

## ACRODATA CASE STUDY: Document Scanning Devonport City Council

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**Insight:** Many local councils struggle to store decades worth of paper based property and infrastructure records that due to legal obligation must be kept for an extended period of time. These records take up space, and will deteriorate dramatically if poorly stored. Storing and retrieving these documents can be time consuming and expensive, not to mention dusty. Councils storing their records solely in hard copy format are also greatly exposed in the event of a disaster.

**Overview:** Existing building records are critical to architects and builders when drawing up extension plans, as well as to prospective and new home-owners during the purchase decision making process. Buyers want to know if their investment has all the correct approvals to rule out possible problems such as illegal extensions. They need this information fast so it is important that the council can quickly and easily service such access requests.

**The problem:** Whilst Devonport City Council staff were already digitising newer records, they had over 25 years worth of building records in storage collecting dust. Retrieving a file required a staff member to go to the store room, search for the relevant document, in most cases photocopy and then call the person in to the Council to collect the document. This took staff away from important duties and meant that fulfilling the request could take several hours.

**The solution:** Acrodata was engaged by Devonport City Council to bring the retrieval process for older building documentation and plans in line with those for the new. This would have the benefit of:

- Reducing storage space
- Improving service to customers;
- Saving time and internal resources; and
- Enabling disaster recovery.

Acrodata worked closely with the council to gain insight into existing records and information management processes, making the update as smooth as possible and ensuring that information could still be quickly retrieved while the documents were off-site being digitised.

Regular data transfers were made during the project to further ease any issues with having the hard copy documents offsite.

An electronic document workflow system allows for aged, hard copy files to be destroyed in line with Archives Act obligations. It also means that staff are no longer required to photocopy folders full of multi-size documents including plans up to A0 in size. All documents, including large plans can now be quickly located and printed from the desktop.



*"The team at Acrodata did an excellent job with this project. We are now able to provide a better service to our customers and I also have peace of mind that all our historical building files are backed-up!"*

**Rebecca Wilson**

*Manager Development*

*Services, Devonport City Council*

***This project took 11 weeks to complete, came in on time and within budget. It was comprised of 326,649 A3 or smaller pages and 19,485 A0/A1 plans.***