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Colorado Division of Motor Vehicles Makes Successful Transition from Microfilm to Digital Imaging.

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Benefits at a Glance

➢ CO DMV is able to collect more data.

➢ CO DMV can deliver documentation to requestors in minutes instead of hours.

➢ CO DMV has gained office space that was occupied by microfilm equipment, the huge microfilm carousel and the additional staff needed to operate the old system.

➢ Law Enforcement has immediate access to data through the 24/7 Communication Center.

➢ Documents are available now as soon as they are scanned instead of having to search through boxes of documents while waiting for microfilm to be processed, returned, inspected, filed and laboriously retrieved.

A Colorado Division of Motor Vehicles Documentation Specialist scans incoming license applications using the Kodak i800 Series scanner and Fairfax Software's *Quick Modules* Software.

Thanks to hard work, intelligent planning, assistance from the Department of Personnel and Administration (DPA), and a deeply appreciated Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) grant, the Colorado Division of Motor Vehicles (CO DMV) has transitioned from microfilm to a digitized imaging system. "We wouldn't have been able to accomplish the needed improvement without the generosity and foresight of CDOT," said Mary Tuttle, CO DMV, Records Administrator. "In addition, DPA provides us with an interface to the web and storage for our document images and index data. They continue to help us plan for growth and look for ways to reduce our storage costs while fully recognizing that 24/7 access to all of our records is vital to our mission and our functions." In 2004, the DMV's existing microfilm based system for record preservation and storage was consuming time and resources and rapidly falling behind current technologies.

CO DMV chose Fairfax Software as prime contractor, an industry leader in turn-key image-based products and solutions for data capture, forms processing and document imaging. Fairfax Software provided their own award winning *Quick Modules* software, Kodak (NYSE:EK) scanners, a programming and project team and complete training. "Truly, Fairfax Software brought us into the 21st Century with our documentation and retrieval," said Scot Smith, CO DMV Documentation Preservation Manager.

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"Our microfilm equipment was aging and it needed to be replaced. Maintenance costs were going up every year," added Mary Tuttle. "The volume of documentation and requests for retrieval were exceeding our capacity to handle it. Now, we are providing information we didn't have the ability to provide before; including a lot of new data to support highway and driving safety, such as much more detailed accident information and citation information."

In fact, CO DMV's new accident report imaging program puts Fairfax Software's *Quick Modules* software to the test by performing Optical Character Recognition on over 250 data fields from each report (see "Accident Reports" below).

Old Method

Since microfilm has to be developed offsite, there is a significant period of time before it is available for retrieval. Once it is developed, it must be tediously hand inspected for torn pages, illegible pages and other problems.

Retrieval requires physically locating a microfilm cartridge from a huge carousel using a microfilm locator number. If a document request comes in before the microfilm is developed and stored in the carousel, CO DMV personnel must look through literally hundreds of boxes of paper to retrieve the document.

There will always be a need for microfilm readers, because the stored microfilm goes back 40 to 50 years and it is not yet cost effective to scan the huge backlog of material.

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New Method

Incoming documents are sorted into "Programs." These include Citations, Driver License Applications, Accident Reports, Motor Vehicle Titles and Dealer Licenses among others. Each item can be accompanied by a non-standard quantity of support documents. These are all fed into the Kodak i840's to be scanned. The support documents do not have to be separated; they can be fed into the scanner virtually however they come out of the envelope. Support documents can include nearly anything including hand-written correspondence.

Quick Modules automatically identifies the documents and groups them into submissions (a submission is all of the documents that come from one envelope or that are related to one item such as a license application). Submissions are automatically identified and processed according to their type.

Quick Modules automatically captures data from prescribed fields on standard documents and feeds it to the DMV's databases. Any fields that cannot be read using Fairfax Software's sophisticated character recognition engines are queued electronically to key operators for correction. These operators must only deal with the fields that need correction. The vast majority of documents are processed automatically with minimal human involvement.

The document images are being stored by DPA for immediate retrieval via a website maintained by DPA.

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) 408 Grant

The CDOT deserves a lot of credit for the 408 grant that the DMV received. CDOT worked with the federal grant program through its integrated safety plan. The money came from the US Department of Transportation's (USDOT), National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Beginning in 2004, CO DMV received grants that eventually totaled $276,375.

These grants supported CO DMV's development of the new Accident Report imaging system, an improved Batch Slip program, the addition of *Quick Modules, Quick Config*, (a Fairfax Software solution component that allows the DMV to create and index their own form designs to use for data capture during the scanning process), and to purchase additional Kodak scanners.

"We're grateful for the grant. NHTSA and CDOT have been very supportive. This 408 grant money is available to develop and implement plans and programs involving all aspects and components of traffic safety in Colorado," said Tuttle.

Progress

Nine years later, the innovative folks at CO DMV are still finding ways to improve integration between the Fairfax Software solution and the myriad other systems and groups within the Division of Motor Vehicles. A key factor in this effort has been *Quick Modules* ability to easily interface with almost any legacy system through the use of its user-exits and built-in customization.

"The more we transition, the more benefits we are seeing. As we learn more about what *Quick Modules* can do, the more applications we see for it within our operation," said Mary Tuttle.

CO DMV is working to integrate the remaining programs. These last few document types are low volume, high complexity and internal documents that have low retrieval impact on DMV resources.

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In addition to some other innovations, CO DMV has added two Kodak scanners. The scalability of *Quick Modules* and the special licensing structure that Fairfax Software extends to government facilities enables expansion while minimizing additional cost.

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>
> *– Mary Tuttle
> CO DMV Records
> Administrator*

Auto Title Retrieval

One of the biggest payoffs for CO DMV is vehicle title retrieval. The Title group, which serves 64 counties, can now go directly to the website maintained by DPA to retrieve title images. Non-website requests that used to take one to two hours are now retrieved in minutes.

CO DMV is adding barcodes to their documentation to facilitate batching and sorting processes for automatic processing.

CO DMV has completed their conversion successfully, scanning 100% of their incoming documentation. In this manner, they will be able to eliminate more of the microfilm equipment and save money on maintenance. There will always be a need for microfilm readers, because the stored microfilm goes back 40 to 50 years and it is not yet cost effective to scan that huge backlog of material.

Accident Reports

In 2005, CO DMV made an innovative decision to use Fairfax Software's *Quick Modules* software to perform Optical Character Recognition (OCR) on every data field of their Motor Vehicle Accident Reports. CO DMV called on the software engineers at Fairfax Software to adapt the capacity of its data capture modules to OCR over 250 data items from each accident report. A typical accident report contains over 200 OCR fields on the first page alone. Subsequent pages require another 40 to 50 fields to be captured. Some accident reports have as many as 270 fields.

Using the old system, CO DMV data entry personnel keyed data from an accident report directly from paper. Using the new system, *Quick Modules* captures the data and the key entry operators only have to make corrections to fields that fail OCR.

CO DMV is now using the knowledge they've gained from implementing this new methodology to collect more information and detail about each incident.

24-hour access

Law Enforcement has 24-hour access to data. Officers in the field can obtain license, title or other driver information immediately through a CO DMV call center, 24 hours a day. With the new system, the call center can pull images up right away without having to hunt for microfilm or dig through boxes of paper. "With law enforcement, it has to be 24/7, immediate access," said Mary Tuttle.

Return on Investment

As more DMV programs are converted to the new system, the CO DMV will realize increased savings.

Most of the savings fall into two categories:

1. Fewer man-hours.

2. Reduced equipment replacement and maintenance costs for the microfilm equipment.