

TOWN VOTES FOR SMARTSEARCH

CASE STUDY



BUSINESS:
Government

COMPANY:
Town of Centerville

OBJECTIVES:
Manage police, court and other government documents more efficiently

Town officials choose SmartSearch to manage police reports, court records and other government documents more economically and efficiently

Who says government can't be efficient? The Town of Centerville had run out of storage space for its police reports and court records, and it wanted to be able to find and retrieve these documents more quickly and easily. When they learned how little it would cost to implement SmartSearch and how much money and time it would save, the town's mayor and aldermen acted decisively. "They decided we just couldn't afford not to use SmartSearch!" said Susan Griggs, the town clerk.

The Town of Centerville lies in the heart of Tennessee in an exceptionally picturesque region rich in history and filled with bubbling springs, scenic waterfalls and gently rolling hills. The centrally located town was designated the county seat of Hickman County in 1823 and is situated only 60 miles southwest of Nashville, a city synonymous with country music and one of the nation's most vibrant cultural centers. The Town of Centerville provides a variety of essential municipal services for its residents, and includes police, maintenance and sanitation departments.

Historically, governments have always run on paper, and until recently the Town of Centerville was no exception. The burden of managing much of the government's documentation requirements had fallen on Griggs, who manages critical records for the town's busy police department and court. "The police department is the largest department in the town," Griggs explained. "Their job is to protect our citizens and there's a lot of paperwork involved in what they do."

After long years of storing thousands of paper documents, the Town of Centerville had come to a critical moment: either invest more of the taxpayers' hard-earned money in costly and space-consuming filing cabinets—plus find suitable offsite storage facilities; or else modernize with a new electronic content management system.

"There was no room left and we had to do something," Griggs recalled. "We were looking for an affordable, easy-to-use solution that would eliminate our reliance on paper and make it easier to store and retrieve important records." Griggs had been attempting to find a workable solution for a couple of years when she finally contacted a trusted office technology company. After carefully evaluating the town's requirements, they introduced her to SmartSearch.

Griggs processes reports using Microsoft Access. "SmartSearch looked similar to the software I was using already," she observed, "and I could see that it would be extremely easy to learn and use. When we compared the investment for Smart Search to the lease-to-own estimate for more filing cabinets and supplies, SmartSearch came out the winner by a country mile."



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Through decades of experience with content management technologies in business enterprises of all kinds, Square 9 Softworks has acquired a thorough understanding of document-driven business processes. Intensely customer-focused and highly responsive, the company delivers effective, value-driven solutions and has achieved a reputation for excellence in meeting the rapidly evolving needs of its customers.

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Town of Centerville police officers prepare arrest reports, citations and a variety of other hand-written reports daily. These go through the department's chain-of-command and then are sent to the town clerk's office for processing. When they reach her desk, Griggs manually enters the reports into Access and prints one-page paper copies of them in a format known as a TIBRS (Tennessee Incident Based Reporting System) Report. Griggs also processes correspondence, time sheets, purchase orders and invoices. When court is in session, she runs the docket.

Before the town installed SmartSearch, Griggs would then have to file the TIBRS Reports and other documents in designated filing cabinets by hand. Now she follows the same procedure, but instead of manually filing the documents, she uses a simple scanning device to scan the printed reports directly into one of several customized SmartSearch Inboxes (e.g.: "Offense Reports"). Griggs does this weekly, or whenever it's convenient. The original paper documents, which had been the source of so much frustration, are tossed into a box for shredding.

SmartSearch makes storing and retrieving these documents easy, too. When Griggs is ready to index and store documents, SmartSearch prompts her with a number of preset criteria (e.g.: "misdemeanor" or "felony") and she presses a button to choose the appropriate ones. "It's as simple as that," she said. "It really is!" Before transitioning to SmartSearch, Griggs might have had to sift manually through hundreds of documents to find a misfiled report. Now, she just searches on key words and SmartSearch retrieves the relevant documents—instantly.

"I estimate that SmartSearch has saved me 15 hours each week that I can now devote to other town business," Griggs said. "That equates to a more than 35-percent gain in my personal productivity, and it gives me a sense of personal satisfaction because I'm getting my job done better and more efficiently." Griggs reports that SmartSearch has been so successful in her office that the police, human resources, accounting and other town departments are actively exploring ways to use SmartSearch to streamline their business processes as well, and to provide better coordination among departments and with the state and federal government.

"I am just really pleased to have found SmartSearch," Griggs said. "It really is tremendous. I would recommend SmartSearch to any organization or person who wants to save time and avoid frustration managing documents. SmartSearch has worked for us. It has done everything we were hoping it would do—and then some!"