

case study



Tippecanoe County Moves Toward Digitizing 9 Million Pages a Year

Tippecanoe County is located in north central Indiana, half way between Chicago and Indianapolis, and has a population of 170,000. The Tippecanoe County Clerk is charged with maintaining volumes of important records. DocuWare helps the county streamline and automate this essential task.

The Tippecanoe County Clerk's Office is bringing a vast archive of legal, historical and ownership records into DocuWare. Personnel costs have been reduced by 40% and thanks to DocuWare, even with the reduction in personnel, the staff can now keep up with requests by reducing retrieval time from days to hours. With DocuWare in place the County Clerk's Office now provides a higher quality of service for the residents of Tippecanoe County.

Documents

"No business on earth deals with as many documents as a county clerk. To give you a better idea of the volume of paper records we have, nine million sheets of paper a year pass through our office," said Linda Phillips, Tippecanoe County Clerk, "that's a lot of information."

The County Clerk's Office maintains and stores all types of legal documents. Storing the information is only one side of the coin; the county must also provide timely access to the information for internal and public use.

Work Processes

Because of the volume of records, the county maintains numerous storage facilities. Most of the county's records dated before 1990 are stored on microfilm. Walking to the correct file room, finding the document in question, pulling the information, copying it and re-filing it was a very time intensive, archaic process. Document retrieval time was as long as three days, due to the number of requests and time it took to fulfill each request.

Solution Requirements

The County Clerk discovered that money was available in the records budget to modernize the storage of records. A plan was developed to gradually transfer the county's records into DocuWare. Depending on the volume of record requests, some record types were brought into the system from a point forward, while other types of records were back-logged to provide a larger electronic database of information and improve retrieval time.

Solution

Information & Records Associates, an Authorized DocuWare Partner, implemented the county's solution. Today, all 34 county clerk employees, plus the court, probation, prosecutor and public defender staff have access to the information stored in DocuWare. In addition, the county has three public access terminals that are primarily used by title researchers looking for judgments that affect property ownership.

Court orders were the first records brought into DocuWare. Now the day's paper court orders are signed by the judges then scanned and indexed by date and case number. The scanned images are reviewed for accuracy and the originals placed in storage until they can be destroyed. The electronic court orders are available by mid-morning the next day.

The next record to be digitized was marriage licenses. The last 60 years of marriage licenses were scanned from the original source book and indexed by page and book number. The use of DocuWare continues to expand. As a pilot project, the County Clerk made the court that supervises defendants with mental health issues a paperless court. Service providers along with the probation officer, counsellor, and judge all need access to weekly reports on the individuals under the court's jurisdiction. With DocuWare, service providers' reports are generated in MS Excel and e-mailed to the court clerk where the ACTIVE IMPORT module is used to automatically index the reports by: defendant, case number, and date of the next court appearance. DocuWare's INTERNET-SERVER module and security set-

The Task

- Reduce filing time and costs
- Improve document retrieval
- Streamline flow of information in the court system
- Decrease workplace stress

Appointed Modules

- DocuWare
- ACTIVE IMPORT
- AUTOINDEX
- CDMAKER
- CONTENT-FOLDER
- INTERNET-SERVER
- RECOGNITION

The Benefits

- Reduced workplace stress
- Less search time
- Courts have immediate access to all information for pending cases
- Improved public access to information
- Boost in efficiency
- Instant availability of documents

tings allow each person involved with the case to access only the information they need.

"Our paperless court is one of our most exciting new uses of DocuWare. Initially some of our judges were a little concerned about moving toward a paperless environment, but our pilot program is quickly changing minds," said Linda.

The Benefits in Detail

User Benefits

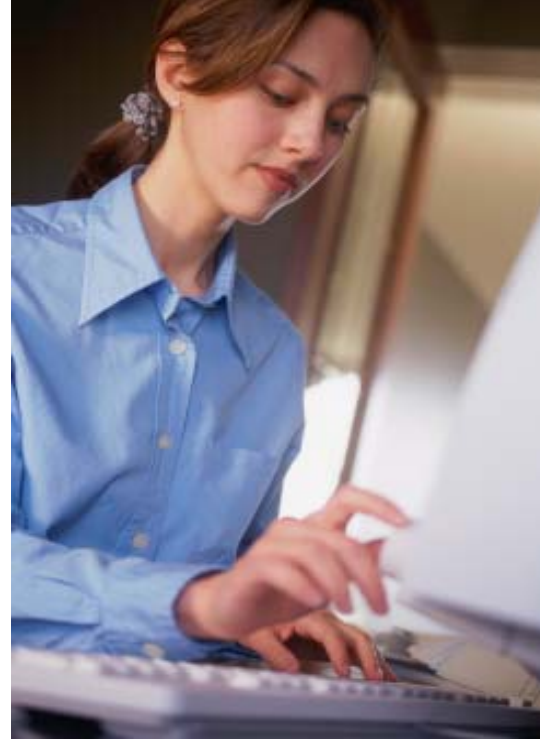
The county records staff loves working with DocuWare. They are now able to fulfill record requests in 24 hours instead of a few days, reducing workplace stress and allowing the County Clerk's office to better serve the people of Tippecanoe County. Internally, document sharing is much faster and the information can be controlled better, helping agencies throughout the county to run smoother and more efficiently. With DocuWare, records are never "misplaced" and can be monitored by a rigid quality control system.

County Benefits

In the county's paperless court, DocuWare has streamlined the process of disseminating information to multiple parties, while maintaining confidentiality. For the judge, a quick search on the "Next Court Appearance Date" field makes all the reports for the day's cases instantly available on the desktop, allowing the judge to better manage his/her caseload.

The first paperless court was so successful that a second court, which reviews child support rulings every six months, will be adopting DocuWare and going paperless once the current paper case files have been imaged and indexed in DocuWare. The DocuWare CONTENT-FOLDER module will be used by the judge to provide immediate access to all the information for a pending case.

The response to the County Clerk's DocuWare system has been so positive that the system is being adopted by other county departments, allowing different county agencies to work together for the benefit of all. The Public Defender's Office will implement DocuWare and the INTERNET-SERVER module to provide contract attorneys access to case files for which the original cannot leave the building. This allows the contract attorneys to work much more efficiently, as well as dramatically reducing storage space. The Prosecutor's office can now streamline paperwork for post conviction releases by being able to access a copy of the original sentencing order online. Once the Sheriff's Office implements DocuWare, the County Clerk's Office can dramatically reduce the printing of warrants. Instead of automatically printing and shipping three paper copies of each warrant to the Sheriff's Office, the County Clerk can create the warrant, send it to the Sheriff's Office electronically and they can print only what they need. By moving to DocuWare and a collaborative program, both offices will be better equipped to track warrants.



"The Courts, Prosecutor and the Sheriff, we all have our hands on the same documents and we don't need the paper. Images are great," said Linda.

DocuWare has allowed the County Clerk's Office to realize enormous savings. Since implementing the system, budget cuts have reduced personnel costs in the records area by 40%. Thanks to DocuWare, productivity has remained constant or even improved as more and more records are stored electronically. The implementation of DocuWare has allowed the County Clerk's Office to stop their exponential need for storage space. Additionally, the collaborative effort of other county agencies moving toward document management will compound the time and cost savings for the people of Tippecanoe County.

In conclusion, DocuWare allows the County Clerk's Office to be more responsive to information requests and provide a higher quality of service which helps the County Government achieve its goal of providing responsive, high-quality services that enhance and maintain self-sufficiency, personal safety, economic opportunity, mutual respect, and quality of life for present and future generations.

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Linda Phillips,
County Clerk,
Tippecanoe County



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at www.docuware.com