

Case Study

Sangamon County Circuit Clerk's Office



The Client

The Sangamon County Circuit Clerk's Office is charged with maintaining the official records of all cases filed and/or adjudicated in the Seventh Judicial Circuit. It is located in the county seat, Springfield, IL, the state capitol. As the administrative arm of the court system, it handles all requests for court records from its constituents – the general public and members of the judicial system.



The Challenge

Dating back to 1821, the Circuit Clerk's Office has numerous paper-based records. Faced with extreme limitations of onsite physical space to store records, multiple remote locations were used for archival purposes. When a request for a case file or record retrieval was received, employees would have to visit one or more facilities to acquire the documents.

Depending on the complexity of the request, it could take days to locate the information required – multiple archival boxes would have to be opened in order to locate and collate all the necessary information. Time, in many cases, was of the essence, as the primary users of these records are the State's Attorney's Office, Public Defenders Office, Human Family Services, Sherriff's Office, Circuit Clerk, and Administration. In addition, security was difficult to enforce in a paper-based environment as well as having a high exposure to potential disasters, compromising their Disaster Recovery (DR) and High-Availability (HA) initiatives.

The Solution – Part 1

"Document imaging became an obvious need, so we began evaluating solutions", said Debbie Cook, Information Systems Manager for the Sangamon County Circuit Clerk. The initial document imaging solution consisted of IBM Optical Libraries managed by IBM i[™] servers, combined with Real Vision Imaging (RVI) software. The RVI software was used for content management in conjunction with JANO[®] Justice Case Management Systems. Together these applications provided the Circuit Clerk's Office a professional archive storage infrastructure.

For many years this addressed their document imaging requirements. The benefits were dramatic; facilitating a tremendous reduction in user wait time and ease of access to all court documents. In addition, the solution enhanced their disaster recovery capabilities by archiving to a long term, multiple copy optical storage solution. "Our major issue was time lost chasing documents. With the implementation of the archive solution, retrieval times went from days to seconds" said Tony Libri, the Sangamon County Circuit Clerk.

The Next Challenge

With over ten million digital documents currently archived, plus an additional 1.2 million documents being archived each year, the key concern for the Circuit Clerk's Office was how, where, and on what archive solution to store their digital records in the future. As their needs have expanded, they required a more robust solution with HA protection that would operate seamlessly within the incumbent environment, ensuring that the Clerk's Office needs would continue to be met. "The solution had to integrate with RVI and include a storage solution that was reliable, provide WORM (Write Once Read Many) protection, was cost-effective, and had good performance" said Debbie Cook, Information Systems Manager.

Quick View

Industry:
Government, Judicial

Application:
Digital imaging and archiving
of court documents

Solution:
Archive Appliance Elite Model 80
Real Vision Imaging (RVI)

Results:
Improved customer service, data
access, and productivity

Authentic, permanent retention
of court records

Enhanced enforcement of privacy
and security controls

Satisfies high-availability and
disaster recovery initiatives

“Our major issue was time lost chasing documents. With the implementation of the archive solution, retrieval times went from DAYS to SECONDS.”

*Tony Libri,
Sangamon County Circuit Clerk*

About Alliance Storage Technologies, Inc.

Alliance Storage Technologies, Inc. (ASTI), with over 25 years of archiving experience, is the leading source for professional data archiving solutions worldwide that meet and exceed regulatory compliance demands for secure, long-term data retention. These regulatory compliant systems preserve original data for extended periods (greater than 50 years) assuring archive data remains unaltered; a necessity for vertical markets such as Healthcare, Finance, Government, Insurance, and Legal.

At ASTI, we are committed to providing best-in-class support to our customers around the world. To find out more about ASTI and our data archive solutions, please visit us at www.alliancestoragetechnologies.com or call us at +1 719 593 7900.

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The Solution – Part 2

Alliance Storage Technologies, Inc. (ASTI) Archive Appliance Elite, a Network Attached Storage (NAS) optical library solution with secure WORM media was identified as the solution that met their needs. With fast access times to data and enhancements to HA and DR initiatives, the ASTI NAS solution is perfectly suited for IBM i environments.

“Installation and tailoring of the Archive Appliance Elite was very smooth and efficient. ASTI’s support tools and utilities have simplified our operations. Their technical support team is highly knowledgeable and responsive to our needs, and the Archive Appliance sends me an email if there is an issue. I really like that!” said Debbie Cook.

The Results

The Sangamon County Circuit Clerk’s Office now provides rapid, first-rate service to their clients. With the NAS Archive Appliance’s front-end RAID storage, user access times have been once again greatly improved. Access to records that once took minutes to retrieve are now available in seconds. Docket sheets now include all supporting case files, incorrect indexing can be quickly corrected, new images can be easily attached to existing court records, and the option to print or email the files as an added convenience is now available. All these improvements have resulted in increased productivity and reduced cost: thereby allowing the Circuit Clerk’s Office to be more proactive in managing their resources.

With five scanners in operation, document images are regularly being added to the digital archive. Built for scalability, the ASTI Archive Appliance Elite will grow to meet the Circuit Clerk’s Office storage requirements as more digital images are added. And because the documents are kept in a digital format the Circuit Clerk’s Office has the ability to enforce physical security and privacy controls is enhanced.

The cost-effectiveness of ASTI’s Archive Appliance Elite library solution is such that it enabled the Circuit Clerk’s Office to acquire a second library for their disaster recovery site. This ensures that in the event of an outage or disaster, the Circuit Clerk’s Office will continue to operate in a “business as usual” mode by switching over to the secondary library, as opposed to days of restoring from tape. In addition, the proactive, self-monitoring Archive Management Software is used to assure that they meet their DR and HA initiatives.

“The Alliance product line offered everything we were looking for, including great performance for our users”, said Tony Libri, the Sangamon County Circuit Clerk.