Case Study
HORNSBY SHIRE COUNCIL

iPLATINUM

The Challenge

Council decided after 15 years, to move from the Councils Online Managed Service to a new solution based largely "in the cloud" as well some in-house operations.

But in the move to the new system Hornsby faced the question should it convert all historical information over to the new system, or archive it?

The Solution - iArchive

The iPlatinum iArchive solution accommodates any council historical data that no longer has a place in current transaction systems. It provides the capability to query and report on historical data in legacy systems without the need for a supporting application.

The Benefits

The solution provides a means of handling legacy historic information and ensuring ongoing seamless access without the need to maintain or know how to navigate around redundant historical business systems.

About Hornsby Shire

Area 455 square kilometres

Population 140,000 plus

Density 309/square kilometre

Expenditure $133.4m

*operational plan 17/18

Hornsby Shire is a local government area situated on the Upper North Shore and Northern Suburbs of Sydney. The Shire stretches from the M2 Hills Motorway in the south to the Hawkesbury River town of Wisemans Ferry, some 53 kilometres to the north, making it the largest local government council in the Greater Sydney Metropolitan region in terms of total area.

Hornsby Shire was incorporated in March 1906. It began as a centre for Aboriginal tribes, became a rural district for European settlers then transformed into the surburban area of today.

About iArchive

iArchive helps with the decommissioning of legacy systems, while allowing councils to store historical data independent of application technology. This gives councils a mechanism to query and report on this data without the need for an application to support it.

iArchive is now widely accepted in local government and installed at a large number of councils.

HORNSBY ANSWERS THE QUESTION: HOW TO MANAGE HISTORICAL DATA WHEN INFORMATION SYSTEMS CHANGE

As a number of councils in New South Wales face the prospect of amalgamations a major question confronts many of them, namely what to do with the historical information residing in their legacy systems.

For Hornsby Shire Council on Sydney's northern outskirts this question became more of a dilemma when the Council decided after 15 years, to move from the Councils Online Managed Service to a new solution based largely "in the cloud" as well some in-house operations.

Hornsby's Manager Information, Communication and Technology, Craig Munns, explained that the Council's decision to move off the service was aimed at reducing costs, as well as having a solution which more effectively met its business requirements, priorities and management needs.

"Deployment of various applications in a cloud environment – such as finance, assets, HR, payroll, performance management and library- as well as direct in-house control of Pathway, Trim, InfoCouncil and GIS are delivering major benefits," Mr Munns said.

"These benefits include stronger management, more control and flexibility over hardware systems and greater responsibility without the need for more staff." =

But in the move to the new system Hornsby faced the question should it convert all historical information over to the new system, or archive it?

While the first strategy implied a substantial systems conversion project, the latter raised the question of whether the Council could store and access historical data, independent of an application to support that data.

And further influencing Hornsby, as many councils are now discovering, the more applications in the cloud, the higher the financial premium for data storage.

As Hornsby embarked on its latest generation of information systems Mr Munns acknowledged the implications for archiving were far more wide-reaching than two years earlier. At that time, iFerret had been initially deployed as a corporate search tool to quickly retrieve information from across multiple data bases, including Lotus Notes, Pathway, TRIM, email, network drives and other archives.

Soon after iFerret was being rolled out the Council commissioned iPlatinum to migrate its existing iPlatinum archiving solution to allow it to query and report on data in Hornsby's Stowe TCS, from which it had upgraded in 2004.

The success of that initial archive project at Hornsby dictated a strategy that has since seen it commission the building of archives using iFerret to access the Council's Business Paper system, the Oracle eBusiness suite (finance, HR, payroll assets and CRM) and the Kronos Time and Attendance system.

Craig Munns is charged with leading continuous strategic improvement initiatives in corporate software, hardware and processes which impact every division of Hornsby Council.

"Our archive development project aimed to archive Council legacy systems to ensure less risk of missing data, with easy, read only access.

"Satisfaction with the first archive development project made it a straightforward decision to commission iPlatinum's services again," Mr Munns said.

Database backups were used to load the original data required for the development of the various new archives. iPlatinum staff then undertook a data mapping exercise, transforming the source data into an archive warehouse which provides appropriate views for reporting. Hornsby staff then tested that the reporting was accurate and identified whether any required data was not available in the reporting.

The Council's payroll application required quick access to archived data. Other less time-critical applications focused mainly on balances from the finance system and masterfile data related to assets. The need to access archives is expected to gradually reduce as data becomes available through Hornsby's new in-house systems.

The iPlatinum iArchive solution accommodates any council historical data that no longer has a place in current transaction systems. It provides the capability to query and report on historical data in legacy systems such as GenaCIS, Stowe TCS, Practical, Fujitsu, PeopleSoft Financials, Oracle Financials, JDE Financials, Chris HR/Payroll, Business Paper systems, Asset Management systems, Time and Attendance systems, Records solutions and more, without the need for a supporting application.

The solution provides a means of handling legacy historic information and ensuring ongoing seamless access without the need to maintain or know how to navigate around redundant historical business systems.