

Case Study



Community Service Organization Seeks Better Scanning Solution for Vital Documents

The Food Project is an organization that brings together teenagers and thousands of volunteers annually to work on nearly 40 acres' worth of farms in and around Boston. The organization's goal is to create a sustainable system for growing healthy food and delivering it to residents of Boston and surrounding communities through farmers' markets, food relief programs, and community organizations. It also works to foster the leadership potential of hundreds of the youths while helping people—both the volunteer workers and food recipients—feel a stronger connection to the land.

Business Needs

The Food Project administrative office is in Lincoln, Massachusetts, with two additional program offices as well as 35 full-time employees scattered across the eastern part of the state. During its busiest months in the spring and summer, the organization adds at least 150 youth and many more adults to its ranks. The annual recruitment process for this influx leads to a sharp increase in paperwork, resulting in a need to transport large numbers of documents across the offices and work sites spread across four cities and towns.

Additionally, the organization produces many other documents such as surveys from neighborhoods served and information about individual farm sites. Much of this information is used to apply for grants, which are critical for the organization's funding and existence. The grant applications are time sensitive and involve the efforts of many different employees across all offices, so receiving the information in a timely manner is vital to its operations.

The Food Project attempted to streamline its document management by digitizing all of its paperwork using a multifunction device. However, its performance was problematic.

"We found it to be inconsistent and undependable, and it wasn't Mac friendly," says Rob Sozanski, Technology Manager for The Food Project. He says the organization needed to find a more reliable scanning solution that would be compatible with its Apple computer equipment and could be easily used by all members of the team.

Solution: Fujitsu ScanSnap S1500M Compact Scanner

The Food Project decided to abandon its previous scanning equipment and turned to the Fujitsu ScanSnap S1500M, a compact, duplex-capable scanner that can scan up to 20 pages per minute in color or monochrome. It also produces a variety of file types that can be used by The Food Project, including PDFs, JPGs, and editable Microsoft Word and Excel documents.

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"We chose the Fujitsu scanner not only because it fit seamlessly with our Mac equipment, but we also realized how easy it would be for anyone to use this scanner without the need for technical training or background," says Sozanski.

Benefits: More Productivity, Reduced Mailing Costs Help Organization

Bringing in the Fujitsu ScanSnap S1500M has helped The Food Project alleviate some key operational issues.

"With its ease of use, everyone can benefit from the effectiveness of the S1500M and use it for their everyday tasks," says Sozanski. He notes that the intuitive ScanSnap Quick Menu makes it incredibly simple for staff members as well as volunteers to quickly load a document, select their preferred output, scan the document, and be done so they can get back to work.

There are also cost savings. "There is an indirect labor savings because I don't have to be pulled away from other projects to fix a scanning problem, which happened in the past. The Fujitsu product just works," says Sozanski. He adds that the organization has saved money on postage because it has been able to increase the number of documents that are scanned and sent by email, instead of having to rely on the Post Office to deliver paper documents.

"It has worked out so well that our goal now is to have a Fujitsu ScanSnap in each office so we can help the organization move all of its processes away from creating and moving paper documents," he says.

The Food Project benefit snapshot:

- **Reliable scanning hardware eliminates the need for IT person to be pulled away from tasks to fix scanning problems**
- **Intuitive ScanSnap software makes it easy for anyone in the organization to quickly scan documents**
- **Enables cost effective document handling across multiple offices through increased use of electronic file sharing**

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