Improved Capture System Helps Kent County Process 73,000 Documents a Year

Located in Western Michigan, Kent County is the fourth largest population center in Michigan. The County provides a wide range of mandated services and discretionary functions to its 604,142 citizens. It employs around 2,000 people who make up its 26 departments.

One of those is the Information Technology (IT) Department whose mission is to provide quality, responsive, cost-effective IT solutions and services to the county departments, agencies and local government.

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Pains of Aging Software

The Kent County office processes hundreds of invoices every day using IBM Datacap. After 10 years their current version of the software was aging causing limitations and issues to rise to the surface. Still wanting to leverage IBM Datacap, the IT Department reached out to IBM for support, who recommended us, Pyramid Solutions.

The County uses IBM Datacap to process all invoices. This includes capturing the vendor's name/ number, invoice number and invoice amount and feeding that information into Kent County's system of record. On an average day, the County inputs 200-500 documents into the system.

"One of the Strategic Goals of the IT Department is to provide a robust and flexible computing infrastructure for our internal 'customers' that is capable of handling current and projected needs," said Steve Watson, Computer Programmer in the IT Department. "Our old version of IBM Datacap [version 8.0.1] prevented us from meeting that goal. It proved its worth by being durable and serving our needs for several years, but technology advancements and changing business needs caused us to outgrow version eight."

The user interface became dated and offered limited features for users. The image viewer was small, several workflows were broken-including one that populated the wrong vendor's name, the speed of workflows slowed, and several information fields still required manual entry.

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>
> — Steve Watson
>   Kent County

Say Hello to IBM Datacap 9.0

After meeting with Kent Country and understanding not only their technical requirements, but also their business objectives, the two teams collaborated on a solution and project time line that met the County's needs and deadlines.

"The Pyramid Solutions Team gave Kent County some new enhancements such as a larger image viewer during the scanning processes, a workflow that displays the vendor address during indexing so it's easier to select the correct vendor, and a 'single-payment-vendor' option for vendors not in the system who submit invoices for small amounts," said Dave Prizlow, Principal Engineer, Enterprise Content Management, Pyramid Solutions.

In the new interface, users can resize and move windows around the screen to create a unique view based on individual preference. Version 9.0 also has faster processing speeds and matured capture technology that decreases manual data entry.

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Anna Morris, Account Executive, Banking & Financial Services, Pyramid Solutions, was also on the project team for Kent County. She too was impressed at the Engineering Team's drive to go above and beyond on this project.

"Not only did the IBM Datacap solution upgrade without a hitch, but the Engineering Team had the foresight to identify potential future needs and incorporate features that address those needs into the solution," Anna said. "Kent County was really impressed by that."

In Conclusion

"Across the board, it was a great relationship," Steve said. "Pyramid Solutions was patient fielding our questions and they all were incredibly responsive. Having them physically here when we implemented the solution was the cherry on top because it put us at ease and was helpful for making on-the-spot adjustments."

Within months of upgrading IBM Datacap, Kent County noticed a significant ROI because of the following benefits:

- Reduced processing time

- Automatic data entry and validation

- Streamlined and consolidated processes

- Fewer errors

- Faster decision-making and turn-around times

Not only does the solution meet Kent County's current needs, but it sets the organization up to become a more cognitive business. Upgrading to version 9.0 is a stepping stone towards using future versions of IBM Datacap with fortified language processing, text analytics and machine learning technologies. The County will be able to process higher quantities of documents and more complex or variable documents.