

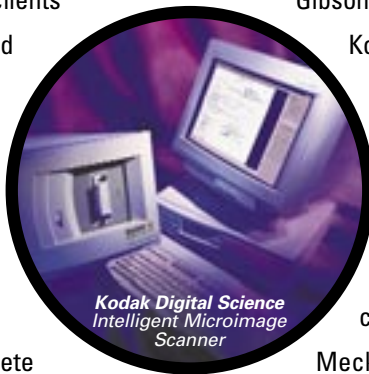
Mecklenburg (NC) County Register of Deeds

The **iN**side Story

The Mecklenburg County Register of Deeds, in Charlotte, NC, is the official repository for county records dating from 1763 to the present – land, power of attorney, marriage, birth, death, military discharge and other legal documents. These records must be, by law, preserved in perpetuity. With a vast array of paper and microfilmed documents, the Deeds office needed a way to quickly and easily make these records available to demanding paralegals and other members of the community.

A few years ago, a fire at the Mecklenburg County Records Building made it dramatically clear to the Register of Deeds, Judy Gibson, that her department housed an enormous number of valuable documents on paper and microfilm, some without backup. Working closely with Imaging Solutions and Services, Inc. (ISSI – an imaging components, solutions, and services provider serving clients throughout the U.S.), Gibson and Allan Brown, Assistant Registers of Deeds, developed a retrieval solution featuring a *Kodak Intelligent Microimage Scanner (IMS)* and customized software from ISSI. It's a solution that's complete

- and easy to use, and addresses multiple concerns and goals, including –
1. Reduce handling of microfilm and fragile paper documents by the staff and public
 2. Deal with varying microfilm quality and formats
 3. Offer fast, easy access to documents
 4. Provide high-quality copies from film archives
 5. End reliance on staff member assistance for document access by the public



To determine exactly what county personnel and typical users desired, ISSI brought an IMS unit to the Mecklenburg Deeds office for testing. The IMS first impressed the Mecklenburg staff with the enhanced detail and clarity of documents viewed, as the IMS' high-density CCD captures more information from film than conventional film scanners. With Gibson and staff sold on the Kodak/ISSI solution, the process of customizing answers to accomplish all of Mecklenburg's goals began.

ISSI personnel worked closely for a day with Mecklenburg personnel, gathering comprehensive requirements and learning, for example, what they wanted to see on screen in terms of a software interface. The film archive of 12,000 rolls was also sampled to better understand the scope of documents and quality issues to be considered.

The IMS' ability to rapidly scan film-to-image allowed for efficient creation of a digital repository for Mecklenburg's Deeds office and provided easy, PC-based access for the public and staff. And thanks to ISSI's customized

Situation

The Mecklenburg County Register of Deeds is charged with maintaining records – in perpetuity – from 1763 on. The county traditionally captured images on microfilm and faced increased demand for access to – and copies of – records.

Objective

Provide high-quality images and hard copies for the legal community and general public.

Solution

*Reliability and productivity of **Kodak Digital Science Intelligent Microimage Scanners**; **LandView** software and integration services from **Imaging Solutions and Services, Inc.***

Comments

"We are absolutely delighted with the viewing and output quality from the IMS ... ISSI really understands what good customer service means."

~ Judy Gibson, Register of Deeds

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software development, users were able to get exactly the information they desired.

Handling of microfilm was greatly reduced, via PC access and the versatility of the IMS to gently transport their ANSI film cartridges. (An advanced design allows for smoother transport of a variety of film types from ANSI, to *Ektamate* Magazines, to M-type cartridges, while eliminating glass guides and the operator maintenance that these often require.) Viewing and printing quality was maximized, thanks to the IMS' high-density CCD sensor, which delivers better legibility from films of varying quality.

As part of their solution implementation, ISSI customized their LandView software to create eight different applications and search modes to address varying needs and scenarios, based on beta testing with paralegals. ISSI worked with another supplier to integrate a cashiering program that calculates the number of prints made and deducts charges accordingly.

Now, with the system up and running, feedback from the public, demanding paralegals and the Deeds office is very positive. "ISSI really understands what good customer service means," praises Gibson. Brown adds, "We haven't had

any problems. The IMS units are very dependable and we don't have to tend to them all the time. The IMS truly allows our people to accomplish more and be more productive." Thanks to the outstanding quality of outputs from the IMS, the county is now able to charge for copies, creating a new revenue stream. "We are absolutely delighted with the viewing and output quality from the IMS," adds Gibson.