Mexico D.F. Registry Modernizes its Services, Reduces Record Preparation and Registration Time by 65 Percent

Over a three-year period that began in 2008, the Trade and Land Property Registry of Mexico D.F. completely modernized the way it provides services. In that project, the largest in the institution's 140-year history, the Registry deployed a centralized management solution and began digitalizing its entire archive. Today, the Registry has reduced the time required for preparing and filing deeds by 65 percent, streamlined customer service, and improved the legal certainty of records—which offers economic and social benefits for citizens of the district and the country as a whole.

Summary

The Trade and Land Property Registry of Mexico D.F. registers property deeds for individuals and families and prepares articles of incorporation for businesses throughout the district. As measured in volume of operations, the Registry is one of the largest such institutions in the world, and on any given day more than 1,000 individuals pass through its doors. Previously, citizens doing business with the Registry spent up to half the day there, most of that time waiting in queues, and they usually needed to make two or more such visits to complete their business.

"This was an inconvenience at best, and for those citizens whose paychecks depend entirely on the time that they are on the job, it was a genuine hardship," says Lic. José Guadalupe Medina Romero, General Director of the Trade and Land Property Registry of Mexico D.F.

In 2008, Medina Romero and his colleagues launched a project to address the problem. Led by Futuver México, a member of the Microsoft Partner Network with Gold competencies, the Registry implemented a solution based on Microsoft SQL Server 2008 to digitalize hundreds of millions of records and automate hundreds of procedures. After three years of work, the Registry has reduced errors by 60 percent, lowered its paper use by 90 percent, and trimmed the time for preparing and registering a property or business record by 65 percent. Through these efficiencies the Registry enables citizens to complete a visit in half the time they did before and—even better—enables most of them to have everything done in just one visit. These efficiencies also help the Registry to provide a higher level of confidence in the authenticity of records, so that individuals and families have greater assurance about their home ownership and businesses have less worry about the risk of litigation.

> "Citizens now spend just one-quarter of the time that they did in the past to have a property deed prepared and registered."
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> Lic. José Guadalupe Medina Romero, General Director of the Trade and Land Property Registry of Mexico D.F.

Company: Trade and Land Property Registry of Mexico D.F.
Website: www.consejeria.df.gob.mx
Country or Region: Mexico
Industry: Government
Employees: 500
Partner: Futuver México
Website: www.futuver.com

Company Profile: The Trade and Land Property Registry of Mexico D.F. registers property deeds for individuals and families and prepares articles of incorporation for businesses.

Partner Profile: Futuver México is a member of the Microsoft Partner Network and part of Spain-based Grupo Futuver.

Solution: With the assistance of Futuver México, the Registry modernized its entire operations by deploying a centralized management solution and digitalizing its records and procedures.

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The Challenges of Scale

The Trade and Land Property Registry of Mexico D.F. is one the largest and busiest property registries in the world. From a single office in the center of a metropolitan area that is home to 22 million people, the Registry prepares and registers the legal records required in real estate transactions by individuals, families, and businesses, in addition to the business records required for incorporation.

The Registry serves more than 1,000 citizens in its office each day, and until very recently most of them were there for up to four hours at a time because of short staffing and long queues. Citizens who lived on the outskirts of the city could easily spend another four hours getting to and from the Registry. For the Registry to fully prepare and register a given deed or similar record, citizens had to make at least two such visits, which was even more burdensome.

This was unacceptable to Lic. José Guadalupe Medina Romero, the General Director of the Trade and Land Property Registry of Mexico D.F. "For citizens to have to take the better part of two days away from their jobs, families, and other obligations was an inconvenience at best," he says. "For those citizens whose paychecks depend entirely on the time that they are at their job, it was a genuine hardship."

In 2008, Medina Romero and his colleagues saw an opportunity to address this problem and other challenges at the Registry, including a progressive loss of information due to physical deterioration of archived books, a procedural backlog of 60,000 operations, and errors that resulted from the use of multiple registration methods and older, nonintegrated applications. These challenges not only delayed the creation of new records but also threatened their authenticity.

A Monumental Change

Medina Romero and his colleagues determined that the best way to overcome these challenges was to modernize the Registry's information management solution. They launched this effort with the help of Futuver México, a member of the Microsoft Partner Network with Gold competencies, whose flagship product, Futureg, provides an electronic framework for managing land and property registry offices. Futureg is based on Microsoft SQL Server 2008 database management software and other Microsoft technologies.

Over a period of three years, a team led by Futuver implemented a customized version of Futureg, migrated data from the Registry's earlier applications, and began digitalizing the entire archive—hundreds of millions of records that date back to the late nineteenth century. The team also started automating the standard procedures that support record preparation and registration and making them available online. The Registry intends for all such procedures to be online by 2015, including electronic verification of notarial signatures.

To illustrate the enormity of this project, Medina Romero compares it to a prior modernization effort at the Registry: the adoption of *folio real* in the late 1970s. *Folio real* is the practice of assigning a number to a given property and entering all transaction records associated with that property on documents accessible through that number. Folio real replaces the centuries-old practice of entering records one after the other in leather-bound volumes, such that they are organized according to the entry date alone and not the properties themselves.

"Moving to *folio real* was monumental, and at the time, it was the largest change in practices since our office opened in 1871," says Medina Romero. "But this modernization is larger still, by orders of magnitude."

Citizen Service Delivery, Transformed

By using a single, fully centralized management solution, the Registry has simplified the overall process for preparing and registering a deed and reduced data-entry and data-management errors by more than 60 percent. As a result, the Registry has tightened processing time by 65 percent, begun to shrink the procedural backlog, and reduced paper use by 90 percent. The Registry also has enabled lenders, real estate developers, and public notaries to do more of their work online and less of it in the office, freeing office staff to be more focused on serving individuals and families.

All this, as Medina Romero explains, makes the experience of working with the Registry a lot easier for citizens. "Instead of having to come to the office twice for the preparation and registration of a deed, citizens come in once and spend half the time that they used to on each visit," he reports. "This means that citizens now spend just one-quarter of the time that they did in the past to have a property deed prepared and registered."

Economic Vitality for the District and Beyond

Medina Romero and his colleagues are also pleased that the Registry is giving citizens far more assurance and legal certainty about the authenticity of records, due to the simplified process and reduction in data errors. "In the past, we saw dozens of disputes each year over the legality of a given deed—disputes that could result in years of litigation at significant cost to public and private entities," Medina Romero says. "Although we cannot eliminate all such disputes, we know that in the year following this modernization, there were none. Individuals and families in the district can feel more confident that their homes are their own, and businesses that are incorporated in the district have fewer worries about becoming entangled in litigation."

Even better, Medina Romero adds, is that such benefits may extend well beyond the district. "By providing individuals, families, and businesses with greater legal assurance, the Registry can help support development, strengthen economic vitality, and improve the social and political well-being of citizens throughout the district," he says. "And because the district accounts for such a large part of the national GDP—30 percent—these benefits can extend to the country as a whole."

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