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Background

- With the arrival of COVID 19, Bayside City Council was tasked to reduce the human touch points associated with the planning approval workflow.

Challenges

- The traditional planning workflow was based on physical document submissions and objections.

- Council was faced with having to implement a new digital workflow in a short period of time without compromising the integrity of the planning submission process whilst satisfying the COVID legislative requirements.

Solution

- EzeScan software was configured to capture web form objections, automatically process them as the original record, redact a copy and automatically publish it to Council's website.

Results

- This digital transformation project was delivered successfully in a short period of time with the minimum of disruption to the process whilst maintaining the safety of the community.

EzeScan helps City Council overcome its COVID 19 planning workflow challenge

Melbourne's Bayside City Council reduces the opportunities for virus transmission with the assistance of an EzeScan digitisation solution. Here's why they did it...

Government legislation introduced to deal with the COVID 19 provided a challenge to Local Government Authorities in that state that still had many human touch points in their planning workflows.

Reducing the opportunities for virus transmission required eliminating these touchpoints, a strategy that Melbourne's Bayside City Council achieved with the assistance of an EzeScan capture management solution.

The Challenge

Bayside's traditional planning workflow required that plans and objections be submitted either via hard copy delivered by mail or direct to council offices or email, then registered in Content Manager and a copy provided to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) .

Traditionally residents that wished to view objections to planning proposals would visit Council Office to do so.

The state government's Omnibus (Emergency Measures) Bill 2020 passed in April 2020 introduced COVID 19 temporary measures that included requirements to make planning documents available for inspection on Council's Web site.

Alistair Bourrilhon, Corporate Records Coordinator at Bayside City Council, said "When the legislation passed, we had to find a sure way that we could do this without compromising the integrity of the planning submissions process.

"With safe distancing and self-isolation, we could not allow our residents to come in. We also had to make sure the details of the objector was not visible to the person building a fence or a new pool.

"The integrity of the data was at the forefront of all of this as well as having to make sure that we were obeying government legislation, requiring us to be as agile as possible.

The Solution

"We have been using EzeScan for over 10 years to classify, scan and register information that arrives by post and via email from Council's Web site, so we contacted them for a solution," said Bourrilhon.

EzeScan implemented the solution through a Web form on Council's Web site that generates an email which is automatically categorised using the INDEX module in EzeScan.

Two PDFs are then automatically generated, a raw original and another with all personal data automatically redacted. Both the original and redacted document are saved into Council's Content Manager-CM9 record-keeping system and delivered to VCAT when required.

The redacted copy is then published to Council's website to allow public inspection, as required by the new government legislation.

"EzeScan was able to make sure that we got everything up there without any issues whatsoever so we now have a record of the original objection which has not been tampered with as well as the redacted version as required by the COVID legislation."

- Alistair Bourrilhon, Corporate Records Coordinator at Bayside City Council

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"The Web form has mandatory fields for submission details such as name, address and application number. Choosing which fields to redact in the published PDF is just a simple matter of selecting an item in the dropdown menu in EzeScan

"It then literally wraps all the security from the content management system into the redacted format."

EzeScan can be used as a data capture or data entry application. Data can be typed, derived from recognition engines, or looked up from other systems or SQL compliant databases.

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About EzeScan

EzeScan provides fast, cost effective data capture business solutions including simplified back scanning, automation of invoice processing, forms data extraction, mailroom/ correspondence automation and highly integrated EDRMS capture solution. With thousands of installations in Australasia, North America and the UK, EzeScan is your ideal production batch capture solution.

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