Case Study

ORGANISATIONS:
LANDKREIS UNTERALLGÄU
LANDKREIS LANDSHUT
LANDRATSAMT MIESBACH

INDUSTRY: PUBLIC AUTHORITY

APPLICATION: ELECTRONIC ARCHIVE OF VEHICLE REGISTRATION DATA

SOLUTION: PLASMON G-SERIES GX24 AND GX32

"Not only was UDO the best solution for our archive requirements, it also helped us financially by creating efficiencies and reducing operating costs."

Klaus Wetzel,
Head of IT,
Landratsamt Miesbach

Landkreis Landshut

Landkreis Unterallgäu

Landratsamt Miesbach

German public authorities are choosing UDO to cope with growing volume of data and improve services through fast access to information

German Public Authorities

Landkreis Unterallgäu, Landkreis Landshut and Landratsamt Miesbach are only three of many German administrative districts that have implemented UDO in their evolution from a paper-based to an electronic archiving system.

The Bavarian district offices chose Plasmon G-Series libraries Powered by UDO (Ultra Density Optical) to archive and manage vehicle registration data and improve services offered to the public through easier and faster access to information data.

All three customers estimate that their UDO archive not only delivers significant cost savings but also improves the efficiency of their initial archive application for vehicle registration.

Customer Profile

Germany is divided into over 400 administrative districts, which are at an intermediate level of administration between the *Länder* (German states, which collectively make up the Federal Republic of Germany) and the *Gemeinden* (municipal level). Most districts are *Landkreise* or rural districts, with some cities being districts in their own right (*Stadtkreise* or urban districts).

The districts have a wide range of responsibilities which are dictated by federal, regional and local laws and which include the building and upkeep of roads, hospitals, schools and libraries; social and youth welfare; support for culture; economy and tourism and vehicle registration. All of these responsibilities demand that these important records be carefully controlled and maintained.

The Problem

The German vehicle registration system is complex. Whenever a person moves to another district in Germany, they must de-register their number plate and buy a new one in the new district. People can also choose the validity period of their number plate, from 2 to 12 months, allowing them to change between summer and winter cars.

German car number plates show the city or region where the car is registered, followed by one or two random letters and one to four random numbers. However, various combinations are considered politically unacceptable and the registration office must pay special attention not to issue them accidentally.

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With these intricacies in mind, it is understandable that the traditional paper-based vehicle registration system had become impractical. The time required to access the information, retrieve registration data or process applications was no longer within acceptable limits. In addition, because of growing volumes of registration data, the amount of paper folders was exceeding the space available in the storage rooms.

The Solution

Unterallgäu District was the first Bavarian district to switch to an electronic archive solution using the UDO technology. During a 6-month evaluation process, they put a tender out and devised a point system to rank potential suppliers of Enterprise Content Management and archival storage solutions for cost-effectiveness, reliability and durability of the solution. Plasmon came top of the list and the company's 20 years experience in archival storage provided an extra degree of confidence in their selection.

Since random access to any file in a UDO library is less than 10 seconds, the requirement for fast data retrieval was met more than adequately. UDO also proved a very cost-effective solution. Total Cost of Ownership analysis over the life of the UDO archive is indeed comparable to tape or DVD technologies and far less expensive than hard-disk systems.

The reliability and durability criteria were satisfied by UDO's professional quality: the media is enclosed in a robust protective cartridge and the libraries are built to withstand the rigors of continuous, intensive business use. This was an important criteria since vehicle registration data must be retained for the life of the registration plus an additional 3 years after expiration of the insurance cover. If a vehicle has been stolen, then its registration information must be kept for up to 5 years, while the vehicle is being tracked. In addition, all paper-based data is destroyed once it is archived in the UDO library so the security of the electronic archive is paramount. To ensure maximum protection against natural disasters such as fire, water damage or vandalism, all media is duplicated and a copy stored in a separate location.

Franz Sirch, IT Executive at Landkreis Unterallgäu, sums up: "The amount of paper we had accumulated and the data growth rate made us realise that we could no longer sustain a paper-based archive. We would have had to spend a considerable amount of money on building new storage rooms! Moreover, the vehicle registration system was becoming too slow and the public was soon going to suffer from delays in the process. I thought UDO was the ideal solution for us, because of its scalability, reliability and fast random access to archive data".

Implementation of the UDO Solution

All three authorities implemented Plasmon's entry level G-Series libraries. Both, the Gx24 and the Gx32 libraries can manage between 24 and 32 pieces of 30GB UDO media, giving a total capacity just under 1TB. The stored vehicle registration data consists of a variety of document types (TIFF, JPG, PDF images) with typical file sizes between 1KB and 2MB, permitting the archival storage of up to 14 million images in their current UDO library. Between 15 and 20 users access the archive daily, creating new registrations, updating existing documents or de-registering old records.

Unterallgäu District recommended the UDO archive solution to other Bavarian Districts prompting Landshut to install their own Gx24 library; also specifically dedicated to the vehicle registration data archive system. Miesbach chose UDO independently based on their own evaluations and research.

Unterallgäu and Miesbach are using Pegasus InveStore software to control the library, while Landshut chose Plasmon's own Diamond software. All three offices selected Optimal Systems to provide the ECM (Enterprise Content Management) software tools.

Bernhard Wiedemann, IT and Communication Executive at Landkreis Landshut, comments: "The UDO archive solution not only provided us with an excellent archive system, it also opened up new service opportunities such as the provision of personalised number plates. This level of flexibility has made our car registration system very attractive for the public!"

The Future

Franz Sirch believes that the UDO solution will save him further costs in the future, as it will facilitate the process of identifying and destroying expired documents and forwarding those to keep to the Bavarian Central Archive.

Plans are already in place to expand the electronic data archive to include driving licence information, expanding later to the Finance department.

Bernhard Wiedemann concludes with similar projects: "We are very pleased with the UDO solution and are planning to roll it out to other departments such as Finance and Planning within the next few years."