



Inclusion Through Diversity

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Tompkins County Achieves National Recognition as Top Digital County

Tompkins County has been recognized as one of the nation's top digital counties by the Center for Digital Government and the National Association of Counties (NACo). The award identifies best technology practices among counties nationwide, recognizing leading examples of counties that use technology to improve services and boost efficiencies.

The top-ten ranking was based on the County's digital achievements in the categories of civic engagement; policy; operations; and technology and data. These achievements include innovative use of digital records scanning technology through an enterprise documents management system, a digital approach that saved the County \$5.5 million over a physical records facility.

Stephen Acquario, executive director of the New York State Association of Counties said, "Since the creation of our counties, the county clerk's office has been instrumental in maintaining the important records and history of our communities. More than 300 years later, that role remains critical for counties, but the technologies for keeping those records have changed. We applaud Tompkins County for embracing the digital technologies of the 21st Century in ways that are making the county more effective, efficient and transparent. The recognition by the National Association of Counties is well deserved. Tompkins County is a model that will be followed by other counties in New York and across the nation."

Managing records through the Laserfiche documents management system enabled the County to scan 9,000 boxes of records housed in its deteriorating Records Center, destroy the paper, and vacate the building, avoiding the planned cost of renovating or constructing a new building. The EDMS technology is now used to manage records and automate business processes in all 28 County departments, and the court system, as well as for 17 municipal partners through a shared services agreement—which includes the City of Ithaca and all of the county's Towns and Villages.

"We're thrilled to receive the national award, which in part recognizes the effort of Tompkins County to use 21st Century technology to provide better recordkeeping alternatives," said Michael Lane, Chair of the Tompkins County Legislature. "This initiative was spearheaded out of efforts in the Tompkins County Clerk's Office, led by Deputy Clerk Maureen Reynolds, working in cooperation with County's Information Technology department. We are particularly excited about how this program is being shared with other municipalities throughout the county in the spirit of true intermunicipal cooperation."

The County employs digital technology to improve relationships and efficiencies among County departments, as well as to enable law enforcement agencies to share important data and information to increase efficiencies and improve public safety. Civic engagement is fostered and encouraged by digital technologies including the County's online meeting portal, through which residents can access meeting schedules, agendas, minutes, and other materials, and view web-streams of live and past County Legislature meetings.

“It is an honor to be recognized as one of the national Digital Counties,” said County Information Technology Services Director Greg Potter, who accepted the award on the County’s behalf at the NACo annual conference this past weekend in New Orleans. “ITS and County Clerk’s staff deserve daily recognition for their diligent efforts and work. Receiving this award has meant a great deal to my staff and to Tompkins County.”

“This award is due to the collaborative efforts of our Information Technology Department, County Clerk's Office, other county departments and our local municipalities,” noted Deputy County Clerk Reynolds. “We have been fortunate to have municipal leaders who recognize that technology and collaboration through shared services agreements can save tax-payer money; and that by establishing relationships with our municipal partners, we will be able to cooperatively design other cost-saving technologies in the future.”

Tompkins County tied for sixth position in the up to 150,000 population category. More information on this year’s Digital Counties program may be found at <http://www.digitalcommunities.com/survey/counties/?year=2014>.

Contact: Deputy County Clerk Maureen Reynolds, 607-274-5442; Director of Information Technology Services, Greg Potter, 607-274-5417; Michael Lane, Chair of the Legislature, 274-5434, 844-8313, or 844-8440.

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