

Paperless push pays off for Public Prosecutions

Challenges

- Over 3,000 police briefs are received per annum
- The ODPP needed to improve accountability, transparency, timelines and security of records.
- Whilst the current system enabled the ODPP to scan the associated documents into a single PDF document, it did not provide flow-on benefits to paralegals and prosecutors.
- ODPP staff needed a faster and convenient way to access records without needing to rely on paper based files.

Solution

- EzeScan Workstation was deployed to help create a paperless workflow with seamless connectivity with Kodak scanners and HP TRIM.
- Predesigned barcode sheets that divided the police brief by various document types was implemented, which also provided the title for individual documents into TRIM.
- The barcode sheets also triggered different indexing questions for the specific document type with all default metadata automatically applied by EzeScan by understanding database references to the ODPP's form information database.

Police briefs that could run up to 10,000 pages were causing headaches for the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) for Western Australia, which has found relief in a paperless workflow utilising Kodak scanners and EzeScan software. Here's how it worked...

The ODPP is responsible for the prosecution of all accused people charged with indictable state offences in WA's higher courts. State Prosecutors employed by the ODPP undertake high profile criminal prosecutions, in jurisdictions from the Magistrates Court, and Children's Court up to the High Court of Australia.

The ODPP must deal with a huge number of documents of varying types. This can include letters, court documents, police briefs and other associated evidentiary material. By far the largest volume of documents are the police briefs which contain witness statements, transcripts, exhibits, certificates, forensic reports, incident reports, bail papers and other types of police material. Depending on the complexity of a prosecution case, these vary in size from 250 pages to 10,000 pages.

When you factor in that the ODPP receives over 3000 police briefs per annum, the challenges of managing paper-based records become apparent. Dealing with this mass of paper documents are 6 records management staff that now create files, index, scan and catalogue documents into the ODPP's electronic records system.

The ODPP began a move to electronic records with the acquisition of HP TRIM (now known as Content Manager). Scanning of police briefs and associated documents began using three Kodak i1440 scanners.

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While our Kodak scanning equipment could scan the associated documents into a single PDF document, this would not provide flowon benefits to our paralegals and prosecutors. We wanted ODPP staff to have faster and convenient access to records, without the need to rely upon the paper based files.

Valter Guarino, Manager of Records at the ODPP

Other priorities included improved accountability, transparency, timeliness and security of records. To this end, the ODPP initially began using EzeScan software to assist with the scanning of various documents, using barcoding, zone recognition and purpose designed job templates. This provided improvements in efficiency, accuracy and timeliness.

Results

- EzeScan has increased productivity and improved timelines, accountability and security of records.
- Using the solution has reduced keystrokes and improved accuracy.
- Documentation is provided in the required structure and formatting, saving time and improving access to files.

Guarino then approached EzeScan to discuss a solution for dealing with police briefs. A solution was developed based upon predesigned barcode sheets that divide the police brief by the various different document types. These sheets also provide the information used to title the individual documents in HP TRIM.

The sheets also trigger different indexing questions for the specific document type, with all default metadata automatically applied by EzeScan by undertaking a database reference to the ODPP's form information database.

"We proceeded to test the EzeScan application on various briefs and we quickly found that the solution was workable and would provide the organisation information in the required structure and formatting," said Guarino.

"Using the barcode sheets and zone recognition through EzeScan, we reduced keystrokes and improved accuracy. The EzeScan solution perfectly suited our needs. It was a simple deployment with out-of-the-box connectivity with our Kodak scanners and HP TRIM."

"The use of barcode cover sheets which contain the TRIM folder number and the document type in the brief has now been expanded to scanning other documents. At present we are using 25 of these sheets."

This solution has increased our productivity and improved timeliness, and we are now looking at enabling other divisions of ODPP to use the technology to help our business in the battle against paper.

Valter Guarino, Manager of Records at the ODPP

"The support from EzeScan has been excellent, whenever we have needed a hand to create a new workflow or transfer a license they have been very professional with quick responses and quality of service."

About EzeScan

EzeScan provides fast, cost effective business process automation solutions including simplified document back scanning, accounts payable, data robotic process automation, forms data extraction, mailroom/correspondence automation and highly integrated EDRMS capture. With thousands of installations in Australasia, North America and the UK, EzeScan is your ideal digital transformation provider.





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