

Konica Minolta scanning capture solution streamlines student profile process for The Smith Family to keep students and sponsors connected



CHALLENGE

- Historic processes not equipped for future growth goals
- Student profile process was complicated, expensive, manual, and had compliance risks



SOLUTION

- Scanning capture solution
- Integration with Microsoft SharePoint



CUSTOMER BENEFITS

- Streamlined, automated document scanning
- Documents stored digitally and centrally, using metadata for easy access
- Improved compliance to meet government document requirements
- Cost, resource, and time savings
- Improved responsiveness to students, families, and sponsors



Industry:
Non-profit organisation

Location:
National

The Smith Family is the national children's education charity, providing young Australians from disadvantaged backgrounds with the extra tools and support they need to succeed at school, so they can create better futures for themselves. For 100 years,

The Smith Family has been tackling the problem of poverty, one child at a time. In 2020-21, almost 180,000 children and young people participated in Smith Family programs in 90 communities across Australia.

“Through automation, innovation, and a passion for the project, Konica Minolta has provided The Smith Family with the beginnings of a digital roadmap that fosters scalability throughout the student profile process and helps The Smith Family reach more children in need across Australia.”

AMANDA BEVAN
PROGRAM & SCHOLARSHIP ADMINISTRATION TEAM LEADER,
THE SMITH FAMILY



Challenge

The Smith Family’s ambition, outlined in its five-year strategy, is to increase the number of young Australians reached by its effective and evidence-based programs over the five years to 2022 by 30 per cent. However, historic processes, such as its student profile process, were not equipped to handle the growing volume of students.

As part of its flagship *Learning for Life* program, The Smith Family supports eligible students and provides them with a scholarship for a specified period. The student profile is a mandatory, two-page, handwritten document that students must complete each year. It provides a critical link between students and The Smith Family sponsors. Students return these documents to The Smith Family offices in Blacktown and Brisbane.

The student profile process has also grown over the years along with student numbers, involving various teams, business units, and external entities. However, the whole process was complicated, expensive, manual, and posed potential significant compliance risks.

The student profile process involved volunteers reviewing hard-copy documents and either manually scanning individual pages or outsourcing the task to an external entity. This was a time-consuming, costly process that would often result in lost or misplaced papers.

Furthermore, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns affected the process as volunteers were unable to work in offices to review physical papers. Some offices were also closed for longer periods of time due to being in pandemic hot spots, so a solution was needed quickly to be able to review and process these documents in a timely fashion.



The solution

The Smith Family approached Konica Minolta to review and analyse its processes. Konica Minolta and The Smith Family have a long-standing corporate social responsibility (CSR) partnership, which involves Konica Minolta subsidising printing costs, volunteering, and participating in activities such as virtual card writing. As part of this partnership, Konica Minolta ran workshops to analyse the business requirements and suggested a solution that could improve processes, help The Smith Family meet compliance requirements, and meet current and future demands.

David Heath, Corporate Partnership Manager, The Smith Family, said, “The Smith Family has a strong, all-round partnership with Konica Minolta. Konica Minolta offers valued expertise on equipment, software, and consulting experience. Immediately, the team at Konica Minolta jumped on board and were passionate to help, providing a fresh perspective on the situation and coming up with a creative solution.”

After conducting a series of fact-finding sessions with The Smith Family, Konica Minolta mapped out processes, systems, and requirements and identified areas for innovation and automation.

As part of phase one of the digital roadmap, Konica Minolta implemented a scanning capture solution that could scan up to 350 pages per minute in the Blacktown and Brisbane offices, which receives the cards and letters from students. It provides high-quality digital documents that are easily renamed and stored in Microsoft SharePoint and uses metadata to generate reports, create automated workflows, organise information through its lifecycle, and classify the information.

Amanda Bevan, Program & Scholarship Administration Team Leader, The Smith Family, said, “Innovation is part of The Smith Family’s goal for growth. The scanning capture solution from Konica Minolta leverages automation to help our teams manage the influx of paperwork. It easily and more conveniently digitises student profiles and saves them in Microsoft SharePoint to be simply accessed.”



Customer benefits

By automating the digitisation of student profiles, processing time has significantly decreased. This means that volunteers are spending less time doing administrative activities and more time focused on students, families, and sponsors.

Because documents are digitised and saved to the cloud, volunteers can review and assess student profiles remotely. This has helped the process continue throughout the disruptions caused by COVID-19 and has assisted in streamlining the three-step review process required for all documents. It has also contributed to reducing the costs of outsourcing document scanning, as now this can be completed in-house quickly and efficiently.

The solution also helps to meet compliance requirements by storing documents

digitally and securely. This helps The Smith Family meet government requirements following the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, which stipulates documents with any details on a child's welfare need to be stored for 50 years. The solution also helps to provide greater version and audit control, while keeping documents in a secure, central location.

Amanda Bevan said, "Since the implementation of the scanning capture solution from Konica Minolta it has streamlined the student profile process, making it easier and more efficient for volunteers to review, find, and access documents no matter where they are. This year, The Smith Family was able to deliver all student profiles to sponsors on time,

which previously we hadn't been able to guarantee.

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Let's talk

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Giving Shape to Ideas