



ViewWise Connects Ohio City Departments While Providing Disaster Recovery Management

Project Overview

Henry County Board of Commissioners

Country or Region: Ohio, USA

Industry: Government

Business Situation

Henry County was concerned about disaster recovery after witnessing other counties suffer after fire, flood, or other unexpected disasters destroyed years of public records.

Solution

ViewWise was installed to provide disaster recovery management, which also enabled Henry County to manage business processes, save space, and automate retention all while going digital and reducing costs.

Benefits

- Disaster Recovery Management
- Scalability
- Space Savings
- Retention
- Near-Instant File Location
- Audit Trail and Security

“In the end, ViewWise makes us more and more efficient, and we couldn’t be happier.”

Richard Myers, Commissioner, Henry County Board of Commissioners

Henry County, Ohio includes local government offices and services to nearly 30,000 residents who call it home. Approximately 25 departments, boards, and commissions are listed on its website, which includes everything from a local airport to a Water & Sewer Department. Storing the amount of paper these various agencies generated a problem, but it wasn’t the main focus motivating a move to switch from paper records to electronic records that was spearheaded by Richard Myers, one of three commissioners on the Henry County Board of Commissioners.

Myers’s primary concern was disaster recovery. He saw what happened in other counties when fire, flood, or other unexpected disasters destroyed years of public records. With the support of the other two county commissioners, Myers, formerly the owner of a computer software company, volunteered to spearhead an IT initiative to protect Henry County from any possible disaster or malicious activity.

Myers started by developing a list of needs.

- **Scalable to Fit Growing Needs** – Expand from a few departments to many departments on a flexible timetable
- **Locate Public Records** – Locate information faster when requested
- **Create One “Main” File** – Eliminate paper copies of the same file in multiple locations
- **Save Space** – Eliminate multiple storage facilities
- **Manage Utilization and Retention Policies** – Reduce data storage and meet compliancy regulations
- **Plan Ahead for Additional Implementation Phases** – Add additional departments and increase workflow and routing between offices

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It didn't take long for Myers to gain support from many corners. On the state level, electronic record keeping was being encouraged by the judicial branch. On the county level, Engineers supported the initiative, as they were worried about maps and paper documents that were deteriorating and understood the value of going digital. Additionally, both the Board of Elections and the Clerk of Courts' office saw the value of streamlining their workflow immediately, and were eager to become early adopters.

Armed with a defined set of goals and the support of significant county departments, Myers and Judy Sonnenberg, the Clerk of Courts, began the search for the appropriate solution. They interviewed several companies and finally decided upon Perry Corporation. Perry Corporation recommended the ViewWise® Document Management Solution from Computhink to satisfy Henry County's defined needs while offering additional features that would increase the value of implementing ViewWise.

According to Myers, there were other products that gave the impression they were more affordable than ViewWise on the surface because they charged a relatively small up-front fee. However, that fee covered a limited number of pages, after which a per-page surcharge would be added to the cost. This would leave Henry County vulnerable in the event the county's needs exceeded the original allotment, something which is almost impossible to predict. This did not seem fiscally responsible. In the end, the price-point, feature set, and benefits of ViewWise made it the easy choice. Said Myers, “ViewWise clearly offered the most appropriate value for our needs.”

A second look at Myer's wish list reveals how ViewWise met Henry County's requirements.

- **Scalability** – ViewWise is completely scalable and always ready to adapt to changing needs.
- **Public Records Request** – ViewWise enables county workers to locate information almost immediately. Keyword searches relevant to individual departments provide immediate access. The Board of Elections and Engineers already have their entire backlogs scanned and available for retrieval. The other departments are currently in the process of scanning their files. Some of the time to scan the files has been created simply because of ViewWise's inherent ability to decrease the need for individuals to locate and transport files by hand.
- **Create One "Main" File** – The County had the same file located and filed in multiple departments, because each department needed some information within that file. Now, as files are added to ViewWise, access can be granted to files or certain sections of a file for multiple offices to view. This has reduced, and in some cases eliminated, multiple copies of a file, as well as the need for multiple storage locations for one file. An additional benefit is a significant reduction in the time it would take one office to obtain a file from another office, especially if driving was involved to acquire the file(s).
- **Space Savings** – Henry County was overflowing with records. Most offices would have multiple storage facilities for their documents all over the county. ViewWise is helping to eliminate the need for multiple storage facilities.
- **Manage Utilization and Retention Policies** – There is a strategy in place to reduce data storage and meet compliancy regulations. When a document reaches its life expectancy, via automated workflow the Ohio Historical Society is automatically notified to signoff that the document can be purged from the system, saving Henry County the time and worry of this necessary action.
- **Plan Ahead for Additional Implementation Phases** – Adding more offices and initiating workflow and routing between offices began quicker than originally expected, mainly due to the enthusiasm of the participants. The project started with five initial departments, and Myers didn't expect that additional departments would sign-on so quickly. However, when the rest of the county offices saw the benefits that the initial five departments were getting, they couldn't wait to start realizing the benefits of ViewWise themselves. "I guess you could say that Phase II already happened," says Myers, "But there are still a few departments that need to be added to the system."

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Additional ViewWise features that Henry County is finding to be valuable

"I don't think we're utilizing half of ViewWise's capabilities now," says Myers, "but each day we constantly strive to use more and more of its functionality." Some additional features of ViewWise that Myers is finding to be very helpful include:

- Audit Trail to monitor any action taken on a document
- Print, email, and fax right directly from ViewWise
- User can create annotations, redactions, revisions and versions
 - Redactions are mostly being used for sensitive information such as social security number, bank account information etc.

ViewWise departments keep growing.

ViewWise is currently being used by the following departments in Henry County:

- Commissioners
- Clerk of Courts
- Sheriff
- Engineers
- Board of Elections
- Juvenile Probation
- Mediation
- Family Court
- Magistrates

A new employment opportunity has been created.

The Commissioners of Henry County coordinated the county's ViewWise installation with a separate Service Bureau initiative at Henry County's Department of Disability (DD). By coordinating, the county was able to hire clients of the DD to do scanning for the county, and since the DD's system also used ViewWise, compatibility was guaranteed.

Return on Investment (ROI)

"We are on track to achieve our goal," says Myers, "In the event of a disaster, our important information will be retained." Beyond that, Myers is enjoying great convenience with the ViewWise system. For example, before ViewWise, if a document had to be transported from the courthouse to the Sheriff's office it was a short walk, but created "down time." "Now click, shoot, bang it's there! That's 10-15 minutes savings for every piece of paper," says Myers.

Even more beneficial, Henry County now has intercommunication capability with the state. (Previously, the Clerk of Courts had a system that was running on UNIX, but couldn't connect because others were running Windows.) Take that in conjunction with the scanning and the office efficiency increases exponentially.



The Final Analysis

Equally important to Myers is that the people who actually use the system are happy with it. “Even people who were initially reluctant are now sold on ViewWise,” says Myers, “We get immediate service if we need it. It doesn’t happen often, but it’s comforting to know Computhink and Perry Corporation stand behind the product.”

“In the end, ViewWise will make us more and more efficient,” concludes Myers, “And we couldn’t be happier.”

For More Information

For more information about Computhink products and services, contact the Computhink Sales Team at (800) 988-4465 or by sending an email to sales@computhink.com.

To access information using the World Wide Web, go to: www.computhink.com.

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Computhink provides Document Management / Content Management solutions for secure information sharing and compliance, targeting small and medium size organizations. Computhink's ViewWise® streamlines business processes, improves customer service, reduces costs and helps to ensure compliance.

An international company, Computhink was established as an Illinois Corporation in 1994 and has over 4,000 worldwide customers in government, financial services, education, healthcare, industrial and utility organizations.