

National Bank Counting Unforeseen Dividends with GlobalSearch®

Ironically, it was the auditors who were making a mess. "In a highly regulated industry like banking, audits are a regular occurrence," said Gerry Harden, First Vice President of Valley National Bank. "Sometimes it seemed like we were inviting the thieves into the vault." Determined to end its reliance on paper-based records and solve the chronic problem of files that went missing from audit to audit, Valley National Bank turned to Square 9's GlobalSearch Enterprise Content Management solution.

"We turned to electronic content management primarily because we needed to preserve the integrity of our files during routine audits," said Harden. "It was frustrating to be criticized by auditors for having disorganized paper files when in fact the auditors were often creating the problem."

After researching a variety of solutions, the bank realized that enterprise content management would pay big dividends in many areas of its operations. Today, in addition to keeping its files "audit-proof," GlobalSearch is helping the bank to use its office space and personnel more efficiently and economically, meet demanding regulatory requirements and plan for disaster recovery. GlobalSearch offered the bank exceptional value.

"Including the cost of scanning and indexing more than one million pages of documents, we easily recouped our ECM investment within the first year," said Harden, who estimated her company is saving almost \$150,000 annually with GlobalSearch.

With its corporate headquarters in Jericho, New York, Valley National Bank is a \$1.8 billion community bank. The bank maintains seventeen branches in the counties of Nassau, Suffolk, Queens and Manhattan; its diverse customer base includes commercial real estate owners and developers, small to middle market businesses, professional service firms, municipalities and consumers. "What sets us apart from other banks in this competitive market is our reputation for providing high quality, personal service," Harden said.

Valley National Bank uses GlobalSearch to manage its voluminous commercial credit and loan files, plus

Snapshot

Industry:

Banking

Departments Impacted:

Administration and Accounting

Featured Products:

GlobalSearch

Objectives:

Preserve integrity of files during audits; reduce paper storage costs; ensure regulatory compliance; provide for disaster recovery; conduct business more efficiently and economically

environmental assessments and property appraisals – full-color documents that run 300 to 400 pages in length. Operating with 50 seat licenses, the bank's GlobalSearch installation has been configured to its unique requirements. Scalable and easy to support, GlobalSearch integrated seamlessly with the bank's Fiserv core computing system that houses account balances and other critical data. Utilizing a centralized scanning system and efficient barcode technology, documents are organized by customer and type using a portfolio code that ties them into the core system.

With the introduction of ECM at Valley National Bank, in-house resources were used to economically scan and index more than one million pages of paper documents over the course of the first year. Confident that they were no longer needed, the bank shredded the documents and converted the storage room into comfortable new office space for five workers. "Our old storage room had been crowded with 35 four-drawer lateral file cabinets," Harden explained. "With space renting for \$35 per square foot, the bank was spending \$35,000 each year to store paper documents."

The bank also measures its return on investment with GlobalSearch in labor cost savings. "Because managing documents with GlobalSearch is far more efficient than handling documents manually, clerical personnel who had been managing our paper



**Saving
\$150k
Annually**

documents were freed up to perform other more important tasks," Harden explained. "Our staff declined from four full-time secretaries and one part-time scanner to one and one-half secretaries and one part-time scanner. The savings from these personnel reductions alone is worth at least \$100,000 annually."

**Personnel
Reductions
Savings**

Audits had consumed many additional labor hours. "We are audited about 12 times each year and two or more audits can occur simultaneously," Harden explained. "Facilitating these audits was like going through a revolving door. As soon as the files from one audit had been put away – if they were put away – we had to retrieve them again. Now, because GlobalSearch is so easy to learn and use, I provide the auditors a five-minute lesson in the solution and they are on their own. Previously, it had taken the staff about 40 hours to support each of the audits. This equates to about \$12,000 in additional savings each year."

**\$12k
Saved In
Support**

GlobalSearch helps the bank comply with security, privacy and other requirements mandated by Sarbanes-Oxley and FDICIA. "Documents in GlobalSearch are accepted as originals and backed up offsite," Harden explained. "In the event of a disaster, we could be up and running again that same day, and information stored in GlobalSearch can only be accessed by authorized users."

Would she recommend GlobalSearch? "Yes, I would – and I have!" Harden exclaimed. "We are very proud of our GlobalSearch solution. I actually demonstrate GlobalSearch to others who are researching content management. GlobalSearch has a very nice look and feel and it shows beautifully. Most of the individuals I recommended the solution to installed GlobalSearch in their businesses. Once you see it, you want it!"