Oil Information Library of Wichita Falls
Case Story

"Contex scanning solution brings the Texas Oil Library into the future"

Summary
The Oil Information Library of Wichita Falls stores seismic data, maps, and well logs used for oil and gas exploration. The organization needed to archive the documents so they could easily be accessed and distributed to members. It chose a Contex HD4230 wide format color scanner – and it's now offering fantastic archiving efficiency to ensure valuable documents are not damaged.

The challenge
Preserving fragile, one-of-a-kind documents by converting them into digital files.

The solution
Switching to a Contex HD4230 wide format color scanner to convert thousands of paper logs and wide format maps into e-format.

The benefits
Better service to customers through digitalized documents.

The results
The Oil Information Library of Wichita Falls has saved time and increased efficiency.

"The installation of Contex HD4230 has completely changed our direction for the library and brought it into the future. It has revolutionized the way we respond to the public."

Gail Phillips, Library Manager

When oil and gas companies or geologists want to access well logs, maps, or other important documents about north central Texas, they turn to the definitive source – the Oil Information Library of Wichita Falls. Now non-profit and membership-based, the organization stores documents that contain critical information for oil and gas exploration in the region. The documents are delicate and often one-of-a-kind, and the library needed a way to archive and store them so they could be made easily available to members, without wear and tear.

The challenge: transforming one-of-a-kind paper records to a digital archive

Wichita Falls is prone to tornadoes and occasional flooding, which underscores the importance of protecting irreplaceable documents. Many of the documents are fragile, one-of-a-kind records that date back to the 1930s and 40s. Library Manager and member of the Board of Directors, Gail Phillips explains, "Whenever a well is drilled, an operator sends a tool down into the hole that measures the thickness and porosity of the formations below the ground. With the collected data, the operator creates a document detailing the rock formations, deposits, and earth beneath. If the document is ripped, torn or destroyed, there is no other copy. What's more, paper has a shelf life – it doesn't last forever."

Given these issues, in 2003 the library staff and members began pushing for a way to preserve the priceless paper documents. At the time, the library was using an analog copier to reproduce hard copy documents. If someone needed five copies of a map or log, the document would have to be fed through the copier five times, creating repetitive wear and tear on already fragile and hard-to-read documents. It was clear that the time had come to find new technology.

The solution: Contex HD4230 scanner creates easily accessible records

The team researched a variety of options, most of which involved hard copy reproduction – and then they saw a Contex HD4230.

"We were blown away by the Contex scanner," Philips says, "especially when we gave Contex an antique map that was so old the background had turned yellow and the print, which had turned brown, was mostly unreadable. The quality of the

scanned image was so good that we could read the date on the map – 1932 – which we'd never been able to read on the original. The Contex HD4230 scanner made the image clearer by removing distortion and yellowing, and bringing the print forward. Again, we were just blown away."

The benefits: fast and easy archiving

In June 2005, the Contex HD4230 wide format scanner was installed. Designed to provide high quality, high-speed color and monochrome scanning, the scanner's 42-inch imaging area is ideal for scanning oil well log files.

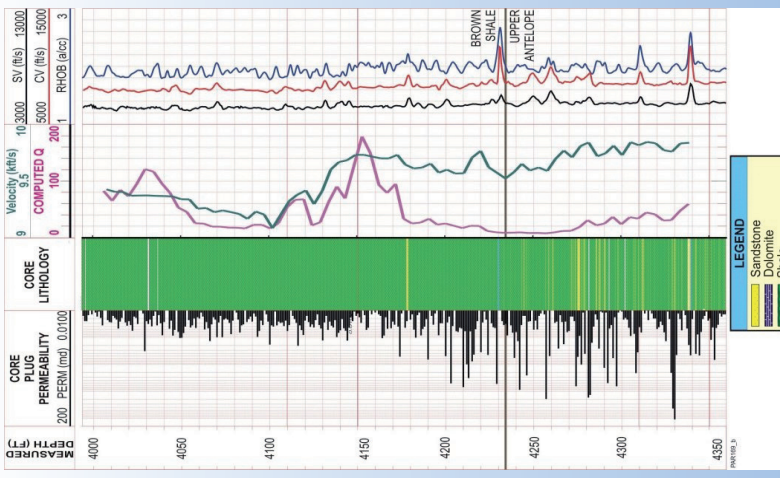
The scanner interfaces with two output devices to enable the library to print out maps and long, narrow well logs. The Oil Information Library also uses Open Archive eCHIVE software to organize its logs by API number, field, county, operator, well depth or other information in the log header to create an easy-to-use digital archive.

The results: new approach saves time and improves efficiency

Since implementing the Contex scanner, the Oil Information Library has made great strides with its preservation project. The team converts new documents as they come in, and they're tackling the ongoing back-file conversion of thousands of older documents – an effort Phillips estimates will be complete in two years.

As progress continues, the scanning solution continues to save time and increase efficiency every step of the way. Today, valuable, one-of-a-kind documents are converted to digital format and can be distributed to member oil and gas companies via email or printed out on request. As for day-to-day benefits, searching for maps and well logs that have been scanned and indexed is fast, easy and requires far less time and effort than the previous analog method.

As Phillips says, "The response from our oil and gas customers has been very positive. The Contex scanning solution has completely changed the direction our library was headed. It brought us into the future, rather than continuing to use an antiquated system to distribute information to our members. It has truly revolutionized the way we respond to the public."



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Gail Phillips, Library Manager and Member, Board of Directors

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