

New Jersey



Warren County, New Jersey

EMC Centera and EMC Documentum solutions advance a county's enterprise-wide document management goals

Located in northwestern New Jersey, Warren County serves over 100,000 constituents in 22 municipalities throughout its 364 square mile jurisdiction. The County's IT organization supports over 32 departments and divisions including Public Safety and 911 Dispatch, the correctional center, a nursing home, and various offices including the County Clerk's Land Records Management systems and Surrogates offices. Operational support ranges from managing phone and information systems and ensuring business continuity to records management and regulations compliance.

To address the administrative and access-related challenges associated with the County's growing paper- and tape-based archives, the IT department has been extensively reviewing possible solutions for the deployment of an enterprise-wide content management system that would support online image archives. The plan was to begin small and roll out the solution throughout the County over the next several years. Powerful EMC® Documentum® Records Manager and ApplicationXtender® software coupled with an EMC Centera™ content-addressed storage (CAS) platform were chosen as the most fitting solutions to assist Warren County in carrying out this initiative.

“As part of government, we're here forever, and we need to deal with products, applications, and services that work well and are going to be around for the long term,” says Barry Smith, Information Systems Director, Warren County Information Systems Division. “The EMC solutions we have chosen are part of a long-term planning process that will enable us to move into electronic document management.”

The first office to benefit

The Surrogates office which handles adoption, will/probate documentation, and other related records was the first group to benefit from the new EMC Documentum and EMC Centera storage solution. Four people currently use the system, but it is expected that that figure will escalate to well over 100 users as Warren County's document management initiative encompasses other departments.

Approximately 700 wills a year, averaging about 25 pages each, are now securely and electronically retained in cost-efficient EMC Centera storage. EMC Documentum Records Manager and ApplicationXtender software, which reside within a server that sits between the user and the EMC Centera, allow Warren County to image the files with an indexing process to support rapid retrieval and control the transfer of information which ensures a high level of security. County Business Systems, an EMC partner which facilitated the deployment of the solution, helped create a database of information that works with

the indexing features of EMC Documentum software. With this integrated functionality, the staff in the Surrogates Office can now enter all the information once from the dozen or so papers required for a filing and then all the forms that are necessary for the recording of a will/probate are populated with that information. Because it eliminates the need to enter the same information on multiple forms, it saves the staff a considerable amount of time.

The combined EMC Documentum and EMC Centera solution also supports regulations compliance within the Surrogates office. Because certain documents contain information that is regulated for release such as cause of death, social security numbers, and those named in a will, HIPAA provisions and other applicable regulatory requirements must be met. The EMC Documentum solution provides the ability to mask certain information on the screen based on user level while EMC Centera stores imaged documentation in an unalterable state for assured content authenticity.

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Barry Smith, Information Systems Director

In addition to the ability to support compliance within the Surrogates office, the EMC Documentum and EMC Centera solution will be called upon to help the County more easily meet HIPAA and other regulations as they apply to the County’s many other service programs, including its own health insurance benefits package, a nursing home, a public health nursing agency, and 911 dispatch—all of which amass large amounts of medical information.

“It’s definitely easier and quicker to work with than the paper-based records,” says Smith. “Our users are pleased with it, and because it has freed up some of their time, they have started to back-scan a number of their case records into the system so that they have those as well.”

Success strengthens positioning for PARIS Grant

In successful operation for over a year, the EMC solution is paving the way toward future expansion. In fact, it helps better position Warren County for additional funding from the PARIS Grant, which involves a competitive, statewide process for funding projects related to records management.

Last year, the first year of the award, Warren County received approximately \$860,000 dollars to fund a needs assessment and inventory project which provided a complete inventory of all the records and documents within county departments. It also helped finance various imaging projects in the Clerk’s and Engineering offices which were also done in collaboration with County Business Systems.

If awarded grant money this year, Warren County will use the funds to support a business continuity/disaster recovery initiative which involves the deployment of a second EMC Centera system located approximately seven miles away in another Warren County facility. This system would be used to replicate all information stored on the existing EMC Centera currently located in the County’s main administration building.

“We are also talking to four of our neighboring counties about replicating information among ourselves, so the northwest region of New Jersey would be totally backed up,” says Smith.

Recognizing the considerable benefits that could be gained, Warren County was one of the first to commit its own funding to further its imaging and electronic document content management goals, which have been in progress for the last three years. The PARIS Grant program is seen as a valuable opportunity for the County to possibly move up some of its five- to 10-year project plans for imaging and electronic document content management to a three- to five-year process.

A lineup of EMC supported projects

In addition to its business continuity and disaster recovery plans, Warren County will soon be using its four-terabyte EMC Centera system as a repository for images from the Clerk's office and for online storage of subdivision maps from the Engineering office.

In the next grant cycle, Warren County will propose the rollout of the EMC Documentum and EMC Centera solution to its Personnel, Purchasing, and Fiscal offices. Plans call for current documents to be imaged immediately with the capture of historic documents to follow. One hundred eighty years of elected officials' bi-monthly meeting minutes, resolutions, and agendas (which require permanent storage) also are slated to be imaged and securely housed within EMC Centera storage archives.

"EMC technology is definitely going to make things much easier for us to do research on our Freeholders' minutes," explains Smith. "To be able to go back and electronically search for a particular resolution, or even a group of resolutions that concern a particular topic, is going to save us a tremendous amount of time."

Warren County also expects to continue to reduce tape backup processes as more applications are supported by EMC Centera storage. Already purchased but not yet deployed, EMC DatabaseXtender™ Archiver software will be used to migrate older database data to long-term files archived on EMC Centera. Once there, these files can be searched independently if required.

Another Warren County document management project in development focuses on the support of ILM initiatives. It involves integrating records management schedules (such as a three-year timetable for correspondence and a seven-year retention period for personnel records) into the EMC Documentum software so that "expired" records can be easily identified and removed from EMC Centera. In this way, capacity on the system is preserved, allowing for an extended return on the investment.

"When you're dealing with thousands of records, the ability to automatically purge particular documents that have reached the end of their life is going to be of tremendous help to us," says Smith.

Statewide interest grows

Although still in the initial stages, the success of Warren County's document management initiatives have begun to attract statewide attention. The Division of Archives and Records Management, an organization at the state level that interfaces with Warren County, has been observing the County's work with EMC, and considers it to be a pilot for others to follow.

"These groups are now talking to EMC because they're looking at what we're doing as their potential future," says Smith.



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Customer Profile
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