

# North Dakota County Preserves Documents and Provides Easy Public Access with XtenderSolutions

## Case Study

Data storage, archive, retrieval, and monitoring system helps financial services company save critical time and meet and exceed SEC and NASD requirements

### The Challenge

Preserve almost 200 years worth of documents

### The Solution

LEGATO's solution safeguards the data while making it more accessible by storing it electronically.

### Products Used

- APPLICATIONxtender
- SCANxtender
- WEBxtender
- DISKxtender

### About the County of Grand Forks, ND

The County of Grand Forks, North Dakota is located in the eastern border of the state, 75 miles south of Canada. Located in the city of Grand Forks, the County's government offices serve the 66,000 citizens and support economic development of all businesses in the 1,400 square mile area.

### The Challenge

#### ***Flood Leaves Deeds Office to Salvage Records and Find New Storage Approach***

All records within the County of Grand Forks Register of deeds office – including land deeds dating back to the 1800s – were kept in huge books, and on microfiche. If county employees or citizens needed land deeds, they would need to travel to the county office and search for them by hand. The office had first installed an imaging system in 1996, but it was used primarily for new deeds. When devastating flood in early 1997 destroyed many county buildings and forced the evacuation of nearly 90 percent of the population, almost every county document was flood-damaged. To salvage the documents, the county loaded the documents onto freezer trucks, and freeze-dried them. The documents were then sent to Texas to be treated to prevent mold and decay. When the documents were returned after treatment, they were very brittle, and the county knew the documents would eventually disintegrate with normal handling.

### The Solution

#### ***Digitizing, Archiving and Electronically Storing County Records Increases Efficiencies and Safeguards Them in the Event of a Disaster***

In order to enhance its imaging and document management system, as well as to provide secure storage for the documents in the event of future disasters, the County of Grand Forks decided to use LEGATO's XtenderSolutions® for Content and Storage – including ApplicationXtender®, ScanXtender® and DiskXtender®. ScanXtender was used to batch scan the brittle deeds, as well as new deeds. ApplicationXtender was used to organize and retrieve the digitized documents using the County's internal network. DiskXtender was used to store the documents using a 20-slot optical jukebox and a 156-slot optical jukebox.

This scanning, indexing and storage solution not only safeguarded the data, but made it more accessible for employees and citizens of the county. Before, documents were retrieved from large cumbersome books, a process that could take hours. Now, within a few minutes, they can access this information via computers located at the county office.

#### ***Positive Response to Initial Deployment Leads to Additional County Offices Requesting Content and Storage Management Solutions***

As a result of efficiency improvements in the deeds office, most other County departments – including the recorders office, taxation, veterans services, social services, courts and sheriff's

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department – have also turned to LEGATO's solutions to better manage and access information. In addition, Grand Forks added WebXtender™ to provide browser-based access for employees within the Court system.

Given that several agencies have deployed XtenderSolutions, they are now able to share data to improve services county-wide. For example, the Register of Deeds office shares information with the Tax departments to help ensure correct property tax billing. The Sheriff's office shares information about ongoing investigations with the States Attorneys' office, increasing judicial efficiency.

#### ***Ability to Offer Services to County's Citizens/Businesses via the Web***

Now, the County is launching a new service using LEGATO's WebXtender. For a nominal fee, banks, lawyers, and real-estate agents will be able access the system via WebXtender. Once logged on, these users will be able to search for, view and print recorded documents from their own offices, and improve their ability to serve their customers in such areas as title searches, refinancing and loan applications. This service will help Grand Forks businesses streamline processes and increase user productivity.

The Register of Deeds and other county offices have saved time and have increased employee efficiency by implementing LEGATO's solutions. Once documents are scanned, searches are done

via computer and documents are retrieved within minutes, compared to laborious and multiple hour-long searches through paper files and logbooks. Therefore, county employees can provide better services to the citizens of the county at a lower cost. Critical county documents are also better protected in the event of a disaster. Additional benefits come from the ability to share data and documents across departments. Previously, since sharing information was difficult, employees would duplicate efforts to gather information, and keeping data changes in sync was virtually impossible. Now, since departments can easily share information, there is a reduction in wasteful effort, and information is always up-to-date. Finally, the new self-service Web option will enable the county to easily pay for ongoing maintenance of the system, as well as potentially add to county revenues.



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