

Industry Profile

Today's housing associations, non-profit organizations focused on building, managing, and renting apartments and affordable housing, are in competition with one another more than ever before. The key to success lies in optimizing operational efficiency and delivering superior customer service. Because these organizations deal with mountains of paperwork every day, accomplishing these goals isn't easy. Housing associations need



a way to effectively manage the never-ending flow of documents so they can place individuals and families in safe, affordable housing in a timely manner and stay responsive to tenant needs over time.

Solution

Unity Document Suite is a complete desktop document management solution that transforms tedious, costly paper-based processes into highly efficient digitized workflows. This powerful, intuitive software works with the document capture capabilities of an integrated bizhub multifunction printer (MFP), enabling housing association employees to convert, edit, organize, combine, search and share scanned documents as well as Microsoft® Office and PDF files like never before.

Unity Document Suite provides a user-friendly interface between MFPs and desktop applications. It optimizes the way users capture, manage, work with, and share documents while eliminating common concerns about file compatibility or security. By enabling users to scan and convert paper documents into editable, searchable PDF documents right from the MFP, Unity Document Suite helps housing associations to offer and maintain safe, affordable housing while being responsive to ongoing tenant needs.

Addressing Key Industry Challenges:

Challenge:

Housing associations are required to keep tenant files for a pre-determined number of years. Storage of hard copy files take up valuable office space and makes it difficult and time consuming to access information needed to respond to tenant needs and inquiries.

Solution:

With Unity Document Suite, housing association employees can scan and/or convert tenant files to editable, searchable PDF files and store them in a digital archive. Depending on the type of document being processed, employees can define a personalized workflow — complete with scan-to destination, conversion format, and routing instructions — that is executable at the MFP with a push of a button. These workflows will automatically scan, convert and route PDF documents to all specified locations and/or recipients. A simple search by text or alphanumeric pattern provides instant access to information.

Challenge:

Housing associations must maintain copious files — planning board approvals, building permits, service and maintenance records, and more — to prove compliance in the event of an inspection and to minimize risk of potential legal action.

Solution:

With Unity Document Suite, building-related documentation can be automatically scanned and/or converted, indexed and stored in a designated location within any digital archive — whether it be a desktop folder, a Windows® network folder, or an enterprise document management system like Microsoft® SharePoint®. In the event of an inspection or legal action, an authorized housing association employee can simply search the archive by alphanumeric pattern or text to find any requested information.

Challenge:

Housing associations need to protect confidential tenant information even as data is transmitted and shared during application processing and over the course of a tenant relationship.

Solution:

Unity Document Suite enables housing associations to protect scanned and/or converted documents with secure encryption and permission controls. That way, information can be sent electronically while protecting tenant privacy.

Challenge:

Every tenant file includes all sorts of documentation — application forms, employment history, references, background checks, and more. Some of these documents may be supplied in hard copy, others as electronic files in various formats. Managing and assembling all these documents can be a time-consuming process that slows tenant placement and service.

Solution:

With Unity Document Suite, housing association employees can instantly create 100% industry-standard, universally viewable PDF files — including all PDF and PDF/A versions — directly from the MFP or from virtually any PC application. They can combine scans and photos with word processing, spreadsheets and other files for automatic conversion to the PDF format. And they can assemble PDF documents by simply dragging and dropping individual pages or complete files. For added convenience, agency employees can also convert to PDF from within Microsoft® Office documents or create PDF files of any document with a single click while browsing with Windows. What's more, support for Windows 7 Jump Lists provides quick access to recent files and common PDF creation and conversion tasks.

Challenge:

Housing associations deal with dozens of types of forms, many of which have traditionally been filled in by hand. As a result, the information on these forms often has to be re-typed into an online system, wasting valuable time and administrative resources.

Solution:

Unity Document Suite features Logical Form Recognition™ technology which makes it easy to turn static paper forms into electronic PDF or Microsoft Word forms that can be filled out online.

Challenge:

Compiling information packets containing documents in multiple formats — paper, Microsoft Office, PDF and more — for association board meeting can be extremely tedious and time consuming.

Solution:

With Unity Document Suite, a housing association employee can simply scan all paper documents to his or her desktop as PDF file. Then those documents can be combined with other electronic files in a single, professional-looking, and universally viewable PDF document that can be distributed via email or posted to the appropriate web site for immediate access in advance of the meeting. The process is faster, greener, and far more cost efficient.

Challenge:

Housing associations need to control operational costs in order to stay competitive and keep rents and fees affordable.

Solution:

Providing integrated tools for capturing, converting, editing, assembling and electronically sharing paper and digital documents, Unity Document Suite saves housing associations money by reducing dependence on paper, faxing and overnight delivery services. In addition, it enables agencies to streamline workflows — initiated right at the MFP — to boost office productivity and improve customer service. All these benefits contribute to maintaining cost-effective operations and achieving a strong competitive advantage.

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