

BMI continues to provide great work for Tuolumne County, creating alternative preservation plans for records throughout multiple departments with the use of Digital ReelL.

Tuolumne County, California



Case Study



INDUSTRY

- Local Government – County Assessor, Recorder & Archivist

LOCATION

- Tuolumne County, California

CHALLENGES

- Multiple efforts to preserve records on microfilm, books, and newspapers, but never enough funding to strategically create a centralized, digital solution
- Over 1 million missing images from previous Halffile conversion project
- Historical maps and newspapers on books that were eroding and too heavy to handle day-to-day

BMI PRODUCTS & SERVICES

- Microfilm scanning at BMI's facility
- Ongoing microfilm creation for archive purposes
- Digital ReelL application for easy search and retrieval of digital records

BENEFITS

- Self-service Public Research Center now offered to public with workstations and directions on how to use Digital ReelL
- Online, easy to search for app avoids need for public to use physical microfilm and physical books
- Grayscale enhancement provides users with image optimization

Overview

The Tuolumne County Assessor, Recorder, and Archivist is tasked with storing and archiving the County's official records and historical County Archives, and enabling fast and easy access to the documents.

The County's relationship with BMI Imaging started with the Recorder. The Recorder had a large amount of official records in old physical books and was looking to convert them to an easy-to-use application for the public to access. BMI offered the film production and conversion service for the Digital ReelL app to help accomplish this goal.

During the course of BMI's engagement with the Recorder, many other document management related projects were discovered. BMI Imaging solved a challenge from a previous conversion project by digitally converting old map books and legacy newspapers and then loading them into Digital ReelL.

Publicly Available Research Center with Digital Reel as the Centerpiece

The Recorder's Office is not heat and humidity controlled. The large windows surrounding the office expose many of the books to direct sunlight. It is difficult to provide an environment conducive to long-term preservation of historical items, especially books.

Consolidation of all County official record archives and go-forward information into one accessible solution enabled the County to move 1,200 physical books to the County Archives for long-term preservation and to maintain any future official records in the same software.

The County worked closely with BMI to inventory the official record set and scan all of the material into Digital Reel. Researchers and the public come into the County and are able to use Digital Reel to search for and locate records.

Custom Solution that Solved a 1,000,000 Image Mistake from a Previous Project

BMI learned that the Recorder had scanned and indexed a large microfilm archive with the intent of digitally importing the archive into HalFile.

BMI staff found missing images during the process. BMI staff collaborated closely with County staff as well as a HalFile engineer to write an application to find the missing images, automatically upload them into the HalFile system and connect them to existing indexing.

This effort not only saved a tremendous amount of staff time, it successfully populated the HalFile system and Digital Reel with images.

Historical Maps Converted & Imported into Digital Reel

BMI worked with the County to creatively re-shoot each book map in a collection of large ±50 lb. map books. Maps were in poor shape, and in multiple sizes and types. Most maps were over 50-100 years old.

The maps were scanned in color and were then successfully loaded into Digital Reel. High quality images provide legibility of even the smallest detail, allowing measurements and even lightly penciled notes to be read by staff, public, and surveyors. BMI also provided a full set of quality film to the County for record preservation. Maps can now be placed in archival quality sleeves and stored safely at the archive for generations to come.

Historical Newspaper Microfilm to Digital Solution

People come from all over the U.S. to conduct research at the Tuolumne County Carlo De Ferrari Archive in search of historical information.

During such a search, several rolls of newspaper film were discovered at the Archive. Scanning this film into Digital Reel has provided access for the public to historical newspapers back to the 1800's. This became heavily used during recent years when drought conditions in California were so prevalent. Searches for water rights became a high priority by State and County agencies as well as citizens.

Conclusion

BMI has successfully negotiated several other Tuolumne County projects providing an ongoing resource of information for researchers and citizens.