GIVING NEW LIFE TO OLD RECORDS IN PLYMOUTH, COUNTY MA

AVENU INSIGHTS & ANALYTICS

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TODAY’S SPEAKERS

JOHN BUCKLEY
Register of Deeds
Plymouth County, MA

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Agenda

• History of Plymouth Colony to Plymouth County
• Challenges Faced by Cities and Counties
• Plymouth County Case Study
• Tackling Funding Resources
• The Path to Digital Transformation
• Q&A Session
HAPPY 400TH BIRTHDAY TO
PLYMOUTH COLONY
Transition of Plymouth Colony to Plymouth County

- Plymouth Colony was Found in 1620
- Town of Plymouth: Known as “America’s Hometown”
- Landing site of the Mayflower 1620
- Home to the First Thanksgiving Feast
- Plymouth County Founded: 1685

Mayflower Compact

#ICMA2019
CHALLENGES FACED BY CITIES AND COUNTIES
Why Safeguard, Preserve and Provide Access to Public Records

1. Public Records define what we own and who we are as a country

2. Legal requirements

3. Provide Transparency, Access, available for research as they are the Official Public Record.

4. Preserve and Celebrate History!
Records Management Challenges

- **Access, Accuracy & Authenticity** for citizens and staff
- Risk of fire, water damage, mold, theft – **Disaster Recovery**
- **Deterioration** from continuous usage, sunlight, oxidation, improper storage
- Costs of archiving paper records – **insufficient storage**
- Need to comply with changing **legislative/regulatory requirements** for documents
- Many schools have dropped **cursive writing** from curriculum
• Types of documents to preserve?
• Where and how to store documents securely?
• Index everything?
• How to evaluate budget and time needs?
• What about fragile documents?
• What if state law requires film as document of record?
The Plymouth County Registry of Deeds is the guardian of historical and modern land records from the Pilgrims to the present.
Case Study:
Plymouth Colony, Massachusetts

Book 1, Page 1 Plymouth Colony Records
“Beginning of Land Records in America”

Leyden Street Today, “The Street” Plymouth, MA
Transcription

• Provide text version of documents written in 18th century cursive

• Provide anywhere online access

• Preserve heritage, unlock history, discover new stories

• Instantly view and compare the original handwritten document to text transcription

Transcription of land documents from original Plymouth documents.
Preparation of 400th anniversary of colony’s founding

Images for 11 volumes provided by county requiring 2,024 documents to be indexed including original land records and deeds

Includes first recorded land record by William Bradford, leader of the settlement

First Deed, Plymouth MA
FUNDING RESOURCES
Funding Source

- Technology Funds
- Grants Available for Archives / Preservation
- State Grants for Modernization
- Community Preservation Funds
- Revenue Stream from Online Purchase of Record
THE PATH TO DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION
Document types, volume and condition

- Vellum paper or wood pulp
- Books (bound or loose documents)
- Page sizes and handwritten vs text
- Film and photostat storage
- Indexing status of existing images
- Paper files in storage cabinets and banker boxes.

Objectives

- Greater online access
- More physical access
- Historical preservation
- Statutory requirements
- Decreased storage needs and costs
- Easy to search, retrieve and send documents.
Digital Transformation Journey

Digital Imaging
Bound books, Case files, Banker boxes with Paper, microfilm, microfiche scanned to digital Images ensures immediate, inexpensive long-term document preservation

Search & Indexing
The ability to search, retrieve and display documents with anywhere access from your phone, tablet or computer.

Redaction – Protection
Redact PPI data in your records safeguarding SSN’s and other personally Indefinable information found in records

Transcription
Preserve the meaning and context of history through our word-for-word rendering of original cursive script into searchable computerized text
Modernization & Preservation Efforts

**Image to Microfilm**
Protect microfilm originals with an efficient, long-term conversion solution – extending the lifespan of your film by hundreds of years.

**Film Preservation & Duplication**

**Book Preservation/ Re-Creation**
Preserve damaged historical books, or replace damaged book volumes by combining scanning, printing, & document insertion techniques.

**Archival Storage**
Maximize your disaster recovery planning. Establish record retention schedule, meet regulatory requirements, or routinely destroy records in necessary.
Foster trust and transparency with constituents when information is easily and more readily accessible.

Preserve future generations' understanding of history.

Enable all constituents to readily access information at anytime.
THANK YOU

Questions?

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