

CITY OF WODONGA



The Challenge

Help Council to answer three strategic questions for its management: what was a record, in what form does it exist and where does it live?

The Solution - iFerret

iFerret is a turnkey solution which is delivered to be fully operational with little effort needed by the customer. With read only access it expedites searching across council information using a comprehensive range of functions.

The Benefits

There are two key and clear benefits since Wodonga deployed iFerret.

Time savings are significant, in searching across multiple document stores in one place, quickly and easily. Secondly, the user acceptance iFerret has received means Wodonga can back scan filing cabinets and free up physical space as well as saving electronic storage because it can identify and remove multiple copies.



About City of Wodonga

Area 433 square kilometres

Population 40,000

Income \$67.6m

Expenditure \$57.2m

Wodonga Council is a local government area in the Hume region of Victoria, located in the north-east part of the state. It is primarily urban with the majority of its population living in the Greater Wodonga urban area. It is one of only a few regional councils in Victoria to remain serving just one urban district after the amalgamation process of 1994, although through that process it did gain some portions of the former Shire of Chiltern and former Shire of Yackandandah.

Sitting on the southern side of the Murray River, across from neighbouring Albury, Wodonga is a fast growing rural city boasting a comprehensive range of cultural, retail, entertainment and sporting facilities. The city is close to the Hume Reservoir and to such attractions as the Bandiana Army Museum and the Bonegilla Migrant Centre which was the arrival centre for many post war newcomers to Australia.

About iFerret

iFerret is an enterprise search product developed by **iPLATINUM** that works like "google" over your corporate information. **iFerret** enables you to find information, including detail residing in scanned documents, that may exist in a variety of corporate repositories including email systems, records systems, corporate systems and shared drives.

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

WODONGA ANSWERS THE BIG DOCUMENT QUESTIONS, THANKS TO iFERRET

When people began to realise the potential of digitisation, they envisaged the need for paper documents and their retrieval and storage would be reduced while electronic documents would be readily accessible and need minimal storage.

The digital era however ushered in a less visible but no less challenging problem for local government: the proliferation and management of electronic documents of many different types, some duplicating paper records and all leaving senior management potentially facing three major questions.

And where once the telephone or letter was the means by which people interacted with councils, digital technology ushered in online communications by email and with it potential threats to information security and data integrity.

Confronting this fast evolving scenario Wodonga Council recognised the need for a records and information management strategy that would accommodate both paper and electronic documents.

Wodonga's team leader, applications and information management, Matthew Garoni said "we could see iFerret would help us answer three strategic questions for our management: *what was a record, in what form did it exist and where did it live.*"

Just months after iFerret's introduction Wodonga users confidently declare "that if iFerret cannot find a record, then it doesn't exist."

Mr Garoni said the Council had recognised a pressing need to combine its document management system and other electronic document stores, ensure a single copy of a record and delete other versions.

"We wanted a single source of truth and a quick and easy way to get an accurate count of our electronic corporate records in one easy-to-use process."

"Our primary focus was how we could catalogue and search across our entire shared drives, email and document management system and determine duplication and the incorrect usage of shared drives and corporate records being managed and maintained outside the document management system in email and shared drives."

Wodonga did have powerful indexed searching of its EDRMS, however this did not provide corporate global searching.

The Council used real life examples to confirm that iFerret would deliver the benefits it was seeking in three areas.

"When we saw the benefits iFerret provided it was a quick justification to move to the full deployment of the application," Mr Garoni said.

First, council wanted to detect duplicated documents stored across shared drives, emails and its EDRMS including their number, size and authorship or ownership.

In the area of data creation iFerret would also enable the Council to determine why it was losing shared drive space ,who is creating the documents and where they are being stored and what types of files are being saved on shared drives.

Finally, using simple, clean and efficient searching, Wodonga wanted to be assured of the integrity of its data through having evidence that it did not have a document or record present in its electronic realm of the indexed sources.

Wodonga used a pre-configured server for iFerret which was simply placed in its server rack.

Within six months of iFerret's deployment to 10 users, "feedback has been positive and they are impressed with the breadth, scope and speed of the searches and the ability to search for as much or as little as you desire - very impressive," Mr Garoni explains.

He cites the example of an appeal to Victoria's Civil and Administration Tribunal (VCAT) which required confirmation that a specific email response was sent to a person who claimed not to have received it.

The person looking for the email thought it was stored in the EDRMS but the EDRMS search yielded no results. An iFerret search was then successful using a "Contains the phrase" search for the email address across the Council's EDRMS, Exchange and shared drives.

This capability also helps the Council cope with the rise of threats posed by the online environment.

"We have strong firewalls and intrusion detection systems, but the occasional spam and phishing email gets through," Mr Garoni says.

The Council has indexed Exchange and given rights to iFerret to enable searching across all inboxes. If a security alert regarding a spam or virus alert is received, the administrator uses the "Contains the phrase" search box in the advanced search to locate any emails that match the offending criteria. From here he uses Exchange tools to delete these emails before end users have a chance to access and/or open them.

The administrator then updates the email filtering rules to prevent any further emails being received. Mr Garoni said this works exceptionally well for spam/virus emails in email boxes which are seldom checked.

Using iFerret's Managed Result Set says Mr Garoni has made "the extraction and completeness of data for FOI requests much quicker because the Council's FOI officer can easily determine the information available. The bulk export method in a Zip file is fantastic as everything is all in the same place and easy to forward on to the person requesting it."

