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![prizmdoc for Java logo]

CASE STUDY

PrizmDoc® for Java Brings Efficiency to the Hampden County Registry of Deeds

Hampden County is one the most industrialized counties of western Massachusetts, with a population of 462,718 residents living in 197,318 households according to the 2020 US Census. Whenever any of those houses or plots of land change hands, documents must be created to record the transaction and it's the job of the county registrar to keep it all straight.

Where the county government processed only 30 different kinds of documents in the early 1980s, that number had grown to nearly 200 by the 2010s. Everything from deeds, mortgages, and liens are now available online, with new types of documents being created each year.

OVERVIEW

The combination of the county's predominantly urban layout and its historic past provides an interesting challenge for the Registry of Deeds. In addition to storing deeds, affidavits, and other documents generated by Hampden's businesses and citizens, the registry also houses historic documents going all the way back to 1636. These timeless documents are an invaluable resource for authors, academics and genealogists researching various subjects.

With many different constituents looking to access these documents, the Registry needed to give users the ability to access disparate forms in a cohesive manner, regardless of the format. At the forefront of the Registry's priorities was a document management strategy that provided the flexibility to incorporate new types of documents.

Under the longtime leadership of the late Donald Ashe, Hampden County prided itself on being a technology innovator. In fact, the county had its records online years before most others and first implemented document-viewing technology in 1998 to improve document access for employees and users. However, with hundreds of thousands of documents being processed every year, their system finally started to slow down in 2012.

CHALLENGES

County employees and the general public were growing frustrated with the slowdowns, which drove the Registry to investigate the issue. Unfortunately, the county's IT department couldn't figure out what was wrong, aside from too many people trying to use the system at the same time, calling up documents and historical records in a variety of formats for legal and research reasons.

Not wanting to see the system bogged down by intolerable slowness, the Registry set out to fix the problem. Hampden County researched more modern document-viewing solutions that could be integrated with the existing records system. After becoming frustrated by the limitations of many viewers on the market, the Registry ultimately chose to implement Accusoft's PrizmDoc® for Java to streamline document access and processing.

" We were attracted to an affordable, zero footprint solution that didn't require a download and presented users with the fewest possible 'clicks' to print or export a document. "

Gregory Rogers
Director of Management Information Systems at the Registry of Deeds

RESULTS

Using the Java-based HTML5 viewer, visitors to Hampden County's website are now able to access over 175 different document types—ranging from affidavits to land deeds—from any web browser. After opening the file, visitors can manipulate the respective documents to meet a variety of needs. For example, users can easily invert and zoom in on documents for better clarity, search large files by page number, print physical copies, and export documents as either PDF or TIFF files. Thanks to PrizmDoc® for Java's mobile document viewing capabilities, users can also access critical information on the go, a tremendous benefit for lawyers, police officers, realtors, title examiners, college officials, historians, and property owners.

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The only thing needed on the backend to run PrizmDoc® for Java is either a Windows server running .Net or any server running Java. Everything else occurs directly in the web browser. Because of this, users aren't pulling down computing power by loading a variety of disparate viewing programs on the server end. While the Registry never identify the cause of the slowdown, the problem disappeared shortly after PrizmDoc® for Java was deployed.

"Everything sped up right away," Rogers said. "And the documents look much clearer when called up with the new PrizmDoc® for Java too. We don't get complaints anymore."

Thanks to PrizmDoc® for Java's easy-to-use documentation and top-notch technical support, implementation took less than 30 minutes from start to finish. Document loading times decreased by 50% following the integration, and the Registry saw an 18% increase in recorded documents over the course of the next year. That allowed the county to collect nearly $13 million in 2012, a 14% increase over the previous year's total. The implementation also allowed the Registry to establish real-time communication between its Springfield, MA headquarters and its sub-office in Westfield, MA, ensuring that users can make decisions based on the most accurate, up-to-date information available as documents are recorded at either location.

In fact, the Registry even received a letter from a woman in England, who was doing a genealogy search, just to say thank you for providing the records she needed in an easy-to-access format. "The response we've received since our implementation underscores that our users are happy with the technology," said Rogers. "Complaints about our system's slow processing time have been replaced with positive feedback about the new viewer's speed and improved document clarity."

About Hampton County Registry of Deeds

The Hampden County Registry of Deeds is a public office under the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The Registry's role is to record, store, and retrieve documents pertaining to real estate in Hampden County. Hampden County has practiced this tradition since the 1600s when English settlers began recording and publicizing property transfers. The Registry now maintains over three centuries' worth of real estate records. Two of the Registry's core values are customer service and historical preservation.

To learn more about the Registry, visit **www.hampdendeeds.com**

About Accusoft

Founded in 1991, Accusoft is a software development company specializing in content processing, conversion, and automation solutions. From out-of-the-box and configurable applications to APIs built for developers, Accusoft software enables users to solve their most complex workflow challenges and gain insights from content in any format, on any device. Backed by 40 patents, the company's flagship products, including Docubee, PrizmDoc Viewer®, and ImageGear, are designed to improve productivity, provide actionable data, and deliver results that matter. The Accusoft team is dedicated to continuous innovation through customer-centric product development, new version release, and a passion for understanding industry trends that drive consumer demand.

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