Case Study

FRESNO STATE
Discovery. Diversity. Distinction.

INDUSTRY
- Education

LOCATION
- Fresno, California

CHALLENGES
- Slow, difficult record retrieval due to physical microfilm
- Reader printer machine in need of constant repair
- Limited dollars from grant to spend on microfilm scanning solution

BMI PRODUCTS & SERVICES
- Digital ReeL microfilm scanning solution
- 450 microfilm rolls and 20 large, physical index books converted
- Digital academic records and index books hosted at BMI's data center
- Fresno staff accesses records online, from Digital ReeL web viewer

BENEFITS
- Immediate record retrieval from a computer workstation
- Non-proprietary format (PDF, TIFF) for email and upload into existing document management system
- Adjustable grayscale to enhance image quality

Overview

California State University, Fresno is a public university and part of the 23 campus California State University system. The Academic Records Department (Registrar) is responsible for providing excellent customer service to students, faculty, staff and the community that require official academic records.

When a grant became available to improve the efficiency of the Department, it was decided to digitally convert thousands of academic records that were archived on physical microfilm.

The Department issued an RFP with the initial intention of scanning the microfilm records to PDF and leveraging an existing document management system. However, when presented with the Digital ReeL alternative, the competitive price, nonproprietary image format (PDF, TIFF) and easy-to-use viewer made it the best option for the Department's records.

Microfilm Scanning & Digital Conversion of Physical Index Books

"Our plan was to convert 446 microfilm reels that contained our oldest records", states Diaz. "Many of the microfilm rolls we used on a regular basis were heavily damaged so we leveraged a second, vaulted copy for the actual microfilm scanning." BMI Imaging created exact, digital representations of each one of the microfilm rolls at the Sunnyvale, CA conversion facility.

Fresno State also had a set of physical index books to help locate academic records stored on the microfilm. Diaz continues, "The books were our only index copy and we were concerned with the deterioration of these books. Each book had plastic covers and anytime we wanted to make a change to the index, we would have to pull the sheet of paper out of the plastic; over the decades, ink was getting removed and we were at risk of losing index information."

Fresno State was on the verge of creating a manual manifest in Word or Excel. This would have taken a lot of organization and staff time to complete. BMI proposed the alternative of scanning the large books and hosting the index books alongside the hosted, digital academic records. Diaz states, "It was a great alternative for us and saved us a lot of manual hassle. We've eliminated the risk of losing this information and each index book is now digital and easily enhanced with adjustable grayscale."

Digital Student Records & Index Books Hosted at BMI Data Center

Fresno State decided to leverage Digital ReeL's cloud hosting option. After BMI scanned the microfilm and index books, all digital images were stored in BMI's secure data center; users log into Digital ReeL's online viewer to search and retrieve records.

BMI has a partnership with Raging Wire data centers. All digital information is secure and available, hosted at Raging Wire's Sacramento SSAE 16 Type 2 compliant data center.

Diaz state, "We were initially concerned with encryption and security of our records, but after discussing where and how our information was stored, we were comfortable hosting the records with BMI. Plus, our IT team had a lot of other projects going on and it was ultimately just an easier option for us."

Records Easily Accessible in Non-Proprietary Format

Fresno State staff accesses records online, using the Digital ReeL interface. "Finding a record is easy. We can pull the application up from any PC, log in to access the digital index books and the digital microfilm library", states Diaz. Fresno State staff can enhance the record, print it or save it to PDF. "We are able to quickly email the PDF or even upload the PDF record to another document management system. We're saving a huge amount of time and offering better customer service to parties that need access to official academic records", concludes Diaz.