

City of Evansville and Vanderburgh County elects Foxit PhantomPDF®

EVANSVILLE INDIANA
& VANDERBURGH COUNTY

Foxit PhantomPDF enables everyone to have full PDF functionality

As the Chief Information Officer for the City of Evansville and Vanderburgh County, Indiana, Mark Uhrin relishes a challenge—especially the challenge of improving government infrastructure.

“You’re trying to get the biggest bang for the dollars you spend,” explains Uhrin. “To me, that’s the fun part of the job, as well as advancing the use of technology within the city and county.”

Nowhere is advanced use of technology among staff more evident than the forms that city employees create, which rely heavily upon PDF functionality to increase their utility. “Creating smart forms that enable us to embed information directly from other sources, such as a database, streamlines our processes,” Uhrin adds. “For example, I’ve been working on an intelligent form for computer services that automatically puts in current pricing on equipment and emails it to the right people for purchase requests. We’re moving more of our departments to capabilities like these.”

Form creation limitations

That kind of innovative spirit, however, can only go so far when an entire city and county government of 1,600 employees is making do with only a few software licenses.

“We were using Adobe Acrobat Pro and had about 40 installations for the people who really needed editing capability and had installed Reader as the default for everyone else,” says Uhrin. “The cost per license for Acrobat is prohibitive to our smaller departments. So we’d either pass a license between people or end up with one person catching all of the PDF work because they had a license.”

Choosing a new PDF solution

Within its boundaries the City of Evansville contains nearly 121,000 of the more than 182,000 citizens that make Vanderburgh County, Indiana home, making the area the third largest district in Indiana.

Keeping Evansville’s lifeblood flowing falls squarely on the government’s staff of 1,600. That’s why the city produces forms that utilize intelligent functionality brought about by advanced PDF features.

The challenge? Only a very limited number of staff members had access to software licenses that enabled them to create PDF forms. Many staff members didn’t even know how to do so. Yet there was a growing push to continue to provide intelligence to the way the district works with its citizens and businesses.

Because Adobe was costly, it was time to look for a new PDF solution such as Foxit PhantomPDF.

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Seeking a solution

With more and more departments wanting to generate smart forms and make fuller use of PDF, the time came to look for a new PDF solution. Uhrin reviewed a variety of alternatives and Foxit PhantomPDF became the winner.

“One of the big advantages that we saw with Foxit is that because of the much lower cost, we could extend editing capability and the ability to generate new forms to a much wider number of our employees,” explains Uhrin. “So we decided to do a 60-day trial with the people most interested in PDF creation. In terms of functionality, we found that Foxit and Acrobat are almost identical. Anything we can do in Acrobat we can do in Foxit. People came back overwhelmingly and said, ‘Yeah, that’s what I want, let’s move forward.’”

Impressive service and support

It wasn’t just the functionality that swayed people, though. “Foxit provided a great demonstration,” says Uhrin. “They not only showed us how easy it was to use all the functionality but the customer service and support, too. So that made our jobs easier.”

With all this on the table, they purchased a site license for Foxit PhantomPDF that covers all 1,600 government workers in the district.

“With the lower cost of Foxit, it made it much easier to give that capability to more people and to make better use of the PDF functionality,” adds Uhrin.

Decreased vulnerabilities

Once PhantomPDF was deployed, one of its big advantages came completely unexpectedly. “We had just changed our antivirus and endpoint protection to a different vendor,” explains Uhrin. “And with one of the first reports we ran, we discovered we had over 200 copies of Adobe Reader with vulnerabilities because they hadn’t been updated. But with Foxit, we download updates and push them to the installations automatically. So we don’t have the concern that there are versions out there that people are not keeping up to date on their own.” That helps keep vulnerabilities at bay.

Smooth implementation

The process of installing PhantomPDF was a boon as well. “It went very, very smoothly,” says Uhrin. “We got everything from Foxit support, were able to build the install and run it with no problems. Nobody reported any issues. Whenever you put new software out, you always expect some bumps. And we really haven’t had any.”

Solid tutorials mean user self-sufficiency



What’s more, PhantomPDF is easy to learn to use because there are ample tutorials, the city finds. “I can tell people, ‘The tutorials are great and will teach you everything you need to know to use the product.’ They can be self-sufficient,” explains Uhrin. And that’s worth its weight in gold to a city government that keeps moving ahead, backed by an IT team that does the same.