Cost Justifying the Scanning of Your Documents

The value of a document can vary greatly according to its intended function. Typically valuable documents may be design data, contracts, financial transaction records, correspondence, certificates, etc. All of these have a quantifiable associated cost related to their storage, ongoing access and archival.

It is this 'life-cycle' management cost of a document, which many companies do not realise, occurs and it can be broken down into a number of areas:

ISSUE	HOW SCANNING CAN HELP
Access Time Typically an office or 'knowledge' worker (According to a Gartner Group survey) will take 8 Hours/Week to locate documents they require. This typically equates to approx £5,000/annum/person.	Scanning your documents enables searches for specific information to be performed in seconds. Even individual words can be searched for which would be impossible across a range of paper documents.
Risk Management If a fire, bomb or flood strikes then original documents could be destroyed and take months to reconstruct. In some cases this could have a serious impact to a business.	Once documents are scanned they can be stored to cheap and reproducible CD-ROMs which can then be accessed on any PC. A customer service department for example could therefore be up and running again as soon as a PC is available.
Improved Levels of Customer Service Improved customer service can improve your market share and by having all of your clients correspondence and documentation to hand it can reduce call backs and associated charges and admin costs.	Customer records can be linked to contact databases and any letter viewed in seconds whilst the customer is on the line. Large reductions in call-back costs and improved customer satisfaction therefore occur.
Sharing Information Paper based documents can only be shared if they are copied which has both admin and environmental cost implications. These are compounded if documents need to be shared across remote offices.	Scanned documents can be emailed or made accessible over a network/internet instantly without copying or the delays associated with courier services.
Long Term Preservation Paper and even microfilm records can become damaged, torn or dogeared over time. Faxes fade.	Once documents are scanned they no longer degrade and they can be copied in seconds onto new media as and when new devices are released in the future. Digital formats can be backwardly read or accessed/transferred at any time giving a high level of 'futureproofing'
Misfiling Every time a paper document is retrieved and then filed there is a small chance that it will not be returned or incorrectly misfiled. Typically 2% of all documents will be misfiled each at a cost of £5.	Once scanned documents have been indexed there is no longer the possibility that they will be lost or misfiled.
Space Documents can take up a lot of space which cumulatively grows every year. This space is always an overhead and cannot be used for profit production purposes. Cost per sq/ft saved varies.	Approx 5 filing cabinets of A4 documents or 3000 drawings can be stored on each CD-ROM which therefore releases space for more productive uses.

The above areas need to be quantified in 'business metrics' terms for each project as each issue will have a greater or lesser impact. In general terms the scanning of documents WILL be more expensive in simple cost comparisons with microfilming but when the above issues are also brought into the overall business case analysis then it is not hard to see why most large organisations are now moving towards the digital storage of their documents.

Once a financial cost justification has been arrived at then the risk associated with implementation and achieving the planned cost savings becomes more important. Scanning Solutions Ltd can provide one of the Uks most established and trustworthy services available to ensure this happens:

ISO 9002 Accreditation across all areas of the business

Corporate clients in the UK alone including High Street Banks & Public Services

Solvent, profitable business focussed only upon document management services

Scanning Solutions Ltd on 01932 230304 to discuss how, by using our document management services and solutions, we can resolve some of your information management problems.