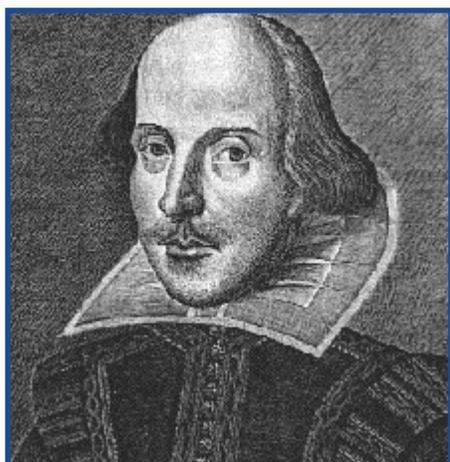


## To Scan or Not to Scan?-That was the Question

*The county of Warwickshire, centrally located in England, has a number of claims to fame, not least of which is that it includes the town of Stratford-on-Avon, the birthplace of William Shakespeare.*



*Established over a 1000 years ago, Warwick, the administrative capital of Warwickshire, has a proud history and is the location of the impressive Warwick Castle. Although surrounded by these famous reminders of their heritage, Warwickshire County Council, the Local Authority which has the responsibility for administering the County, has had to employ the most modern of technology to help it fulfil its tasks and responsibilities.*

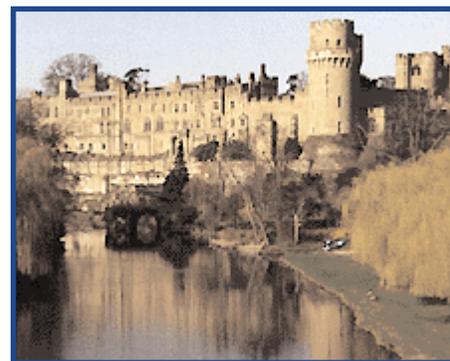
Within the County Council, the Property Services Department (PSD) has the responsibility of being `landlord` for the efficient management of the council land and property assets. And an impressive responsibility it is too! The PSD owns over 1000 properties, ranging from schools, fire-stations and farms through to even a 17th century windmill. The total insurance value of all these properties is in excess of \$700 million.

Inevitably this many properties has, over the years, generated a large number of drawings, plans and maps. It was with the management of this significant legacy drawing problem in mind, that the Authority set up a task force to tackle these issues as far back as 1993.

Owen David, a Senior Analyst Programmer and Team Leader, within the PSD, was part of the original project team, and he picks up the story at that point, "Before 1993, like most Authorities, we had been using manual draughting techniques to create and maintain the majority of our drawings. However, there were a number of significant problems with these "legacy drawings"; for instance, their updating, the storage space they were taking up, the fact that the archive was not all in one location and the inevitable deterioration of drawings over time." Mr David went on, "With these issues as priorities, we researched the marketplace and found that GTXRaster® CAD

provided us with the sort of functionality we needed, particularly the image clean-up and hybrid (i.e. raster & vector) editing tools, to cope with keeping our legacy archive up to date. An added bonus was the fact that training for our AutoCAD staff to use the GTXRaster CAD effectively was minimal."

Initially the PSD employed the services of a scanning bureau, the Blackburn based Cad-Capture, to help them scan in approximately 2,500 building, architectural, electrical, mechanical and other drawings. Typically when the PSD received the files back from scanning, they would use GTXRaster CAD to clean up the images using the intelligent cropping, deskewing and de-speckling tools. If it was necessary to make any updates or corrections, full use would be



made of the Intelligent Object Picking™ and other intelligent raster editing commands within GTXRaster CAD that allow users to work with raster data with the ease that they may have become used to when working with vector data.

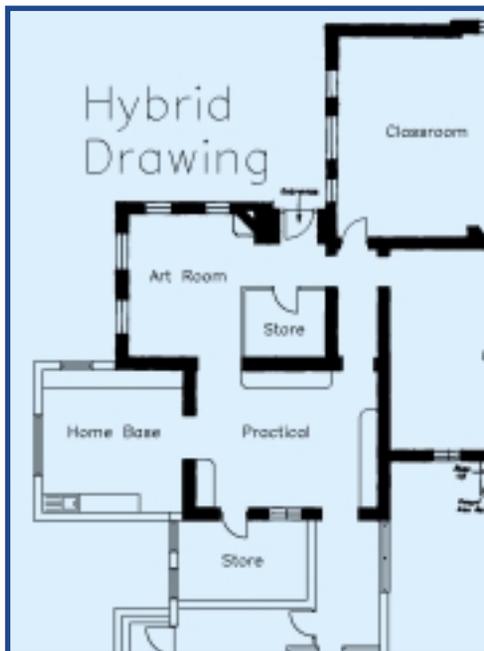
Mr David went on to comment, "One particularly important and useful method we have adopted is to replace the original drawing borders with a corrected, up to date version. This task is made easy by the tight integration between GTXRaster CAD and AutoCAD®. A border is designed and prepared in AutoCAD. It is then easy for it to be `dropped` on to the cleaned-up, updated scan file and rasterized in GTXRaster CAD". The resulting updated file is then available for distributing to 150 or so users over the network who can view and plot on demand. These users include those at both the Warwick and Nuneaton locations.

Since the original project, the number of drawings that have been scanned has grown to exceed 16,000. The number of AutoCAD and GTXRaster CAD/PLUS seats has increased to eight and the system now includes an in-house Océ 9400 scanning and plotting system. Over the years, the PSD have developed an effective and clever database system, based on FoxPro, which enables their users to easily find an existing drawing and access it quickly, providing they have the authority so to do.

Commenting on one of the uses to which the system is regularly put, Mr David said, "The system has proved to be invaluable to our in-house architects for doing "extension" work. They can quickly access the original building plan, which has been scanned-in. Then working in the AutoCAD /GTXRaster CAD `hybrid` environment they can easily add in any new extension work. They can rasterize the final design, prior to distributing it to

colleagues for their comments and feedback and/or for plotting out, as required. Compared with the previous ways in which this type of job was being done, we estimate that we have made a five fold time saving".

Today, the PSD are justifiably proud of their integrated drawing management and editing system. As Mr David reflected, "We were one of the first Local Authorities in the country to take on the



challenge of our legacy paper drawing archives. We have tried to use "best-in-class" products and, we have integrated them together to provide a very cost effective and efficient solution to our customers".

When it comes to plans for the future of their system, the PSD are working with Dave Moore and his team at CADSpec, the Worcester based hardware and software supplier and integrator. Together they are involved in discussing the upgrades that will ensure that full use is made of the latest AutoCAD and GTX software versions and other technological developments.

In the `Modernising Government White Paper` (March 1999), all UK Government and Local Government organisations were set a target to manage their records electronically by 2004. Due to the foresight of the PSD and their implementation of a tightly integrated and effective system, of which GTXRaster CAD is a vital part, Warwickshire County Council should be in the fortunate position of being able to meet this national target with ease. If they do perhaps it could be said that for Warwickshire, paper drawings and documents will have become `Much Ado about Nothing` by then.

Find out more by visiting:-

[www.warwickshire.gov.uk](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk)

[www.cadspec.co.uk](http://www.cadspec.co.uk)

[www.cadcap.co.uk](http://www.cadcap.co.uk)

[www.gtx.com](http://www.gtx.com)



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**GTX Corporation Company Profile:**

*GTX Corporation is the leading supplier of scan-conversion and editing products that provide complete integration and interfacing between scanned drawing archives and Computer Aided Design/Drafting CAD systems.*

*GTX is a privately held corporation headquartered in Phoenix, Arizona with offices in Basingstoke, England and Taipei, Taiwan. GTX sells its products through a network of authorized distributors and resellers throughout the Americas, Europe, Asia, the Pacific Rim, the Middle East and Africa. The Company also licenses its technology to third-party CAD vendors for integration and sale under their own private label.*

*GTX technology brings intelligence to manually created drawings and allows companies to gain productivity and lower costs to effectively maintain, revise and store their engineering documents.*

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