PROFILE

Name: Vista Solutions Group

Location: Austin, TX

Founded: 2000

www.vistasg.org

CHALLENGE

Streamline, maintain, and preserve voter registration records. Eliminate cumbersome and vulnerable paper archives.

SOLUTION

VistaSG *dms³* software solutions combined with Epson's WorkForce® DS-520 document scanner efficiently scan and digitally archive a large quantity of voter registration documents, saving valuable office space and protecting voter records from environmental hazards.
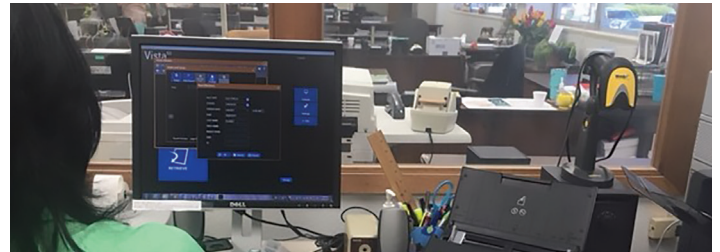
Vista Solutions Group, LP Turns to Epson Scanners to Help Their Clients Protect Voter Registration Data

Keeping Historical Documents Safe

Ensuring the integrity of every election vote in the United States is a crucial task in a democracy like ours, especially considering today's election results sentiment.

To streamline voter registration processes and to provide better access to voter records, county elections offices across the nation are digitizing and automating the tasks.

Paper is cumbersome. With records and files in paper form, it takes up unnecessarily large amounts of space, is difficult to maintain, and protecting those from time erosion and natural disasters is a battle with "Mother Nature" that we will never win. Thus, many county elections offices are taking the digitization process a step further. They are scanning paper registration applications and related documents and filing them away in an electronic format.

One example of this exciting phenomenon is Jackson County, Texas, who recently purchased one of Epson's remarkable scanners to work with Vista Solutions Group next generation software, *dms³*. Together, this combination of solutions is effectively helping Jackson County maintain and preserve these vital public records for the citizens they serve, today and tomorrow.

"Our business is imaging and automating document, file and records workflow for government institutions," says Blythe Storrar, Director of Client Management for Austin, Texas-based Vista Solutions Group, LP which was founded in 2000. She goes on to say, "we really provide a superior solution for our customers with *dms³* software. Just within the last 2 years alone, over 100 county and city agencies have signed on to VistaSG with *dms³* software. It's really great to have a solution partner like Epson, so that clients can clearly gain the benefits of scanning, digitizing and indexing their most important files reliably and efficiently."

VistaSG's *dms³* software solution and Epson's scanners are responsible for making readily accessible and storing safely just about every government document type you can name. From voter registrations to drivers' licenses and tax records, these important records are now accessible today electronically as well as safely stored for tomorrow's use…and all at the click

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>
> – BLYTHE STORRAR, DIRECTOR

of a mouse button. "I like to think of VistaSG and Epson as the standard way of preserving history, as well as of making public records more easily accessible to those who need them, when they need them. Too many times we've seen government documents destroyed by fire, flood, theft all lost for future generations. Our *dms³* software coupled with Epson scanners helps prevent that from happening."

Jackson County, located about 100 miles southwest of Houston, is a typical example. The run-up to the 2016 election saw voter registrations in Texas swell by historic proportions, to almost 78% of the eligible population. According to Lupe Lopez, who processes and files the applications in Jackson County stated, "voter registrations here grew from just over 8,000 to nearly 10,000 registered voters."

The county was prepared. Twelve months before the election, they contracted with Vista Solutions Group to install their highly revered *dms³* automation software in their voting division, together with two Epson WorkForce DS-520 document scanners.

Ms. Storrar says Vista Solutions Group always recommends Epson because, over the years, they have found they are the best overall performing scanners in the market today. "Epson's can scan thick envelopes, folded documents, torn pages, and even scan them double or single sided: things we were surprised to find that our customers could not do with the scanners they already owned."

County and city government agencies across the U.S. proudly tout they use Vista software solutions (*dms³*) because it's so easy to use, secure and affordable. Plus, the company's customer service is extraordinary, and they provide a back-up service for every client installed. "In Jackson County, we set up a local backup system, but we also run backups automatically to backup offsite. That way, no matter what happens, their data is safe."

Simple to Use

The Epson WorkForce DS-520 document scanner is a low-cost, full-color desktop scanner that is small enough to fit on any desktop and very simple to use. It will scan up to 50 documents at a time, stacks of business cards, and sheets up to 8 ½ by 36", scanning both sides in one pass.

Lopez says that she is especially impressed with the scanner and management system because she taken on a task like this before. "When Donna, [Donna Atzenhoffer, the county's tax assessor] was considering buying it, she asked what I thought. I said, 'let's give it a shot.' I'm glad I did, because Blythe (at Vista Solutions Group) showed me what I had to do, and it was simple."

In most cases the applicant mails in the voter registration application or update, but he or she may come to the county office in person. Either way, Lopez types the name, address, drivers' license number and other information into her computer system. Next, she prints out a voter registration card. In years past she would photocopy the card, hand it to the applicant, then file the application and the copy of the card alphabetically by name. Today she simply scans the application and the card and attaches the PDF file the scanner outputs to the file in *dms³*.

"This is so much faster because I can do everything from my desk (using *dms³* software and Epson scanner)," she explains. The scanner picks up every detail of the application, including the color of the ink the applicant used and any notes or highlights. If an application is damaged in the mail, it will still run through the automatic feeder. Lopez says it was very helpful to have the new system this year, given the volume of new registrations.

She and another woman in the office have also begun scanning existing files, a task that will go quickly because the DS-520 will scan 30 voter applications per minute. When they are finished, there will be no need to keep paper files, greatly speeding the process of finding documents and freeing up space in the county office.

Recently Lopez' counterpart from nearby Calhoun County came by to look at VistaSG's *dms³* and Epson scanner system since they were considering installing these as well. "They have three or four people to handle documents, while here it's just me on top of my other duties." She says that's the main reason she appreciates it so much. "I love it," Lopez says. "It's awesome."

We just recently learned from VistaSG that Calhoun County just purchased *dms³* software solution, and they are also scanning with Epson DS-520s.