

CLIENT SPOTLIGHT

How IBM Transforms Its Processes with AQX Automation

Maria Sova, Intellectual Property Law Systems Lead, is at the heart of IBM's Intellectual Property (IP) operations. She is leading the way at IBM to full technical utilization of the automation capabilities of Anaqua's AQX® IP management platform. In doing so, Maria has helped to ensure the protection and management of critically important IP assets across the globe. In this interview she discusses how AQX, with its increased automation and enhanced data consistency, can free up teams to focus on more valuable and demanding work.

How did you get started in intellectual property?

When I was 17 years old, I took courses at a technical center in high school, and that started what became a career at IBM where I was first hired as a secretary. I have been with IBM for a long time now, since 1979.

Eleven years later, I started in the IP department. Tucson was a big IBM plant site, and they had an on-site IP law department, so I was recruited to work as a legal analyst for the IP law department. I stayed there for another 12 years. Then I was recruited to be a developer on our IBM Notes side of the house, which is where our tools were housed. I recently moved back to the IP Law Department as IP Systems Lead.

Can you talk about how AQX supports your team?

Our IP team's needs and capabilities are constantly evolving and what is wonderful is that Anaqua is evolving with us as you incorporate more and more tools in the AQX platform.

The goal of our team is to immediately address issues. Not in a week from now, not next month, but today. We are moving fast, but we also want to be accurate and efficient. Any accurate and efficient automation we get, which is what AQX provides us, is a plus and a benefit.

How do you see this automation being used in the future?

IBM is at the forefront of innovation, and embracing automation in our IP management processes makes us as efficient as possible. We are excited about Anaqua's Document Auto Processing capability in AQX for processing documents from PTO offices.

With this Document Auto Processing capability, we can automate PTO correspondence and document processing. IBM has a large IP portfolio, so you can imagine downloading



documents by hand would be very time consuming. This is where automation saves a lot of time.

Are there best practices or tips that you would share with someone who is getting started in AQX?

Take advantage of Anaqua's process documents and FAQs. The support team is responsive and helpful. I tell people to work closely with their Anaqua Client Director. I appreciate the Anaqua Academy and all the help guides in the support portal. If people use all the resources Anaqua offers to its customers, they will be successful in managing their IP with AQX.

You are part of the Docketing Automation Client Working Group that is helping to steer new automation capabilities in AQX, have the sessions been useful for you?

While I am new to the Docketing Automation Working Group, my experience has been wonderful. With participants from other organizations, you can share experiences and learn

what other IP departments are doing, too. I like to have knowledge so that if people reach out to me, I can direct them or assist them. Sharing with the client working group gives me ideas to help others.

We all do not do things the same way, but Anaqua defines best practices for its platform. This makes it consistent to then adapt those best practices to what is best for your company's internal processes.

Is there anything else you would mention about your experience working with Anaqua?

I know that if we have an issue and we bring it to our Client Director or our support team, we're going to get an answer. I am never afraid that if we have a problem, we won't get support from your entire team.

I also really learned a lot out of the last Anaqua Experience Conference. It is exciting to connect with other IP teams and learn what Anaqua is planning. When I see where Anaqua is going in the future, it is all very promising and motivating.

Do you have any recommendations for women in IP starting their careers?

For women – or anybody actually – I would say being responsive and transparent and being available and hardworking is so important in your career. I believe all ideas are valuable, so never hesitate to offer your opinion.

How can automation improve your team's IP management efficiency and deadline management?

[Learn more about how Anaqua can help with your IP operations](#)

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