



South Dakota Attorney General

Making the Transition to Digital Records Management



The Office of Attorney General is responsible for providing legal services to the State of South Dakota. The Office is composed of two primary divisions, Legal Services and Criminal Investigation with over 130 employees. The legal affairs of the state create vast amounts of documentation requiring well managed processes for the administration and archiving of these important documents.

After decades of microfilming documents, Active Data Systems (ADS) assisted the Office of Attorney General with installing a ScanFile Docu-

ment Imaging and Management System in 2001 (more recently the Attorney General's Office has updated to a FileDirector based system).

According to Mark McClung, President of ADS, "State government has been using microfilm to archive their documents for years. Microfilming documents is very manual and labor intensive, especially on the search portion after you have microfilmed it."

For 12 years Dawn Kramme has been the Records Manager for the Attorney General's Office. She said, "I know there have been cases when

an attorney wants me to find one document in a case that I know exists somewhere on one of three rolls of microfilm. What a nightmare! I know I have just sunk myself into three days of work."

Microfilm vs. Imaging

Kramme noted that because they are easier to read, attorneys generally, prefer original documents to microfilm copies. Since ScanFile can be linked to both document scanners or microfilm readers, it provides optimum utilization of Canon's wide

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Active Data Systems (ADS) is a Sioux Falls, SD based corporation that provides document imaging solutions for government and businesses in a six state area. ADS has been delivering and supporting document imaging consultation, products and services since 1982.

Find out more at www.activedatasystems.com

range of scanners and readers. "When I put it on the scanner it is crisp and clear. It does photos just like the real picture," says Kramme.

Records management is greatly enhanced with today's digital document management technology. A primary reason for putting in the ScanFile system was for protection against natural disaster, such as fire.



Dawn Kramme, Records Mgr.
SD Attorney General Office

Kramme said, "I told Larry Long (South Dakota's Attorney General)

if we have a fire we've lost the whole deal, including several murder cases. However, if I could scan documents as they came in I wouldn't have to worry if the building burned, we'd have it on ScanFile.

The design philosophy of ScanFile is ease of use - making all the functions required of a document management system readily available using a screen design that is intuitive. ScanFile's advanced user administration system gives you peace of mind in the knowledge that all your documents are secure. Access rights can be granted for both single users or groups. Kramme added, "If am gone somebody should be able to walk in behind me and pull that file up to find what they need if I can't be here."

Better Reponse Time

ScanFile produces a more efficient approach to document filing and retrieval, which will save time and money. Said Kramme, "It does a word search. I prefer only having to look through ten pages rather than 500. It does save time and that's very important to the Attorney General. He wants me to have a good response time to his attorneys when they need files."

South Dakota law requires that all archiving be done on microfilm, however microfilming is more expensive than digital imaging. The cost of microfilming will vary depending on preparation required and other production factors. To illustrate the costs Kramme said, "My summer intern worked on about 60 boxes of files and documents we sent in to have microfilmed and I think it cost almost five thousand dollars."

Append Files Effortlessly

Digital management on ScanFile offers unlimited ability to append documents and files. Kramme pointed out that she could scan in case files today and if in ten years an attorney says, "Here's some more documents for that case, I could go right back into that exact same spot and add those five papers with little time or effort."

Active Data Systems has long provided document management solutions for South Dakota government entities. Says McClung, "In 1991 we started making the transition from micrographics to imaging."

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- Secretary of State
- State Treasurer
- Dept. of Social Services
- Dept. Transportation
- Vital Records
- State Archives/Cultural Heritage
- Supreme Court Law Library
- Attorney General

Dawn Kramme appreciates ADS taking the time learn about the needs of the Attorney General's Office. She said, "They were really patient to work with me. Sometimes they would work over the phone. If it was going to take



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more than that they'd come. They're just top notch. You got to have that because when an attorney needs something they need it right now." Added McClung, "Once we understand their needs then we know what we can offer them."

Kramme said her future plans are to have all their files imaged into their ScanFile system and that all documents would be scanned the day they came down from the Capitol. She said, "I would think that everybody would want to get into it. I don't know why you wouldn't."

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