Digital Records in Housing NSW

Context

- 130,000 Tenancies plus other Housing Assistance
- 100 new applicants each day
- 65 Housing NSW Offices
- 1.3 million client files – one legacy system
- 700,000 admin files – two legacy systems
- Plethora of Access databases for tracking

Summary

- Project Objective:
  - Implement Digital Records across Housing NSW
    - New business digital from selected date
    - No halfway house – hardcopies disposed of in accordance with GDA 36
    - Backscanning out of scope
- Phases:
  - Replace Legacy Systems:
    - 1a – Business Classification Scheme
    - 1b - Admin file tracking to TRIM
    - 1c – Ministerial tracking
    - 2a – Client file tracking to TRIM
    - 2b – Item Tracking
  - 3 – Digital Client Records
  - 4 – Digital Admin Records ("the rest")

Why Client Records First?

- Quarantinable – staff using client files don't use admin files

- Paper driven process so biggest business benefits available

- Complex process; felt that we would address all issues likely to be uncovered

Client Records – Business Context

- Document lodgement involves significant client interaction – that is, lodgement is part of the business process, not ancillary

- 65 offices receiving 30,000 pages per day, scanning is major requirement

- Documents include driver licences, medicare cards

- A4 and smaller; single sided and double sided

- Printed, typed and handwritten

- Documents come in "business bundles":
    - Application plus supporting documents

Solution Options

- Minimum Change Option:
  - Scan "in back office" instead of placing on file,
  - Mail back valuable documents
  - Dispose of in accordance with GDA 36
- Business preference – "Scan at the boundary", quality check, return paper to client
- NOTE: No OCR:
  - Not reliable for handwriting
  - slows process
  - increases bandwidth needs
  - Not obvious that it facilitates business process

Scan at the Boundary

- Business Process Simulation:
  - Housing Register Application
    - up to twelve documents
    - 100 pages
    - client interaction 5 minutes best case
  - Three steps in scanning:
    1. Physically scan – 200 dpi, grayscale – realtime
    2. Check quality of scanned document (GDA 36) - realtime
    3. Register – realtime? Offline?
  - Scanner requirement
    - Small footprint, scan 32 page (double sided) HRA document in less than one minute
    - Able to scan driver licences, medicare cards

Solution

- Canon DR2580C – 32 pages in 40 seconds, both sides at once, takes cards
- "Pressure Test" in several offices, endorsed by staff as feasible
- Scan and Quality Check on the spot, Register when client has left or in back office
- How many scanners?
  - Determined by number of client interface points
  - Capacity not critical – usage about 200 scans per day (rated at 1,000 each)

Change Approach

- Implementation Group in each Division:
    - To own the change locally
    - Communicate
    - Nominate SMEs for workshops
- Business staff owners of decisions on process
- Train the trainer – 300 staff intensively trained to train the others
- Training in use of TRIM as a procedure
- Preparation – "PWP"
- Close latest part and create new "digital" part
- New Client Containers numbered from T6000000

Lessons Learned

- We knew the culture change would be huge; well, it is even bigger than that

- Integrate TRIM into Business Process and train that way

- Train all users

- Backscanning is a good idea – include it at least in discussions

- Once people come on board they love digital records

In Parallel – "Item Tracking System"

- March 2009 – "Introduce staff to TRIM"
- Main participants – executives and their support staff
- With Hindsight – not sure if I would do that again – drain on resources

Statistics

- Live for new business 15 June 2009
- 1,500 regular users of Client Records (total Housing NSW 3,000 fte)
- 5,000 documents a day being registered
- 7 Gigabytes each week additional document storage
- Last few weeks, about 100 Gb outsourced backscanning added
- Already over 1,000,000 fewer pieces of paper to manage
- GDA 36 – retention time "measured in seconds"