

## SCANNING & DATA CAPTURE

## CASE STUDY

### Auckland City Environments

Auckland City entrusts Converga with conversion of 15 million property records.

Converga's scanning and data capture capability fast-tracked largest Local Government conversion project in New Zealand.

#### About Auckland City Environments

Auckland City Environments is the regulatory business unit of Auckland City Council. Its many activities include administering the Building Act, district plan and by-laws and allocating building and resource consents. Customers range from residents to large-scale property developers.

#### The challenge

Prior to 2000, Auckland City Environments had 15 million items related to properties stored on a wide range of media such as paper, microfiche, large format plans and aperture cards. This repository was the largest of its type for any local government authority in New Zealand, and indeed it was one of the largest in Australasia. Not surprisingly, the complexity of this information presented Auckland City Environments with a number of challenges:

- › The access to and handling of records slowed the information flow which made for an inefficient consent process.
- › Records were paper based, which meant that only one person could access a property file at any one time. And more importantly, no one else could access that information until the file was returned.
- › Paper based files lend themselves to multiple filing systems where information is either duplicated or represented in one system but not another. This inaccurate and unavailable information increased the risk of litigation and liability for Auckland City.

Auckland City Environments needed to instigate a major property file conversion so that the right information would be available in the right place, at the right time, to the right people. Converting these documents, however, posed additional challenges:

- › Converting historical documents to digital format was complex as there were inconsistent reduction ratios on microfiche files, and variable quality of original plans and documentation (some dating back decades). This made it difficult to resolve the imaging to the high quality standards that Auckland City Environments demanded.
- › In addition to the wide variety of media, the paper documentation alone involved significant variation in size, from smaller than A5 through to A3, plus the large-format A0 plans.
- › Individual property files on microfiche and aperture cards required specialist equipment in order to digitise to an image format.



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Rachel Hill,  
Information Manager,  
Auckland City Environments

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### The solution

Auckland City Environments partnered with Convergica on an ambitious program to convert all its documents to digital images so that they could be sourced quickly and easily, and when necessary, by several people simultaneously.

Convergica encapsulated all the required competencies that Auckland City Environments needed in one organisation. With its proven scanning and data capture capability, Convergica processes on a daily basis huge packets of information, in different sizes and formats and in a wide variety of media, for many of New Zealand's leading businesses and organisations. Convergica has the expertise and scale for long-term conversion projects.

In addition, Convergica takes partnership seriously. According to Rachel Hill, Auckland City Environments' Information Manager, "Convergica impressed us with its ability to think and act like a true partner."

### The benefits

After the project had commenced the Convergica team was very proactive in suggesting ways in which the work could be further fast-tracked, therefore providing more savings and efficiencies for Auckland City Environments. In particular, by collaborating closely with Auckland City, Convergica was able to bring forward the completion date of the project by 3 years. All 15 million items within the Auckland City Environments filing system had been completely processed by Convergica in 2005 rather than 2008! The early completion date also meant that the project came in under budget.

Today, the new document management and imaging capability continues to provide multiple benefits to Auckland City. These include the fact that multiple users can view and access the same file at the same time; the consent process for Auckland City customers and ratepayers is no longer needlessly delayed due to the inefficiencies of a paper-based system; the need for extra staff to manage paper-based enquiries has diminished considerably; the historical records are now protected from disaster.

In partnership with Convergica, Auckland City Environments has now laid the vital foundations for the transition to total electronic processing of all documentation relating to consents and licensing.

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