



Essex Industries replaces an unreliable FTP site with Intralinks VIA™ for secure, yet easy-to-use file sharing with external clients and partners.



### Problem

Essex Industries is a leading supplier to the aerospace and defense, first response, safety, and medical markets. Founded in 1947 by Harold and Sidney Guller in their father’s basement, the company has since grown to four facilities, with over 180,000 square feet of manufacturing space and 375 employees. Over the past 65 years, the product range has grown to include life support equipment, ground support equipment, platform controls, and aircraft components. As a result, Essex Industries has been a part of virtually every major military and commercial aerospace program since 1947.

Because of the complex nature of the work Essex does with its customers and suppliers, it regularly needs to share very large and sensitive files with external contacts—engineering drawings, sales documents, marketing materials, and even purchase orders.

Essex was using an in-house FTP site for file sharing, but it was problematic. “The FTP site required a lot of hand-holding,” commented Donna Wirth, Network Manager at Essex Industries. “It never worked well, and few people are familiar with FTP. It got to the point where our instructions to people anticipated that it would fail the first time they used it.”

Essex Industries needed to find a reliable, easy-to use solution for sharing documents externally, securely. Security was especially important: Because of its work on military contracts, International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR) compliance and the ability to limit storage of data and documents to the U.S. was an absolute must. “We have to know who has the files and how they are going to secure them,” said Wirth.

[intralinks.com/via](http://intralinks.com/via)

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“Considering how simple and easy Intralinks VIA is to use, it is amazing how secure it is.”

— Donna Wirth  
*Network Manager*  
Essex Industries

## Solution

Essex Industries selected Intralinks VIA as its platform for secure file sharing and collaboration, as it offered the perfect mix of ease-of-use and security.

“It’s not only easy for our staff internally, it’s especially easy for our customers,” explained Wirth. “Intralinks VIA just sends an email to our customer contact, they answer a few quick questions, create a password, and they can get on the Intralinks site and download the data they need. Intralinks saves a great deal of time.” Because Intralinks VIA keeps track of who has accessed a file, the staff no longer has to play phone tag to find out if someone has gotten a file, another huge savings in time.

The rollout of Intralinks went smoothly, and the staff welcomed the change over the old FTP server. Essex started with ten licenses, but the popularity of Intralinks VIA has Wirth considering adding more licenses.

The Sales and Engineering departments are the largest users of Intralinks VIA, as they both share large drawings back and forth with contacts outside the firm. The Marketing department is another big user, sending large photo files and banners for use in trade shows all over the world. HR even uses it for managing the firm’s 401K plan, which involves strict rules for privacy.

## Benefits

The FTP site is gone. This alone is saving Essex a great deal of time and frustration.

Essex Industries has also completely eliminated the use of Dropbox. While Dropbox was quick and easy to use, it was not secure and put Essex at risk. “We will not allow it at all,” said Wirth. “Dropbox is not secure enough for our operation. If you want to send grandma’s picture through Dropbox, it’s wonderful. But it won’t work for sending drawings of a military aircraft, even if we’re sending it to an approved list.”

Intralinks VIA gives Essex Industries the ability to generate audit trails of what files were shared and who looked at them. It keeps track of the latest version of a shared document, as well as all previous ones, so there is no confusion about what version people should be using.

Essex Industries was particularly impressed with the ability to enforce expiration dates on documents and geographical restrictions on data storage. “You can set an expiration date on a file, and it can’t be opened after that date, even if a person has downloaded it to their desktop,” said Wirth. “Likewise, Intralinks allowed us to restrict the storage and backup of our data to the United States.”

Wirth is also very impressed with the support provided by Intralinks. “They’re very personable,” she concluded. “No matter who you talk to at Intralinks, they are focused on helping us succeed in our business.”