alert CCLA colleagues or third parties of Client Instruction needs or priorities. Finally, the platform manages the access of transaction employees to in-house and external trading systems to facilitate changes in a client's portfolio, to initiate relevant transactions, etc.

Using the Singularity Process Platform, the CCLA IEE team was able to model its processes, decide on the new Client Instruction solution, and build, test and field the new solution in less than six months.

### **The Results**

As a result of the EEI effort, CCLA processes are now paperless. CCLA's Client Instruction process is now more efficient, effective and transparent and has already realized a considerable savings for CCLA. As the process is now managed from within the Singularity Process Platform, CCLA is positioned to make rapid changes in the flow and in the business rules that apply to specific processing problems, giving the organization a new level of agility in dealing with future changes in their business environment. Moreover, CCLA is now well positioned to scale-up its workload without the need to hire additional employees.

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### **Author**

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For more information on Singularity's Process Platform, check [www.singularity.co.uk/singularity-process-platform-bpm-and-workflow-overview.asp](http://www.singularity.co.uk/singularity-process-platform-bpm-and-workflow-overview.asp)