



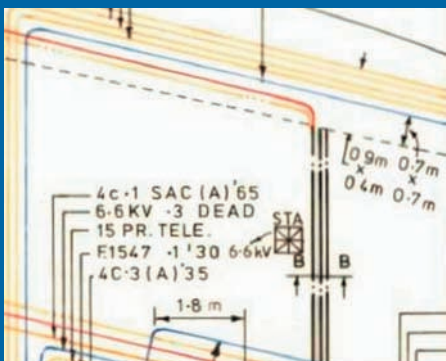
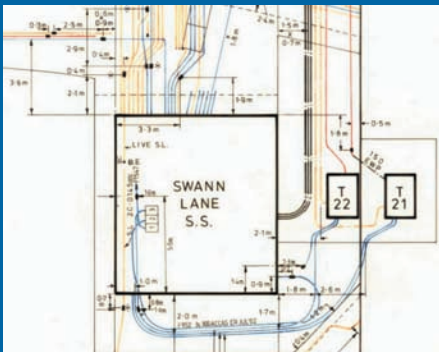
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Customer Focus

Organisation: United Utilities

What they do: United Utilities principal activities are managing and operating the regulated electricity distribution, water and wastewater networks in North West England.



Project : ESCAR



Managing records on a substantial electricity network is a complex undertaking. However United Utilities (UU) has taken a fresh approach and used new technology to improve its information resources. The Electronic Scanned Asset Record (ESCAR) project has enabled UU to reduce its costs, speed time to knowledge and provide a platform for future development.

A major UK multi-utility company, UU is responsible for electricity distribution to over 2 million homes and businesses in the North West of England.

Details of UU's electricity network are held on over 200,000 hard copy records stored at 4 drawing offices in Manchester, Preston, Kendal and Carlisle. Prior to implementing ESCAR, UU used a microfiche system to manage their cable network and plant records.

The microfiche system had many disadvantages. Amendments to records were extremely time consuming. In addition, the system constantly need maintaining and parts were costly and difficult to maintain.

By implementing ESCAR, UU would overcome many of the problems associated with the microfiche system and benefit in terms of improved accessibility to information, reduced costs and effective control over document revisions.

Because records were in constant use, document capture was carried out on-site at each of the 4 drawing offices, with Cad-Capture providing 6 large format colour scanners. The Colortrac GSX3800 was selected for its ability to scan at the required resolution with the necessary clarity and

colour capability. On commencement of the project, 3 scanners were located at each of the Manchester and Preston offices, where the bulk of UU's records were stored.

On completion of the operation at Manchester and Preston, 2 scanners from each site were then relocated to the Kendal and Carlisle offices, where the remaining records were captured. On completion of the project, a scanner was left at each site for day-to-day business maintenance and resultant re-scans.

Scanned records were output in PNG format and each individual image quality checked, before being rotated to North and cropped. Final processed images were supplied to UU on DAT tape with a copy of the unprocessed equivalent. Each tape typically contained 4500 images, equivalent to 3 days scanning at a single site.

The implementation of ESCAR has provided UU with an effective repository of electronic records that are already delivering real benefits in service delivery to UU's customers. The potential for continued improvement afforded by ESCAR is enormous and UU will continue to reap the benefits of its investment for a considerable time to come.

Brian O'Neill, ESCAR Project Manager at UU said, "ESCAR has reduced our costs and provided us with up-to-date, high quality colour information of our electricity network. Cad-Capture did an excellent job and the scanning project has proved to be a great success".

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