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Deborah Young
Clerk of the Superior Court
Coconino County, Arizona

INDUSTRY

- Courts

LOCATION

- Coconino County, Flagstaff, Arizona

CHALLENGES

- Slow, difficult court record retrieval from microfiche
- Aging reader printers and no longer able to get equipment maintenance
- Unique indexing requirements made it difficult to find the right microfilm conversion solution

BMI PRODUCTS & SERVICES

- Microfiche conversion: hundreds of thousands of microfiche and microfilm rolls representing millions of records digitally scanned by BMI Imaging
- Digital Reel application available on a shared, publicly accessible workstation
- BMI Imaging on-site staff training

BENEFITS

- Solution for microfilm and microfiche
- Easy-to-use solution for the public requires very little staff training
- 3 reader printers and a camera eliminated
- Immediate record retrieval from a computer workstation

Case Study



Overview

The Clerk of the Superior Court's Office serves as the official record keeper and financial officer for the Superior Court of Coconino County, Arizona. A key function of the office is to preserve records and provide the public, court, media and legal community access to all records.

In the past, records (e.g. domestic, criminal, civil, probate, and adoption cases, plus marriage licenses) were archived on microfiche and microfilm. Information retrieval from microfiche was cumbersome and once it became expensive and difficult for Coconino County Courts to find reader printer maintenance, the Clerk's Office sought to eliminate this legacy technology.

Deborah Young, Clerk of Superior Court, states, "We had unique indexing requirements that necessitated a single solution for both case numbers and marriage license book and pages. BMI Imaging has experience digitizing court records and was able to work with us to implement a solution that properly addressed both of these indexing requirements."

Lack of Reader Printer Maintenance Facilitates Move to Digital Solution

The Clerk of the Coconino County Superior Court's Office is required to archive all court records in perpetuity. The Office archives court case files and marriage licenses on microfilm rolls for disaster recovery purposes. Prior to Digital ReelL, the Office made index information available to the public on microfilm rolls. Actual case files and licenses were presented to the public on microfiche. Citizens such as genealogists, law enforcement and others conducting research would use reader printers to access the microfilm indexes and then the records on microfiche. Young states, "as time went on, depreciation and aging equipment led us to start looking for a digital solution. We could no longer find a reliable company to provide us reader printer maintenance due to the legacy nature of the technology."

Digital ReelL Supports Unique Indexing Requirements

Most of the Arizona Clerk of Court's records were organized by case number. For example, criminal cases began with CR and adoption cases began with AD and then each were followed by the unique case numbers. Other records like marriage licenses were organized by book and page. Young states, "One of the unique aspects that the BMI Digital ReelL solution delivered was an easy-to-use product backed by a team with experience converting records with both types of indexing requirements. They were able to offer us one simple system through Digital ReelL to organize and present the information."

Easy-to-Find Information From a Publicly Accessible PC Workstation

After BMI completed the microfilm and microfiche scanning service at its Northern California service bureau, BMI was able to customize the Digital ReelL application for the public-facing workstation. Users can now access index information on the digital microfilm rolls and then easily click over within one application to the actual records stored on the digital microfiche images to find the required case and license records.

In the past, citizens might request a particular case and clerks would have to pull multiple microfilm rolls to locate the index information and then search through multiple microfiche records to locate the particular case. Making copies was then an additional hassle. Now, citizens can access a workstation with Digital ReelL to easily find the indexes and then click on the digital microfiche records. From there users can quickly save PDF copies, email and print necessary information.

Digital ReelL also includes a redaction feature. Records that need to be edited such as adoptions and social security numbers are redacted out of the system by the staff using this time saving feature of Digital ReelL.

Next Steps

"In the future, we are looking forward to integrating the Digital ReelL platform with our OnBase system," states Young. "BMI has completed integrations like this in the past and we are looking forward to using both systems - Digital ReelL for our records prior to 2009 which were on microfiche and OnBase for records from 2009 into the future".



CALL
(800) FLY-FILM



VISIT
www.bmiimaging.com



EMAIL
info@bmiimaging.com