

THE BUSINESS NEWS

Serving Brown, Calumet, Door, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Marinette, Oconto, Outagamie, Shawano & Winnebago counties

May 12, 2008

www.thebusinessnewsonline.com

Vol. 6, No. 1 \$1.00



Eric Haas stands in the data storage area of the A.R.M.S. complex. Data, including many types of tapes and hard drives, is stored here. The Business News photo by J.A. Robb

A.R.M.S. offers peace of mind

It helps companies protect, store, and retrieve vital data

By Betty Wall

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You might say that Eric Haas sells peace of mind. The president of Automated Records Management Systems Inc. (A.R.M.S.) said his company helps companies of all sizes protect, store, and retrieve data to keep their businesses running.

"We are a full service commercial records center," said Haas. "So, our business has a number of different sectors. As we say, we cover information management from inception through destruction."

A.R.M.S. was founded in 1983 by Haas's uncle, Michael Liebmann. The company was first housed in a warehouse on North Broadway in Green Bay. They moved to the current facilities at 1850 Enterprise Drive on De Pere's east side in 1996. Haas purchased the company in 2005.

The company has grown significantly during the past five years and Haas said they have seen a 50-percent increase during the past 24 months. A.R.M.S. covers a wide regional area of Northeastern and Central Wisconsin, the Fox Valley, and Upper Michigan. It has 24 employees, both full- and part-time, and is the largest full-service records center in the area.

Services include records information management, consulting, off-site media and records storage, e-Backup solutions, e-mail archiving, network storage, data protection, media rotation services, media and data vaulting, document imaging, confidential destruction of records and media, on-site shredding, scan-on-demand imaging, and

disaster recovery planning.

"Information services as a whole has changed a lot, especially in the past five years, with the advent of a lot of governmental regulations like HIPAA, Sarbanes Oxley, and numerous other Federal and State rules," Haas said.

"The government has required people to follow much more stringent guidelines as far as records management goes. The liability is much higher now for companies, whether they are small or large," Haas said.

"We store and manage documentation for corporations and companies off-site, starting on the hard copy records side, where we do active, semi-active, and archival files," Haas said. "We have a proprietary software package that is Web-based that our clients are able to go on and see what they have, where they have it, when it was last accessed, who from our company pulled it, and who put it away. Everything is bar code scanned. Clients can make requests online as well."

Haas said they work with all company sizes. "It doesn't make any difference if a company is small and has perhaps 15 boxes here, or a large corporation that has thousands upon thousands of file boxes. For some companies, we act as their actual file room on a daily basis, running back and forth with our couriers."

"Another portion of our business is document management or what most people know as scanning," Haas said. "Applications can be across the board. For example, we can act as an outsourcing agent for companies that already have document management. We have a particular software suite that enables us to go

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— Eric Haas, president of Automated Records Management Systems, De Pere

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back into over 190 other different types of document software that is out there. So, no matter what, we can index everything for our customers so things flow properly.”

Haas said A.R.M.S. can often save businesses money by handling certain processes for the company. "For example, with document management in accounts payable, we can act as a mailroom for them. Everything that is accounts payable gets imaged, and then, depending on how they want to find things, we will index the information accordingly. What does this do for a company? In some cases, we have seen larger companies where a bill has been touched 18 or 19 times after it comes into an office. If there are that many touches, think of how many people and how much wasted time that is. In some of the analyses that we've done, a company can

reassign three or four people because they have driven that much time out of it. It can be a major cost savings." According to A.R.M.S., it maintains the largest data vault in Northeast Wisconsin. The vault is poured concrete and has a national fire safety rating. It also has humidity and temperature controls, providing the ideal environment for storage of any type of magnetic media, microfiche, and microfilm.

"With another specified software system, we track people's back-ups. Our couriers go and facilitate the backup. Our clients can go online for all the information."

"So, we are a part of the disaster recovery business. We try to consult with customers to make sure they do system re-stores or trial re-stores on a regular basis, to make sure data is not corrupt within the system," said Haas.

"Our couriers run 365 days a year, 24 hours a day, so we are facilitating services for a lot of larger businesses that have data centers that are running all the time. We are their back-up center."

Haas said the company has increased its capabilities in recent years for document destruction. A.R.M.S. operates a mobile destruction truck for on-site shredding. They also handle destruction of hard drives and other types of electronic media. He said they offer de-gauzing, which uses a very powerful electronic magnet to scramble information on any type of magnetic media.

"Depending on the level of protection somebody needs, we will de-gauze first, and then we will destroy by shredding," he said. "We can also handle electronic destruction through a third party partner that actually pulverizes electronic equipment."