Assessment of the Feasibility of Imaging Applications in the
Kings County District Attorney's Office,
Brooklyn, NY

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REPORT

Bureau of Justice Assistance
CRIMINAL COURTS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROJECT
A Joint Program of the Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Department of Justice, and
American University School of Public Affairs
Assessment of the Feasibility of Imaging Applications in the Kings County District Attorney’s Office, Brooklyn, NY

September 2001

Consultants

Robert Harrall, Ph.D.
Christopher Shelton (NCSC staff)
_A joint consultancy by the American University and SEARCH Group, Inc._
BJA-American University
Criminal Courts Technical Assistance Project

Assignment Data Sheet

Technical Assistance No.: CCTAP 99-064BG

Requesting Jurisdiction: Kings County (Brooklyn), NY

Requesting Agency: District Attorney's Office

Requesting Official: Honorable Charles J. Hynes
District Attorney

Local Coordinator: William Kelly
Chief, Information Services

Date of On-Site Study: June and July, 2001

Consultants Assigned: A joint TA assignment by the BJA-funded
Courts Technical Assistance Projects of
SEARCH Group, Inc., and American
University:
Robert C. Harrall, Ph.D. (CCTAP Consultant)
Christopher Shelton (NCSC staff/SEARCH
consultant)

CCTAP Staff Coordinator: Joseph A. Trotter, Jr.
CCTAP Project Director

Central Focus of Study: Assessment of the records management and
imaging needs of the District Attorney's Office.

This project was supported by Grant No. 99-LD-VX-0002, awarded to American
University by the Bureau of Justice Assistance of the United States Department of
Justice, and by Grant No. 99-MU-MU-0005 awarded to SEARCH Group, Inc., by
the Bureau of Justice Assistance of the U.S. Department of Justice. The Bureau of
Justice Assistance is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also
includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office
Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not
represent the official position or policies of the United States Department of Justice.
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Data Sheet</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background of the Assignment</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization of the Consultancy</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FINDINGS</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview of the Present System</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Conclusions on Assignment Objectives</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DISCUSSION OF CONCLUSIONS</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System Viability and Application</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application in Various Units</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Records Management</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources/Fiscal</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crimes Against Children</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Violence</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rackets/Financial Crimes</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juvenile Crimes</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appellate</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Aspects</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## APPENDICES

| Appendix A: Technical Specifications and Costing | A1 - A4 |
| Appendix B: About SEARCH, the National Center for State Courts and the Court Information Systems TA Project | A5 - A7 |
INTRODUCTION

Background of the Assignment

This report is the result of a request, in May 2001, from the Kings County (Brooklyn), NY, District Attorney’s Office to the BJA-sponsored Criminal Courts Technical Assistance Project (CCTAP) at American University for assistance in determining the feasibility of implementing an electronic imaging system for case files in one or more bureaus and divisions of that office. The precipitating situation was an acute space problem in the District Attorney’s Office and the belief that the extremely high caseload volume of the office (e.g., 82,000 misdemeanors and 18,000 felonies in 2000) could be more efficiently and cost-effectively managed in the near- to mid-term future if file storage space could be freed up to permit re-organization of space utilization in the Office’s headquarters, including the re-location of certain satellite office case processing activity to that building, which is located at 350 Jay Street, in Brooklyn.

Following discussions between CCTAP project staff and representatives of the District Attorney’s Office, it was determined that the issues to be addressed warranted the involvement of the respective expertise of the CCTAP project and another BJA-sponsored technical assistance program – the Court Information Systems Technical Assistance Project, administered by SEARCH Group, Inc., of Sacramento, California. Subsequent to further discussions among the three parties and the prospective consultant team, it was ultimately agreed that the objectives of the consultancy would be fivefold:

(1) To determine if the purchase and installation of an imaging system in the office of the Kings County District Attorney would increase the effectiveness of records management, primarily the storage of, and reference to, disposed cases.

(2) To determine the degree to which the several administrative units within that office would benefit from such a system.

(3) To prepare generic, biddable, specifications for such a system.

(4) To make general recommendations as to the procurement of the system and its installation and management.

(5) To determine if there are observations/recommendations regarding records management which, although not necessarily directly related to the imaging system proposal, would prove useful in general records management in the office.
Organization of the Consultancy

The joint consultancy was out by Dr. Robert C. Harrall, an independent consultant representing the American University’s Criminal Courts Technical Assistance Project, and Christopher Shelton, of the staff of the National Center for State Courts, representing the SEARCH-administered technical assistance project. The directors of the two projects, Joseph Trotter, of American University, and Francis Bremson of SEARCH, were involved in site visits and strategy conference calls. Site visits were conducted by Mr. Trotter and Dr. Harrall on June 18 - 20, 2001, and Dr. Harrall and Mr. Shelton on July 22-25, 2001. Mr. William Kelly, Director of Information Services for the Kings County District Attorney’s Office was of inestimable assistance in planning and coordinating these visits so that consultant and staff time could be best utilized.

Both site visits included detailed discussions with a wide range of the District Attorney’s Office staff. This included the senior management of the office, including District Attorney Charles J. Hynes, Deputy District Attorney Mary D. Hughes, bureau and division chiefs, line attorneys, other legal and non-legal staff who are either directly involved in records management on a unit or office-wide basis, or who would be directly impacted by the prospective new system, and police officers. The second site visit also included a visit to the offices of the Queens County District Attorney where a system similar to the one being considered here is operative. In all areas staff were unfailingly courteous and helpful, and produced any and all data requested by the consultants in an accurate and timely manner. (Although we could not devote significant time to detailed data verification, we have no reason to doubt its accuracy). Of special note were the insights and assistance provided to the consulting team by Mr. Thomas McDonald, records management bureau, and Mr. Stas Sotiriadis, information services bureau, of the Kings County District Attorney’s Office.

FINDINGS

Overview of the Present System

Kings County is presently a totally hard copy retention system. There is no use of imaging of any type, including basic micro imaging. Records are retained in a variety of jacketing types ranging from flat file folders to several types of envelopes of varying configurations, quality, etc. Long term storage is either on open shelves or in standard (one cubic foot) records boxes either on open shelves or stacked, the shelving being primarily for storage of the more recent records and boxes for the older material. As a general rule, the most recent, undisposed, material is in the several programmatic units throughout the District Attorney’s Office, and the most recent disposed material (roughly 2-3 years) is in central storage in the same building. There are two main storage areas; one for felonies and one for misdemeanors. The older material is held in one of two remote locations outside the building.
The indexing system is essentially alpha-numeric with files being stored by number. Some color coding is in use both to aid the alpha-numeric file and to identify case types. Retention schedule requirements are excessive (notably for misdemeanors, which require 25 years) but are outside the control of the office, in that they are established by an independent agency which sets statewide retention schedules for public agency records.

Such a system has several inherent inefficiencies, notably the occupancy of prime office space with disposed case files, the difficulty of file control, the constant transfer of records from one facility to another, the retrieval of files from remote facilities, the physical deterioration of some documents within files, and the limitation of use of the same file to one individual at a time.

Despite all these structural difficulties, the present system appears to function quite well. However, that is due to the relatively low reference rate to the disposed material and the dedication of the present staff, who make an essentially inefficient system work. As case volume and complexity increase, the present situation will become much more tenuous.

**Basic Conclusions on Assignment Objectives**

1. A properly designed imaging system can be of great assistance to Kings County in its management of closed cases. (See discussion below)

2. Not all of the units in the office would benefit equally from such a system. (See discussion below)

3/4. The office will benefit from the preparation of generic specifications which can be circulated for competitive bidding. However, those specifications must be comprehensive (including acquisition, installation, training, and maintenance), and the office must be sure that it has (or obtains) the expertise to evaluate proposals and have effective involvement in the installation and training stages. (See Appendix)

5. There are a number of factors in records management within the several offices surveyed which, although not directly related to the installation of an imaging system, could be addressed to bring about further overall improvement in the records management system. (See discussion below)

6. The effectiveness of the system will be heavily affected by the basic decision as to whether it is to be used for both felonies and misdemeanors. Many of the units in the office deal almost entirely with felony cases. If the decision is made not to image felonies, it will have significant impact on the utility for those units.
DISCUSSION OF CONCLUSIONS

System Viability and Application

Imaging systems work, and a system will work in the District Attorney’s Office. In that office, the most logical type would appear to be one dedicated to the elimination of the hard copy retention of disposed cases, as opposed to a “real time” system which is designed to include all cases from the time they enter the system, creating a totally “electronic” file. Such “real time” systems are inestimably more complex, require very serious changes in major administrative routines, raise many practical operational questions in daily relationships with other agencies (notably courts), have higher acquisition costs, and, most significantly, require extensive and expensive “care and feeding,” notably in terms of personnel.

As part of this consultancy, the applicability of a more basic microforming system (preferably roll film or non-updatable fiche) was considered, as the present intent of the District Attorney’s Office is to develop a more cost-effective and flexible system to retain and reference disposed case files.

Such a basic system would undoubtedly have a lower initial acquisition cost. Ongoing operational expenses would be similar to an electronic imaging system in terms of personnel, required processing space, etc..

Storage media would occupy more space and probably would be somewhat more costly (film versus electronic media). Processing time would be longer in a film-based system. The cost of an initial, one-time conversion of existing records would probably be similar in both systems.

However, the most significant differences between the two technologies are in retrieval and future development:

1. electronic-based systems are more reliably indexed, retrieval is much more rapid, and the same material may be accessed simultaneously by multiple users.

2. an electronic system may be enhanced more easily, particularly if King County decides at some point in the future to move to a “real-time” imaging system.

3. an electronic system would facilitate the sharing of all or portions of case files with other agencies, obviating, among other things, the need for the user to travel to locations where film readers are available to review documents.

In consideration of these factors, the present assumption is that the Kings County District Attorney will acquire an electronic imaging system dedicated to post-disposition imaging. Such a system will address the questions of relatively long-term retention, file control, expedited and simultaneous multiple reference, the reduction of physical file movement, the deterioration of
documents, and the occupancy of relatively expensive office and storage space with disposed, low reference, material.

**Application in Various Units**

As noted above, not all units will benefit equally from the installation of such an imaging system. Some will be able to eliminate large numbers of files, some very few, and some virtually none at all. However, the overall impact on records management in the office will be significant, particularly if revised procedures of records management (notably the transmission of disposed cases from the programmatic units to imaging on a frequent and constant basis) are effectively implemented throughout the office.

**Records Management**

This unit will benefit the most of all, in both the short and long term. This unit has responsibility for disposed records in three locations: active office space in the main office facility, remote storage retained in the previous office facility, and records sent to a remote archives facility. This configuration comes at cost which it is beyond the scope of this report to calculate precisely, but which is clearly a composite of the cost of the space occupied and the personnel who must manage the system. There are also a number of intangible, but equally significant, costs in terms of more general office inefficiencies which always result from such systems. In both the immediate and long term these costs can be reduced by system implementation. However, such savings are difficult to project at this point, particularly in the area of personnel, and hoped for savings should not be the prime reason for system acquisition.

There are two basic decisions which condition the impact a post-disposition imaging system will have on the central records storage area: what case categories are to be imaged, and whether the system is to be “day one” (starting with imaging the first disposed case on the first day the system is operative), or whether there is some intention to image recently disposed material already in storage.

a. The two basic case categories are felonies and misdemeanors. There seems to be no question that misdemeanors will be imaged. They are long retention, low reference, and relatively small files. If they can not be imaged, there is no point in acquiring the system. The question of felonies is more basic. They are longer retention—thus making them good candidates for the program. They are higher reference, but that is no problem for a properly designed system. The larger consideration is that they are far more voluminous files, thus posing a much larger workload for preparation and imaging. (This is not a system capability problem. Storage in such systems can be virtually unlimited and is relatively inexpensive)

Queens is not imaging felonies, primarily for the reasons noted above. They also allude to some “legal questions”. During our visit we could elicit no more details
as to the nature of those questions. As the consultants are obviously not conversant with the rules, practices, etc. of the New York courts, we are reluctant to express an opinion regarding the potential for such problems in the imaging of felony cases. However, we would point out that the usual ruling regarding case documents is that the court file is the “official” case record. Query as to the “official” status of prosecutors’ (or defenders’) files in this context.

In any event, this is a key decision which must eventually be made, probably prior to system purchase, as it could condition system configuration.

b. It would be easiest and less expensive to implement this system as a “day one” system. However, if it is done in that manner, it will only gradually impact the hard copy records presently in storage. Conversion of some of the existing hard copy files, notably in the District attorneys prime office space, would have immediate impact. It would also free present records staff to a greater degree (as the most recent material requires the most management) to implement the new system.

However, conversion comes at a price -usually a high price- and usually must be contracted out, as existing staff can not operate the old system, implement the new, and handle a quantity conversion. It would be wise to include a solicitation for some identifiable category/quantity of records in the request for proposals when the system is acquired. Such a proposal could be bid as a separate item with award optional.

There are also some “confidentiality issues” which arise regarding access to certain files. Access can be controlled in imaging systems at least as effectively as it is in the present hard copy system.

**Human Resources/Fiscal**

This unit will probably derive the least direct benefit from the new system. As noted above, the system is intended to be directed towards the long term preservation of, and easier reference to, disposed cases. In large measure HR/F does not fit that design. Personnel files of present employees require constant updating, and only a “real time” imaging system can handle that. (Such an addition could come later to the system as presently conceived, but it would be expensive, and is certainly not cost effective in the initial installation.)

Having said that, there are some aspects of HR/F records which could be explored which would aid their records management and free some office space (i.e., one of the two file rooms) in their area. HR presently retains the files of former employees for quite some time. There are valid reasons for that practice, particularly in light of the increasingly complex legal issues which arise in the Human Resource area. Many of those files are stored off site, but a significant quantity
is in the HR offices. Although they might (rarely) need updating, they are probably likely candidates for imaging. There are also some applications to fiscal files. Old fiscal paper could be imaged. It is also entirely likely that various hard copy documents, reports, etc., which Fiscal receives from the City could be received in some type of electronic media. Both of these steps could free additional space and expedite reference.

**Crimes Against Children**

These hard copy records now occupy one very small crowded interior file room in the CAC space. It is an alphabetical file (by child’s name) in flat file folders on open shelves. CAC has an operational need to maintain these files on site, as they are cases which are constantly being referenced in searches. (same mother, same father, same perpetrator, different parental combinations, name changes, etc.). The files have a relatively long life (based primarily on the age of the child).

Although we did not see it, we were told that there is a computer-based internal cross index which the user felt is somewhat limited in utility. This is an area which Kings IS staff should review to determine if the effectiveness of the office could be increased, as the many data items and possible cross check combinations are a natural computer based application. However, even if such is developed, we see little direct benefit from the imaging system for this unit in CAC information efficiency or space saving.

**Domestic Violence**

This unit has one small interior room designated as a file room. In fact, no files are kept here for any length of time. At present, all files, closed and open, are kept in the individual attorney offices. The system is supposed to have files sent from the attorney offices at the time of disposition to Tom McDonald for long term storage. In fact, the system rarely works that way. There appears to be a practice for attorneys to retain disposed case files in their office space. The only large scale transfer to storage generally takes place when individual attorneys are “rotated” to new assignments. At that time DV support staff are faced with large quantities of cases to transit to central storage. This is pattern beyond the control of DV support staff, as they have no effective way to monitor cases within the office as to status even if they had the authority to enforce transfer.

DV will not gain any usable office space from system installation. However, the nature of DV caseloads is that there are many repeat offenders. The inclusion of disposed DV cases in the system as soon as possible should expedite reference.

**Rackets/Financial Crimes**

This office is unique among the operational units within the DA’s office. While the other units are essentially prosecuting cases of individuals who have already been charged, R/FC is as much investigative as prosecutorial. This causes much of their file material to have a very long life, encompassing both the investigative and prosecutorial stages. It also means that they accumulate large quantities of material beyond paper documents (surveillance audio/video tapes, computer hardware/software, voluminous business records, reports, etc.).
All of this material presently occupies three quite large internal storage rooms and one quite large office area within the R/FC unit. The storage rooms are largely shelf storage. The office area is primarily lateral files with locking doors. At the relatively superficial level of our inspection, we were unable to determine the ratio of open to closed case material. (We were also informed that R/FC has a rather large number of repeat offenders who move from one scam to another or reappear periodically within the same scam. Thus, closed files are often retained in the unit for future investigative purposes.).

Although it poses some legitimate unique problems, R/FC is a good candidate for use of an imaging system. The two unique problems are careful indexing (possibly by "scam" category) so that future investigations can be carried out within the files, and the need to store securely and cross index case related material which cannot be imaged. Both these needs can be accommodated, but would have to be specifically addressed in the design stage. (It would be worthwhile to query Queens about their handling of such cases if they are presently imaging them, although their non-inclusion of felonies probably means they are not.

There is also a very high confidentiality factor in much of the R/FC material. Notable among their cases are law enforcement agency corruption cases. Many of those, and some of the R/FC cases rely heavily on informants who would be at risk if careful records security is not maintained. It is also true that R/FC commonly transfers cases to Corporation Counsel or federal authorities for a number of practical and legal reasons. The several aspects of such transfers would have to be addressed in system design.

**Juvenile Crimes**

Juvenile is a relatively small unit with a relatively small number of cases. The scope of the unit is determined by the fact that the unit is restricted to handling the cases of juvenile offenders who are waived out of the adult court even though they have been charged with adult crimes.

File use is relatively long-term, as the unit also operates an alternative sentencing program for many of these juveniles in a post-disposition mode. In a sense the unit is quasi-prosecutorial/quasi-social work in its function.

In terms of the present (and projected) caseload this unit would gain little from inclusion in an imaging system. Their present manual system appears adequate for their internal reference and use needs, and the files do not occupy any significant amount of space which the unit could put to better use. Although certainly feasible, inclusion in the imaging system need not be a priority, and the question can be revisited once the system is installed and established.

**Appellate**

At present the Appellate unit has three storage areas. However, they are about to surrender two of them to an office reallocation, thus requiring a consolidation within the one remaining room.

Criminal Courts Technical Assistance Project #99-064BG: Kings County (Brooklyn), NY
This unit handles all appeals of cases disposed by the King’s County District Attorney. At present the unit creates an appellate case folder which contains essentially only appellate documents. However, the unit often calls for the disposed trial case file. Thus, a number of those files are also retained, on a temporary basis, in their file area.

There are two particular characteristics of the Appellate caseload which impact records management. The first is the relatively long life of appealed cases from filing to disposition. As long as they are “active” the files are kept in that unit. The second, more complicating, issue is the multiple, sequential appeals filed by prisoners serving long term sentences. When a prisoner who has already filed an appeal (or a second, or a third) files again, that appeal is added to the existing appellate file. This can cause very long term retention of some files as well as great physical expansion.

Faced with the need to consolidate noted above, the unit is in the process of sending large numbers of case files to remote storage. Although this will obviously free the reallocated office space, it will mean increased recall of hard copy files with all the time and expense that entails.

Appellate is a logical candidate for use of the imaging system. Being able to reference the trial file electronically (assuming, of course, that felony files are being imaged) will simplify recall problems. More significantly, disposed appeals could be imaged. That imaging would require abandonment of the practice of adding subsequent appeals to the same file, but that could be accommodated by developing a related case number for each appeal (eg. 1234, 1234A, 1234B, etc.) if maintaining such a relationship is deemed necessary.

The appellate unit also handles some other “specialty” functions, notably requests for documents under public records/freedom of information regulations. Handling those requests would be expedited by an imaging system, as document recall and reproduction would be facilitated by an electronic file.

**Technical Aspects**

Attached as Appendix A is an analysis of the technical and cost parameters of the proposed imaging system.

**FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS**

Assuming a decision to proceed, King’s County must address the following issues:

- Funding source(s) (state grants, forfeiture monies, etc.)
- Preparation of an RFP
- Staffing Considerations (reassignment issues versus new or temporary hires)
- Bid solicitation/evaluation (this should take about 60 to 90 days)
It is suggested that Kings County create an internal project team with the necessary skill sets to carry out the project from now until installation/implementation. This team would address the numerous aspects of such a project noted in the report above on a coordinated basis. A limited amount of additional technical assistance to participate in orientation of the project team or to review a draft RFP prepared by the team may be available from the BJA technical assistance projects that sponsored the present consultancy.
APPENDIX A

Technical Specifications and Costing

Technology Awareness

The Kings County District Attorney's Office has expressed a strong interest in using document imaging to assist with the paper and space woes within their office. However, is imaging the right technology for those problems? The monograph *Document Imaging*, which was produced by NCSC, states that the following situations suggest the use of imaging:

1. Documents must be (1) retrieved rapidly from several places by more than one person, (2) routed to workstations for use in processing with other information (e.g. information in a computer data processing system), (3) worked on concurrently, and (4) stored; incoming documents must be used for data entry into a data processing system; large volumes of records must be received, handled, and retained for a number of years in a secure and reliable manner; and the organization must give better service through rapid and accurate processing of requests for information that depend on document retrieval, inquiry responses, and output production.

Since the focus of this assessment is solely on closed cases, the above situations that address workflow issues are not applicable (1, 2, and 3). However, the Kings County DA's Office does meet the storage/retrieval criteria to consider the use of imaging. With a minimum retention period of six years for legal case files and an annual caseload of approximately 70,000 cases, the DA's Office is required to store at least 420,000 case files. With limited space, the Office maintains roughly 2 years of inactive cases on-site and the remaining cases at an off-site facility. The on-site cases occupy prime office space in the DA's office.

Regarding case retrieval, the records room receives over 28,000 file requests annually. Approximately 18,000 or 64 percent of the request are for case files that are located on-site. These files are forwarded to the requester within 24 hours. The turnaround time for requests of off-site case files ranges from 3 to 5 days. Based on informal polling, the primary reason for case file requests is to obtain case histories on defendants.

Currently, the DA's Office has two computer applications for case information. The older system contains about 25 years of data and is used for case tracking and inquiry purposes. Program modules for case tracking are available to all office divisions, except the Juvenile Crimes Bureau. The newer system contains about 2 years of data and performs case initiation activities only. Case data is uploaded every ten minutes from the new system to the legacy system. Roughly 1,300 users have access to this legacy system via the DA's local area network.

Eventually, the Information Services Bureau will expand the new system to include case tracking and convert the data in the legacy system to the new system. As the DA's Office redesigns its tracking
system, it should consider adding more information to provide a more comprehensive case history. Searches against a more comprehensive data base could possibly reduce case file requests.

Case Study

To further investigate the appropriate use of imaging to address the storage and retrieval problems in Kings County DA's Office, the project team and several representatives from the DA's office visited the Queens County District Attorney's Office to observe an operational imaging solution. Queens County's business problem was similar to Kings County's -- insufficient on-site storage space and marginal service for information requests that was labor-intensive and time-consuming. Queens County DA's Office handles approximately 65 percent of the caseload handled by Kings County DA's Office.

The scanning process consists of two scanners and three PC workstations for scanning and review. The maximum speed for the high-end scanner is 80 pages per minute. Using commercial storage and scan software packages, scanned documents are captured and indexed (case number only) on local machines and uploaded daily to the database server. Access to imaged documents is coupled with the case tracking system via interface software developed by an outside consultant. The case tracking system exists on the DA's local area network. The imaging solution runs in a Linux environment using DB2 as its database engine. The estimated cost was $100,000 for hardware and software, excluding personnel cost and the development time and cost of the interface software.

A staffing increase was not required to implement the imaging solutions, but specific job duties and tasks were reallocated and two additional Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) were reassigned to the records room. Six FTEs were assigned to file preparation. File preparation includes creating cover sheets, removing staples and duplicate forms, and assembling file for scanning. The documents within the files are not assembled in any particular order. Two FTEs were assigned to scanning.

Cost Justification

Since the storage and retrieval processes at the DA's office appear to be likely candidates for imaging, the project team conducted a cost benefit analysis to determine the cost justification of an imaging system purchase and to determine the possible benefits to the DA's office with its implementation. The ideal end-result is to offset or exceed the cost of the hardware and software with cost-savings from reduced administrative and storage costs and improved work productivity.

First, the team calculated the estimated volume (number of pages) of closed felonies and misdemeanor files in a day. As of July 2001, approximately 57,000 misdemeanor cases and 4,500 felony cases were closed. Based on those figures, the DA's Office will close roughly 97,715 misdemeanor cases and 7,714 felony cases this year. With a median of 55 pages per misdemeanor file, these closed cases will contain approximately 5,374,325 pages. For felony cases with a median of 109 pages per file, the total number of pages equals 840,826. With an annual total of 6,215,151
pages contained within files closed this year, the records room can expect a daily rate of approximately 23,900 pages for assembling, scanning and indexing.

*What is the Cost?*

The costs related to implementing an imaging solution are:

- Hardware
- Software
- Personnel
- Maintenance
- Training
- Facilities Upgrades/Site Preparation
- Conversion

Based on the configuration at Queens County DA's Office, the information provided by ImageWork Technologies Corporation, and the expected volume, an imaging solution for Kings County DA's office could have the following components:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Number of Units</th>
<th>Unit Cost</th>
<th>Estimate Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Database Server</td>
<td>Dell PowerEdge 8450</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$48,759.00</td>
<td>$48,759.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raid Storage</td>
<td>10 X 18 GB</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$21,674.00</td>
<td>$21,674.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC Workstations</td>
<td>Dell OptiPlex GX200 Mini Tower PIII</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>$2,355.00</td>
<td>$11,775.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scanner 1</td>
<td>90 ppm portrait/120 landscape @200 dpi</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$41,000.00</td>
<td>$41,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scanner 2</td>
<td>60/75 ppm @200dpi</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>$17,000.00</td>
<td>$34,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scanning Software</td>
<td>Kofax Ascent Capture</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$32,000.00</td>
<td>$32,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storage Software</td>
<td>Kofax Ascent Storage</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viewing Software</td>
<td>Freeware to $25</td>
<td>~1300</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Database Software</td>
<td>Oracle 8.01</td>
<td>~1300</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$194,208.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Maintenance (equipment): $10,000.00/annually
Maintenance (software): $3,600.00/annually

**Year 1**

- Hardware/Software Procurement: $194,208.00
- Hardware/Software Maintenance: $13,600.00
- Temporary Staffing (5 @ $10/hr.): $19,500.00
- Conversion (36 million @ .025 per page): $900,000.00
- **Total:** $1,127,308.00
Conversion of Existing Closed Cases

At first glance, the DA's office should consider converting closed felony and misdemeanor files dating back to six years from the installation date -- the minimum record retention requirement. If outsourcing the task, the conversion cost can range from 5 to 10 cents per page, depending on the conversion method (off-site versus on-site). Even at 5 cents per page, the total cost could easily surpass $1.8 million dollars! Even if the DA's office decided to convert only the approximately 3 years of closed case files at 350 Jay Street, which would support over 70 percent of the file inquiries, the on-time cost is still close to $1 million dollars.

The alternative is to conduct the conversion in-house with the assistance of temporary workers. Upon completion of training, the full-time staff members can start the conversion process and the temporary workers can perform the day-to-day tasks of the staff members. With a staff of twelve to operate and maintain the new imaging system, the conversion team will need to be the same size, if not larger. Unfortunately, working at a rate of 36,000 pages a day (using a 120 ppm scanner operating at its maximum rate for five hours a day), it would still take approximately 500 days or 1.9 years to complete the task with two high-speed scanners. Of course, adding scanners would reduce the completion time, but the DA's office will definitely experience a shortage of work space and additional cost for more employees and equipment.

Definitely faster and possibly more cost effective, outsourcing the backfile document conversion to a service bureau is the better option. In negotiating cost per item, the large volume should qualify the office for a reduced rate of 3 cents or lower, especially with an expected volume in the millions.
Appendix B:
About SEARCH, the National Center for State Courts, and the Court Information Systems Technical Assistance Project
SEARCH, The National Consortium for Justice Information and Statistics

SEARCH is a nonprofit membership organization, created by and for the states, which is dedicated to improving the criminal justice system through better information management and the effective application of information and identification technology. Since 1969, SEARCH’s primary objective has been to identify and help solve the information management problems of state and local justice agencies confronted with the need to automate and integrate their information systems, and to exchange information with other local agencies, state agencies, agencies in other states, or with the Federal government. SEARCH’s headquarters are in Sacramento, California.

SEARCH provides justice agencies at the local, regional, state, and federal levels with diverse products, services, and resources, including:

- No-cost, expert technical assistance for agencies in the process of acquiring, developing, upgrading, or integrating their computer systems.
- Hands-on training designed to teach criminal justice investigators and support staff how to investigate high-technology theft and computer-related crime.
- National conferences, workshops, and symposia on a range of justice information management technology and policy issues.
- A variety of on-line resources, including databases of IT procurement documents and criminal justice software, information on law enforcement IT resources, and profiles of state activity in the areas of integration and incident-based reporting.
- Information management policy assistance programs to help states expand the utility of their criminal history records.
- Significant, nationally disseminated publications that document legal, policy, and statistical research on a range of relevant issues affecting operational justice agencies, and development of national information models and standards, including security and privacy standards and a model rap sheet format.

SEARCH Online Resources

SEARCH provides a wide variety of information about justice information systems, related technologies, standards, research, and technology acquisition via the Internet and World Wide Web. In addition, SEARCH offers access to criminal justice policy research, including electronic newsletters and briefing papers, automated research databases and documents, and hypertext linkages to relevant research data. All of the Web sites can be accessed via the SEARCH home page at www.search.org.
The National Center for State Courts

The National Center for State Courts (NCSC) is a nonprofit corporation dedicated to the modernization of our nation's courts. The Center acts as a focal point for judicial reform, serving as the catalyst for implementing standards of fair and expeditious judicial administration, and helping to determine and disseminate solutions to problems of state and local judicial systems. Their work includes providing information, technical assistance, and consulting services to courts and other interested parties, and conducting research and evaluations in all areas of court operation.

NCSC also publishes journals, newsletters, bulletins, books, monographs, and reports to keep the state courts informed of its own activities and activities in the state courts.

The Court Information Systems Technical Assistance Project

The Court Information Systems Technical Assistance Project is a national effort that focuses on developing practical resources for state and local courts in their efforts to automate and integrate information systems, both within the courts and between courts and other justice agencies. The project is funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. DOJ, and is a partnership of SEARCH, NCSC, the National Association for Court Management (NACM), and the Conference of State Court Administrators (COSCA).

These courts need special assistance to address the policy, operational, and technical issues associated with the development or implementation of new automated, integrated information systems. This project provides expert and practical advice, guidance, and assistance to courts and justice agencies that are automating, upgrading, and integrating their information systems. The project offers two types of no-cost assistance:

- In-house assistance provided at SEARCH headquarters in Sacramento, California, or by NCSC in either Williamsburg, Virginia, or at its Court Services Division in Denver, Colorado, or via written correspondence, telephone consultations, or electronic mail. This provides courts and justice agencies with immediate access to the specialized knowledge of professional staff, as well as referrals to technical resources.

- On-site technical assistance provided to courts and justice agencies. This helps agencies effectively plan for, design, develop, procure, and implement a computerized information system. Assistance ranges from such processes as needs assessments, system requirements, integration planning, technical proposal preparation, operational and policy consultations, and system transfer.