



Electronic imaging helps CU meet service goals

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► A credit union member calls and urgently needs copies of a check deposited at one of your branch locations. Another member calls needing a particular transaction voucher from two years ago to present at an Internal Revenue Service audit. The audit is tomorrow. Both need a prompt reply.

An overdramatization? Not in the least. Members in less dramatic circumstances also have similar expectations. When members entrust you with important documents, they expect you to be able to provide them.

THE CHALLENGE

Solving this aspect of member service was the mandate of FORUM Credit

Union—a \$445 million asset, full-service credit union with eight branches in Indianapolis. The credit union serves 75,000 members and nearly 1,100 employee groups.

For the previous 10 years, the credit union stored its checks on microfilm at a central clearinghouse. When members wanted information about certain checks, staff had to ask the clearinghouse to locate the check images. Members' questions couldn't be answered without a callback. And to further complicate things, checks would occasionally double-feed during the filming process, obscuring one check with another, making retrieval even more difficult.

FORUM Credit Union's centralized microfilming system was the best option available when it was originally installed. But over



FORUM CU streamlined its records-management processes with electronic imaging.

time, microfilm's shortcomings became incompatible with the credit union's member-service standards. FORUM Credit Union sought a way to eliminate the delay in response time to members' requests by having information more readily available.

The credit union also wanted a better way of storing transaction vouchers, which hadn't been part of the microfilm process. FORUM Credit Union stored transaction vouchers in the branch for two months, after which time the paper was sent to a storage area. When members requested vouchers, staff would have to go to the storage area and physically search for them. Again, questions couldn't be answered in a single phone call.

THE SEARCH

The Canon CD document recorder is a self-con-

tained unit that scans 50 to 60 checks per minute and records them directly onto a standard recordable compact disk. This capability makes it easy for branch locations to store and quickly retrieve important records without the delays associated with microfiche and outsourcing.

Last September, the credit union decided to test the scanner in a branch that processes 20,000 to 25,000 transactions per month (combined checks and vouchers).

Technicians installed the system and trained the branch manager, assistant branch manager, and head teller. These managers then trained seven tellers.

After the initial training, technicians returned to make sure everything was running smoothly and that everyone was comfortable with the process.

BENEFITS OF ELECTRONIC IMAGING

► The key areas of your records-management processes that could benefit from optical imaging include:

- *Teller operations.* Optical imaging protects checks and deposit vouchers from loss or theft and helps your credit union respond quickly to members' requests from any branch location.
- *Member files.* The process also helps manage long-term records more efficiently, requiring less space and maintaining the integrity of central files to ensure high levels of member service and satisfaction.
- *Business files.* It also keeps accounting and administration files organized and easily accessible.
- *Loan operations.* It can consolidate all documents associated with a loan file under multiple electronic fields (i.e., loan number and member name).

DAILY WORK FLOW

Once the test proved successful, FORUM Credit Union installed the Canon 4046 scanner in five additional branches. The training procedure was identical to the test model. One branch received the Canon 4050, which is an upgraded version of the 4046. In addition to scanning to CD, the new 4050 includes a network card that enables it to be used as a network scanner for e-mailing and capturing documents onto a shared network drive for network user access.

Tellers, using either the 4046 or 4050, scan checks directly to disk in batches of 100 to 200 at a time. They later scan transaction

vouchers separately in daily batches. The tellers record each batch with the date and teller number before scanning. A disk typically holds one to two weeks of checks and vouchers, depending on branch volume.

“We met the member service goals we set before installing the scanner,” says Brian Crum, FORUM Credit Union’s operations manager. Now, when a member requests an item, it can be retrieved using a standard Windows-based personal computer. Tellers simply search for the date and teller batch on the corresponding CD. They can then print or e-mail a high-quality image of the check, which gets it in the mem-

ber’s hands quickly.

Compared with centralized microfilming, another benefit of this distributed scanning process is lower security risk. The work is done on the premises without having to transport each branch’s cash letter to a centralized location.

The credit union is also using the scanner in its accounts payable department, scanning all incoming invoices for storage and retrieval.

Compared with the previous microfilm system, the Canon 4046 scanner has streamlined the process of capturing and maintaining important documents, thereby helping the credit union meet its member

service goals.

Nationally, credit unions are also using the scanner for maintaining other records, such as loan files, signature cards, and board minutes.

Canon USA is a strategic alliance provider of CUNA & Affiliates. To obtain information on year-end rebates on the CD-4050, visit www.cuna.org, then “Products & Services,” then “Year-End Rebate Offers: Image Filing Systems From Canon.” To have a Canon representative assess your credit union’s records management needs, contact CUNA’s customer service department at 800-356-8010 (press 3), and mention “magazine.” ■