

# Department of Consumer Affairs vs. a major Retailer

*The State of New Jersey, Department of Consumer Affairs contracted NBS to process 1.8 million documents to be used in litigation support.*

## **Challenge:**

The Department of Consumer Affairs for The State of New Jersey was requested to investigate consumer complaints regarding questionable work being done at the Sears Roebuck & Company Automotive Centers. Sears allegedly was charging customers for 4-wheel alignments, when it was questionable if the vehicle could have a 4-wheel alignment preformed. In order to complete this investigation, Sears was ordered by the Court to turn over sales invoices from each of its New Jersey Auto Center stores. The invoices were photocopied, assigned a BATES number and grouped by this identification. It became apparent by the State that due to the sheer volume of the documents, over 1.8 million, that it would be impossible to accurately review each document for potential violations.

## **Solution:**

National Business Systems was called upon because of their experience in litigation support and their ability in dealing with large volumes of documents and presenting the findings in a timely manner. NBS's began the process by scanning in all 1.8 million documents. The procedure required NBS to create their own internal tracking so the documents could be batched into groups for scanning. The scanning process created images of the documents that were sent to NBS's various facilities for keying. The actual scanned documents were then stored in a secure section of the NBS warehouse. In order to save the State money from unneeded data capture, and to assure more accurate results, two Data Capture passes were created. Pass 1 was to capture basic information about the vehicle and the type of wheel alignment service preformed. When the Pass 1 was completed, a query was written to find all documents where a 4wheel alignment was charged to a vehicle that could not physically have had such an alignment. These images were grouped for Pass 2. Pass2 was far more detailed with 14 separate fields captured in order to give a more complete picture of potential violations. Once this information was collected, NBS was able to perform special queries to help in the analysis of the data and the final report was written for presentation to the Court.

## **Conclusion:**

NBS was able to offer the State of New Jersey, Division of Consumer Affairs a complete one-stop solution to their data management needs. Imaging the invoices allowed for detailed study of the captured information giving the State more time to present a thorough case.

