

FRC SCANNING SERVICES

Things to consider
when planning your
scanning project



FEDERAL RECORDS CENTERS
of the National Archives and Records Administration

How will my output requirements affect my scanning project?

This flyer will help you understand how your output requirements for your digitized records will impact the cost and turnaround time of your scanning project. Thinking about these factors will help you plan your project and best manage your digitized records over time.



Color format and resolution

When planning your project, you will need to make some decisions about color format (color, grayscale, or black and white) and resolution (the measure of the sharpness of an image). Your requirements will depend on the record type and on what you plan to do with your digitized images, and your decisions will impact the legibility, size, and load time of your digitized images. The choices you make can also affect project cost and turnaround time. FRC scanning specialists can help you determine what color format and resolution are most appropriate for your particular records.



Quality assurance

Quality assurance is critical to any scanning project. The quality of the scanned images, indexing data, and other information can impact usability of the scanned records. Trained FRC technicians measure quality performance to your specifications throughout the digitization process. The FRC can offer all levels of quality assurance, from quality control checks of a random sample of your records to a visual check of 100% of records scanned.



Indexing

When considering how to index your scanned documents, think about how you currently use and index your paper records. How the information is sorted, ordered, and accessed will help you determine the types and amount of information you will need to capture about your digital records. Simple collections may have only one indexing field, while more complex ones will have multiple fields. If your agency is using a content management or document repository system, FRC staff can contact your IT department to determine the capabilities and requirements of that system.

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Optical character recognition (OCR)

OCR software identifies sequences of characters in scanned records. This allows end users to employ word search functionality when reading scanned documents. Adding OCR to your project will increase the cost of the project and the amount of time it takes to complete, but it will greatly improve the accessibility and usability of the scanned records.



Image output format

When selecting your image output format, you will need to consider how you want to use, share, and store the records. The FRC can deliver your scanned records in any of the commonly used image output formats, including .jpeg, .tiff, .pcx, .pdf, .gif, and others. FRC staff can advise you on the best formats for your particular collection of records.



Hosting/managing scanned images

When planning your scanning project, you will want to consider the amount of space your scanned images (and their related indexing data) will take up in your content management system. Some examples of these systems include FileNet, SharePoint, and Documentum. The FRC can consult with your agency's IT staff and provide guidance on the ingestion of the scanned records and indexing data into your agency's content management system.



Delivery of scanned images

When deciding how you want your files delivered, you will need to consider the size of the files, how quickly you need the files, how you are going to share the files, and the kind of equipment your end users have to read the files. The FRC can deliver your scanned records on media, on external drives, or via electronic delivery (e-mail, FTP, etc.). Regardless of delivery method, the FRC can encrypt your files to ensure they are kept secure both during transit and in storage.

Questions? Call 314-801-9300 or e-mail frc@nara.gov