State of Georgia

Captricity Helps the State of Georgia Increase Transparency and Reduce Corruption

The Challenge

By December 31, 2013, the Georgia Government Transparency and Campaign Finance Commission had to solve a thorny problem. The Commission is responsible for making public all of the financial disclosures and campaign contribution forms for both elected officials and individuals running for public office. The Commission fulfills this important public mission by both collecting the filed reports and making them available online in a searchable database.

Several years ago, the Commission built an eFiling system that enabled candidates and elected officials to submit their filings online in a format that made the information searchable. In 2013, legislature passed HB143, which required local candidates and elected officials to file their reports with the local filing entity and not the Commission. The local filing entities were then required to transmit these reports to the Commission. The legislature mandated eFiling or eFax as the method for these reports to be transmitted.

"We had to figure out a way to set up an eFaxing system that could handle the volume of incoming forms. We were also looking for a way to have this information publicly available and get the information into our existing eFiling system so we would have one, unified, statewide dataset. And we had no additional budget funding to execute this project," said Joel Perkins, CEO of Inserv360, and Andrew Booth, CEO of Jaxified LLC, the primary consultants who manage IT infrastructure and code for the Commission

The team began by setting up an eFax solution to receive the incoming forms. But without some way to extract the data from the forms into structured output that could be mapped to their eFiling solution, those faxes would only be marginally useful; they would simply sit on a file server and not be searchable by the public. To make things even more challenging, the incoming forms were varied in the way they were filled in. "Some people use Adobe and print on the forms; some people handwrite them. We have even received forms written in crayon," said Joel.

> **Without Captricity, we would have imported the files into a bulk directory and that would have been it. What we are trying to achieve would absolutely, 100 percent not have been possible without Captricity.**
>
> **Joel Perkins, IT Lead, Georgia Department of Ethics**

The Solution

The Commission needed a cost-effective solution that could integrate with an eFax system, accurately extract data from handwritten forms and integrate that data into the existing eFiling system. They tried using several OCR systems and the results were far below the level of accuracy they required, particularly with handwriting. With time running out, the team was growing concerned.

That's when Andrew, the IT co-lead on the project, found Captricity. The team ran a few tests and found that the structured data the system returned was above 99 percent accurate—even with handwritten forms. And Captricity fit easily into their existing workflow. It was simple to set up the integration with the eFax system and map the data to the back-end database. Using the Captricity API, the data would flow into the correct fields in the eFiling system.

"I have found the field mapping with Captricity to be very intuitive. Since we already had the database tables built, I just used our existing table name and column name when I mapped the document. I mirrored what was in our tables. Uploading documents is very, very simple," said Perkins.

Since January 2014, the department has received more than 6,800 faxes (many with 10 or more pages). Perkins estimates that they will process 40,000 pages per month during the seven annual filing periods in 2014. All of these forms—even those filled out with crayon—now flow from fax to Captricity to the eFiling system in one smooth pass.

Why Captricity

Captricity's powerful web-based data extraction platform combines machine learning algorithms and human workers to ensure more than 99+ percent accuracy for most data—even handwriting. Our cloud-native platform integrates seamlessly with existing systems and workflows so organizations don't have to change the way they work.

Fast. Secure. Simple. 99%+ Accurate.

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