

Property Management Firm Cuts Process Times in Half with Square 9

Case Study:

Towne Properties

With Bill Salyers, IT Director at Towne Properties

Industry:

Property Management

Departments Impacted:

Accounting, Payroll, Operations

Featured Products:

GlobalSearch, GlobalCapture

Objectives:

Simplify document archival and retrieval and reduce document touchpoints.



Meet Towne Properties

Towne Properties is the fifth-largest privately held property management company in the U.S., managing homeowners associations, condo associations, apartment communities, and commercial properties while owning numerous apartment communities of their own. Their responsibilities as managers of these communities include financial oversight and ground and building maintenance. Between those living in and working for these communities, Towne Properties is responsible for approximately 275,000 people.

Challenge

As a leading property management firm, Towne Properties' IT department regularly looks for ways to increase the efficiency of the organization's processes. One initiative was to reevaluate tasks involving more than two document touchpoints. The first processes evaluated were in Towne Properties' accounting department.

With numerous properties to manage, Towne Properties has nearly 800 sets of books that need to be kept, tied out, and audited each year. For each property's board meetings, bank statements, reconciliation statements, and other transaction records were sent and requested via email, leading to delayed access and customer service concerns.

Towne Properties' payroll and operations departments also dealt with document archival & retrieval challenges due to the large volume of forms, contracts, and other records they manage.



"If staff asked for bank statements the day of the meeting, they probably wouldn't have them in time. When you're handling someone else's money, that raises questions,"

Bill Salyers, IT Director

Salyers had previously worked with another intelligent information management solution but found it too expensive and complex, lacking an intuitive user interface. Towne Properties chose Square 9 after evaluating several competitors. Though initially skeptical about the simplicity of Square 9's interface, Salyers was impressed with the platform's robust feature set and easy-to-use interface.

Solution

Towne Properties' implementation was incredibly smooth, and despite some initial hesitation, Towne Properties' staff were quick to adopt the solution once they saw its value at work. "Once we got a couple of archives built and deployed, the momentum's been great," said Salyers. "It's taken them a bit to get there, but now they don't think about filing cabinets and folders anymore."

Towne Properties began its implementation in its accounting department, indexing all its bank statements in a searchable archive. "Now whenever someone has a meeting, they just pull the bank statements they need," said Salyers. "It's taken days out of the original process."

After successfully archiving its bank statements, Towne Properties began managing meeting financials, minutes, and other accounting records for which it is responsible.

The company then expanded its solution into its payroll department, managing documents such as mileage reimbursements to simplify retrieval.

"The payroll department's feeling is if there's a filing cabinet they can see, they can simplify the process electronically," said Salyers. "They've done that with almost all of their processes and cut out about half the time on each one."

With immense success in both departments, Towne Properties began examining the management of historical agreements for each property's operations department.

"If they have an agreement, it gets scanned in and tagged so they can quickly retrieve it," said Salyers.

Only a few weeks after implementation, Towne Properties' operations department is already looking to expand into other processes.

Benefit

According to Salyers, Towne Properties has been highly impressed with the level of customer service Square 9 provides.

For example, after initially implementing an on-premise version of its solution, Towne Properties has migrated to Square 9's cloud, simplifying the remote access process and allowing the company to take advantage of additional offerings.

According to Salyers, Square 9 took great care to make this process as simple as possible.



"Square 9 did all the heavy lifting. I just had to verify that it was working, test it, and sign off on it. They even ensured that all my scripts were pointing to the cloud instead of on-premise. It was as painless as it possibly could have been,"

Bill Salyers, IT Director

Salyers was also impressed with Square 9's ease of use and product education program. "I went through the certification process, and once I was done, setting up the archives was incredibly easy," mentioned Salyers.

Result

Towne Property's staff saw significantly reduced turn-around times on documents needed for meetings, which ultimately enhanced the company's customer relationships.

"We're able to pull the documents up right in the meeting, and it puts a lot more confidence in our customers' minds," explained Salyers.

When asked what he is most impressed with about Square 9, Salyers mentioned two aspects: the platform's ease of use and technical support.

"I was always someone who had to take a ton of notes, but once I got over the learning curve and finished the Square 9 training, it all came back to me instantly," said Salyers.

"I've also gone to Square 9 tech support with some of the simplest problems, and as soon as they explained them, they made sense. They never make you feel silly or like you're bothering them, and they almost always elaborate and follow up."

When asked if he would recommend Square 9, Salyers mentioned that he already has.

"I have recommended Square 9 several times, and I always say 'try it' because until you do, you can't appreciate how easy it is. You're going to save money, you're not going to lose a lot of time on implementation, the benefits are going to be great, and it's very cost-effective."