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KI firm handles digital document storage

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STEVENSVILLE — Give Ken Carlsen a computer and a compatible scanner and he'll convert your business's paper documents into digital files that can be safely stored off-site and be available for easy access at modest cost.

Carlsen is the president of Stevensville-based ShoreScan, which is in the business of handling document storage for municipalities and businesses in seven counties in Maryland and Delaware.

"The initial goal is to establish a business presence within a 50-mile radius of Kent Island," Carlsen explained.

Since starting ShoreScan in February 2010, he is well along in meeting that goal.

The company is currently handling digital document storage for Queenstown, Chesapeake Beach in Calvert County, New Carrollton in Prince George's County, Charlestown in Cecil County, Secretary in Dorchester County, and Lewes and Dagsboro in Delaware, as well as private businesses.

"We're talking with other potential clients," he said, adding that he has been mak-

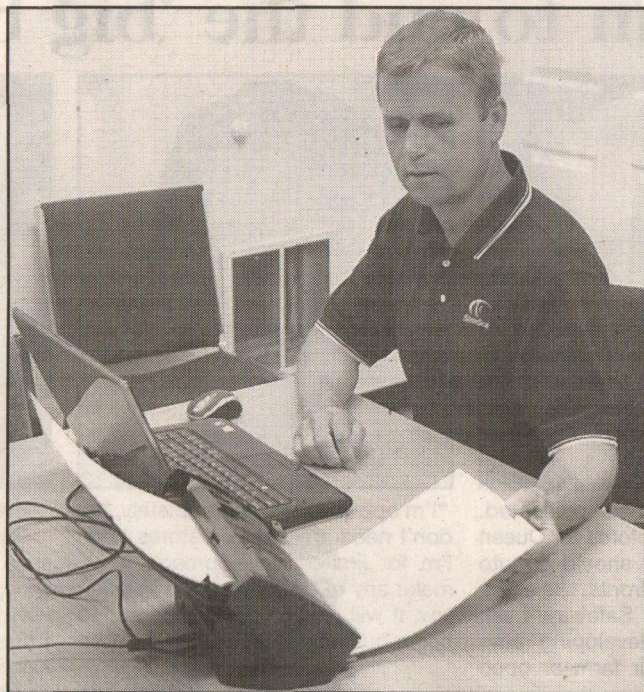


PHOTO BY JACK SHAUH

Ken Carlsen, president of Stevensville-based ShoreScan, demonstrates how easy it is to convert paper documents into digital files that are stored off-site in a web-based document-management system. All he needs is a compatible computer and compatible document scanner. ShoreScan is currently handling document storage for municipalities and businesses in seven counties in Maryland and Delaware.

ing contacts through such events as the Maryland Municipal League trade show.

ShoreScan essentially takes current and archival paper documents produced by towns and businesses, scans

them into digital form, and stores them off-site where they can be accessed electronically without the need for workers going through file cabinets and boxes full of paper.

"We start by scanning everything current and get a feel for the situation and then do the archives," Carlsen said. In the case of Queenstown, which recently became a client, town staffers and volunteers have been trained in the use of the software and the scanners, and have been scanning voluminous town documents for the past several months.

That way, if something happens to the paper documents that fill the storage areas of the town hall, the documents still exist in digital form somewhere else.

"If they realize the amount of time they spend trying to find things, they'll find this is better," Carlsen said of his clients.

The concept has been welcomed by the municipalities and businesses that have signed up with ShoreScan.

"Letting go of paper and using technology isn't easy; however, this is user-friendly, easy to learn, a time-saver,

and cost-effective," said Queenstown

Town

Commissioner Mike Bowell. The cost to the system to clients depends on how often it is used. In the case of Queenstown, Bowell said it is "compatible to our budget."

"We're extremely pleased so far," said Charlestown office manager Emily Fletcher, one of ShoreScan's newest clients. "We're in for the long haul."

She said three town employees and others have been "getting in a lot of scanning" in recent months and describe the concept as "great."

The average time for training people to use the system is two hours to six hours, Carlsen explained. He personally visits the various businesses and municipalities to set up the scanning equipment and train those who will use it.

Once logged in, a person can scan about 20 pages a minute front and back, send it to a temporary file where it is given index information and then sent onto permanent digital storage at three different locations in the U.S.

Carlsen said that clients can create backup files and store

them in a vault or safe deposit box if they wish.

The company can make equipment available for short-term rental until the client can obtain the scanner that is compatible with their office computers.

ShoreScan is linked with the digital storage company eBridge Solutions that provides it with the technology for safely storing the digital documents at low prices, Carlsen explained. He said it is the "best web-based document management solution" he has ever seen.

Carlsen is a former vice president of National Document Services in Baltimore and worked on document recovery there before beginning his own company.

"It was a real eye-opener to the inefficiencies of paper handling and storage," he said.

A resident of Kent Island since 2003, is involved in community work and sports with his three sons.

"No question it is the wave of the future," said Carlsen of digital document storage and retrieval.

ShoreScan is online at www.ShoreScan.com.