

PROFILE

Name: Jackson County, Texas

Location: Edna, TX

Founded: 1836

www.co.jackson.tx.us

CHALLENGE

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

SOLUTION

Use the Epson DS-520 document scanner to efficiently scan and digitally archive a large quantity of voter registration documents, saving valuable office space and protecting the records from environmental hazards.

Protecting the Integrity of the Vote

Voter Registration Office Turns to Epson Document Scanners

Ensuring the integrity of the vote is a crucial task in a democracy like ours.

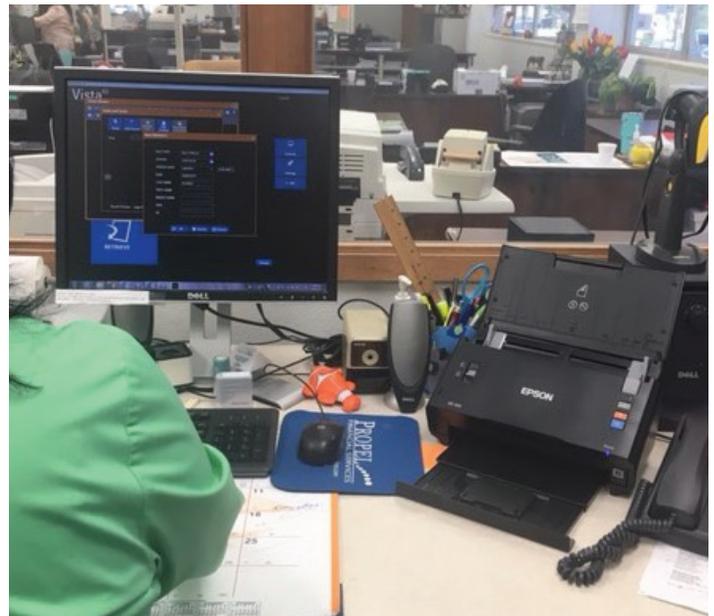
To streamline the voter registration process and to provide better access to voter records, county elections offices across the nation are digitizing and automating the task.

Paper is cumbersome. Paper files are difficult to maintain, hard to access, and subject to the ravages of time and natural disasters. For that reason, many county election offices are not only creating new files in digital form, but scanning paper registration applications and related documents and filing them in an electronically.

That is the case in Jackson County, Texas, which recently purchased a remarkable document scanner from Epson to help maintain and preserve these vital public records.

Keeping Historical Documents Safe

Jackson is a largely rural county close to the Gulf coast, about 100 miles southwest of Houston. For Lupe Lopez, who processes and files its voter registration applications, 2016 was a busy year. In the run-up to the presidential election, voter registrations in Texas swelled by historic proportions. In Jackson County, they grew from just over 8,000 to nearly 10,000 registered voters.



The county was prepared. Twelve months before the election, they installed Epson DS-520 document scanners, together with software to file and manage digital records. The software is especially helpful because, while it resides on local computers, it automatically backs up files to a server that is off site. Using local computers means that Lopez can continue to work even if the county loses Internet service, but offsite backup means that, should there be a fire, flood, or robbery in the county offices, all the records will be preserved.

“This is so much faster because I can do everything from my desk.”

– LUPE LOPEZ

Simple to Use

The Epson DS-520 document scanner is a low-cost, full-color 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 8½ by 36", scanning both sides in one pass. It will even handle thick envelopes, folded documents, and torn pages using its automatic feeder, things that many other scanners cannot do.

Lopez says that she is especially impressed with the scanner and management system because she has never taken on a task like this before. "When Miss 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 once I understood what I had to do, 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 electronic voter record.

"This is so much faster because I can do everything from my desk," 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 Port Lavaca in nearby Calhoun County came by to look at the system, which they were considering installing as well. "They have three or four people to handle registrations, while here, it's just me, on top of my other duties." She says the speed and simplicity of the workflow are the main reasons she appreciates it so much.

"I love it," Lopez says. "It's awesome."

Since then, the Epson DS-520 is being replaced by its newer model, DS-530, which is faster, more robust and comes with a Three-Year Limited Warranty and Next Business Day Replacement program¹.

"The DS-520 will scan 30 voter applications per minute."

¹ Expedited shipping not available in all areas. Road Service orders must be in by 3 p.m. Eastern Time for Next-Business Day delivery.