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iQ

THE R·I·M QUARTERLY

Professionals Australasia

INFORMATION GOVERNANCE: The term that captures it all

+ An interview with the national Information Commissioner

Change we must

Unlocking the value of information

Empowering your mobile workforce

iQ THE R·I·M QUARTERLY
Professionals Australasia

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David Pryde, Chairman of the Board, RIM Professionals Australasia

inForum on Information Governance: don't miss out!

As the final brush stokes of preparations are whipped and whisked in an air of anxious expectation and discerning eyes are cast in careful scrutiny of the near completed masterpiece, the question of most importance is this – will you be at the unveiling in the 'Centenary City' during those four wonderful days in September?

INFORUM 2013 – INFORMATION GOVERNANCE

It's not too late to join the celebrations, heralding this paradigm of risk management and good governance in the national capital of Australia in its centennial year. I'm a bit envious of our members from the ACT Branch who have been in 'party mode' all year and who will continue for the rest of it.

As an expatriate Canberran, I was fortunate to attend the last inForum held in the ACT in the first year that I was elected to the Board of Directors, about 10 years ago. It seems fitting and proper that as I approach the end of my time of service in that forum that once again Canberra is the host city.

In that time much has changed – our brand, our name, the people who I served with, standards, the Constitution, structures, rules, bylaws and even our association colours. But two things haven't changed since 1969 – our ideals and the reasons why we put so much energy into our education calendar providing events like inForum.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

We claim to be professionals! … We learned our skills and became qualified in them; we honed and developed them to the point of proficiency. Over time, experience as a practitioner has allowed us to cultivate and refine those skills and expand on them through continuous self-development. … But are we?

When the Association founders first met, their vision was so simple and uncomplicated. They wanted to attract like-minded records managers to events where:

- they could receive vocational training and education together
- more experienced members could mentor and pass on experience to new practitioners
- they could learn about the latest trends, ideas and technology
- they could see and touch the latest technology in one place
- they could meet in person to network and share problems and ideas.

The Records and Information Management Professionals Australasia convention is still driven by those goals even though we have expanded the community to include information professionals of all disciplines. At a time when the biggest opportunity / threat to good information governance is enterprise content management (ECM), it is time that we worked together to find solutions rather than work in siloed isolation.

The current collaboration between the Australian Society of Archivists and Records and Information Management Professionals Australasia in developing the 'Statement of Knowledge for the Archives, Records and Information Management Professions' is still a work in progress yet it is a shining example of how we can work through our differences by concentrating on our shared interests.

…improve your employment opportunities, by raising your base skills above those of others in the job market

The blockbuster records and information management convention of the year rolls around in a few weeks' time and I really don't want any of you to miss it. Information governance is the biggest talking point of the year with ECM platforms and we are laying it out like a buffet for your information.

I have provided you with five good reasons why you must not miss this event – all things that enhance your skills base, knowledge or career prospects in the future. I believe that skills and knowledge are a 'given' but what was the other thing? Career prospects?

Everything we do whether ad hoc or part of a planned CPD program is designed with just one aim. To improve your employment opportunities, by raising your base skills above those of others in the job market. That is why we also strive for qualifications from our professional members.

The Vendors Showcase (Trade Area) provides a 'one-stop shop' of cutting-edge services and technology under one roof. Even if you work in a perfect world and you don't need these things – don't we at least need to see what is on offer, and touch or play with the software in case we move to another job that is not as perfect as the last? For being armed with knowledge makes you more competitive in the marketplace and respects those providers for their time and support of our profession.

A conversation with a new friend met at inForum could be an introduction to a future employer/employee, business associate or the answer to your most nagging problem. You may even gain professional kudos by being the solution to another member's problems – but you have won a disciple for life.

Many of you do not receive the support that you deserve from your employers to attend these crucial core development opportunities and that is sad. We are striving to provide more resources to support your efforts in educating employers of the ROI of staff development but the struggle is slow.

There is only one thing sadder than witnessing our members being denied attendance at inForum and that is those who choose to deny themselves of the opportunity.

I look forward to seeing you all in Canberra!

David Pryde, MRIM

Kate Walker, Chief Executive Officer, RIM Professionals Australasia

Information governance: creating a competitive advantage

Gartner describes information governance as a framework for consistent and responsible creation, use and storage of information which: *"includes the processes, roles, standards and metrics that ensures the effective and efficient use of information in enabling an organisation to achieve its goals"*.

Companies are seeking better ways to ensure compliance with internal and external standards, whilst managers seek smarter ways to reduce operational costs without affecting results.

It has long been understood that information is the key driver in business process. Many managers realise that the richness of information is really the key differentiating factor for a competitive advantage and ensuring the company is accountable and in compliance.

If the information is not accessible nor able to be efficiently gathered for accountability and compliance requirements, then good information governance is not occurring. Moreover, if it isn't possible to determine if the costs of acquiring, storing and processing the information and the risks attendant in storing and processing it and translating it into business practices and good information governance practices will produce a return on investment, then too many unknowns are left unattended.

The volume of business information is growing at an amazing rate making it even harder to manage both information and its flow between business units and third parties. At the same time, more regulations and compliance laws place new demands.

Information governance is policy-based management of information designed to lower costs, reduce risks and ensure compliance with legal, regulatory standards, and/or corporate governance. It includes policies and technology to understand what information is at what point in its life cycle.

Information governance encompasses the people, practices and technology to proactively manage and take control of information. Through discussions and audits, it appears that around 80% of company information may be unstructured content with most of that unmanaged.

CREATING COMPLIANT DOCUMENTS

Governance starts with creation. Creating and assembling compliant documents is one of the first steps in governance. By ensuring that documents are created according to a set of defined rules, it becomes easier to do and ensure better managed information, from classification, to structuring, versioning, storing and retrieving.

The National Archives of Australia[1] state that the key information governance documents an organisation needs include the following:

- An information and records management framework which outlines the legal, regulatory and business context within which information and records are created, used and managed; it sets out guiding principles which reflect an approach and commitment to creating and managing information and records that meet your business needs

- An information and records management strategy that describes your agency's planned approach to information and records management to meet current and future organisational needs and regulatory requirements

The strategy sets out a plan for continual improvement. It describes what the agency aims to achieve in its information and records management and summarises the actions needed to achieve its aims in accordance with the principles and context outlined in the agency's framework. It assigns responsibility for the actions.

- An information and records management policy that provides direction and guidance to staff for creating, capturing and managing information and records to satisfy business, legal and stakeholder requirements, and assigns responsibilities across the agency.

An information and records management policy is consistent with, and based on, the principles, environment and directions described in the information and records management framework and strategy.

Many companies have adopted successful information governance initiatives and others have failed. Here are some common causes for breakdowns:

- Failure to take action
- Lack of responsibility for making it work
- Absence of data management capabilities
- Unwillingness to make decisions to drive progress
- Lack of enterprise focus on information governance goals

Many information governance initiatives suffer from a lack of scope and definition. They're simply too big and amorphous to ever get off the ground. To address this, insightful managers decided to start small, incremental programs. They also recognised the need for someone to 'own the data', leading to the creation of the data steward role. But coming up with a new name and role isn't enough. To give it teeth, the company needs to do the following:

- Define and formalise the data steward role
- Give the data steward authority to fix data
- Invest in the right tool sets to support real data management

These steps clarify the role for the data steward and show that the company understands the importance of its data and is embracing the concept at the executive level.

As noted, information governance efforts often are doomed because they are ill defined and not properly scoped. This has led to a 'bottom up' approach, where information governance starts with a small, controlled project that is the basis for ongoing activities and roles.

The ideal project should do the following:

- Solve an existing business problem(s)
- Have a clearly defined end state
- Help define delivery processes
- Be data enabled or data intensive
- Receive clear executive backing
- Be delivered in 90 days or less

A small project can establish important new information governance polices and prove that they can be successful. But beyond proving the initiative's viability, the small project lays the groundwork for repeatable processes that can be scaled up for subsequent projects.

A small project can establish important new information governance polices and prove that they can be successful

Some information governance activities can be automated and some can't. Transactional, repeatable tasks lend themselves well to automation. While investing in expensive tools for a single project may not seem sensible, productivity gains and economies of scale become evident with additional initiatives. In the end, better quality data helps people throughout the organisation make smarter business decisions faster.

There's no single recipe for success, but the following checklist can help your efforts to launch information governance initiatives:

- Define what information governance means for your company
- Design the process
- Choose a key initiative as a test case
- Define simple metrics that can be tracked and used for continuous improvement
- Align stakeholders at the outset
- Document what's different to illustrate process and data improvements
- Leverage your success

By starting with a small, controlled project, you can scope a finite, data-enabled business problem, formalise roles and processes to solve it, and enable better decision making based on sound, trusted information.

Kate Walker
FRIM MAICD AMIM, MBA, BSC (BAdm), AdvDipBus (Rkg), DipBus (Adm)

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1 http://www.naa.gov.au/records-management/strategic-information/information-governance/key-documents/index.aspx

WORLDWIDE NEWS

Recognising Victorian innovation in records management

One of this year's winners of the Sir Rupert Hamer Records Management Awards was Victoria University for its project 'Keeping Track of Social Media at Victoria University'.

Kirsten Wright from Victoria University (right) with Justine Heazlewood, Director of Public Record Office Victoria.

iQ published a report on the project in February this year entitled *Tweets, check-ins and status updates: keeping track of social media* at Victoria University by Kirsten Wright and Kathryn Crawford, who also presented on the subject at last year's inForum event in Melbourne

The Sir Rupert Hamer Records Management Awards were announced in May at a gala event in Parliament House. The Awards showcased projects highlighting the role of good recordkeeping and record keepers in capturing the history and culture of Victoria, and in ensuring government accountability.

Director of Public Record Office Victoria, Justine Heazlewood, said 2013's winners are notable for their innovative work in digital records management.

"Many outstanding projects from this year's winners and nominees highlight the role of digital records and processes, showing how Victorian Government agencies and community archives are leading innovation in digital records management," said Ms Heazlewood.

The Wannon Region Water Corporation also received recognition for its projects *Taking the risk out of records at Wannon Water* and *Wannon Water records transfer to Places of Deposit at Hamilton, Casterton and Warrnambool*. You can read more about Wannon Water's involvement in Information Awareness Month 2013 on page 35.

Named after former Victorian Premier and public records advocate, Sir Rupert Hamer, the awards have been offered by the Public Records Advisory Council (PRAC) and Public Record Office Victoria since 1998.

➲ For more information: http://prov.vic.gov.au/government/sir-rupert-hamer-awards

Survey highlights explosive growth of SharePoint content

Metalogix, the leading provider of content infrastructure software to improve the use and performance of enterprise content on Microsoft SharePoint, Exchange and Cloud platforms, has released survey findings that provide insight into the numerous SharePoint challenges faced by organisations including rapid content growth, cloud adoption and SharePoint migration.

Executed at the SharePoint Conference in Las Vegas late last year, over 100 SharePoint administrators and IT directors from large financial firms to government agencies participated.

The results of the survey show that SharePoint content continues to grow at explosive rates, with 50% of users having over a terabyte of content in their SharePoint environment and 15% responding they had more than 10 terabytes of content. In addition, the average SharePoint user surveyed has experienced nearly 75% content growth year-over-year.

The study showed that while 90% of respondents are on SharePoint 2010, nearly 40% are still operating SharePoint 2003 or SharePoint 2007 farms. In addition, the survey found that respondents were almost evenly split on the use of Office 365, with 55% of respondents electing to stay completely on-premises, while 45% plan to use Office 365 for all or some content. This could indicate that some adopters of on-premises technology could be too invested to attempt the move to Office 365.

With the introduction of SharePoint 2013, a significant number of respondents plan to upgrade, with over 60% planning to upgrade within the next year. Highlighting the growth of mobile devices in the enterprise, over 50% of respondents listed mobile device support as the feature they are most likely to deploy in SharePoint 2013. Additional features in SharePoint 2013 that users are likely to deploy include new community sites, new MySites and managed navigation based on metadata.

The survey also found interesting data points on the use of SharePoint itself, with respondents listing high-fidelity (maintaining metadata, permissions and versioning information) as the most important aspect of SharePoint migration, followed by pre-migration planning, no downtime and speed of moving content. The survey also showed that over 50% of users leverage another content repository along

⇛

with SharePoint, and their biggest challenge with the other repositories is the ability to migrate content to and from SharePoint.

"The hyper growth of enterprise content farms combined with the introduction of SharePoint 2013 provided the unique opportunity to understand the needs of the SharePoint community," said Steven Murphy, CEO, Metalogix. "While many in the community acknowledge that content is growing rapidly, the rate of growth identified in this survey is beyond expectations and highlights the infrastructure management issues facing IT. From migrating and upgrading to the latest version of SharePoint to synchronizing content across multiple locations and evaluating opportunities within the cloud, organizations will continue to face challenges improving cost effective knowledge sharing and collaboration, unless they implement the processes and infrastructure necessary to proactively manage the growth of their content."

➲ For more information: www.metalogix.com/2013SharePointSurvey

NHS watchdog agency accused of cover-up in death scandal

Britain's top law enforcer, the London Metropolitan Police, has been called in to investigate allegations that a British government National Health Service (NHS) watchdog agency concealed damning emails and deleted a critical report on its failures in a maternity unit deaths scandal.

London-based media earlier reported that the former chief executive and other top officials of the agency, the Care Quality Commission (CQC), discussed deletion of the report before it was erased. Then, last month, the national *Daily Telegraph* reported that commission managers concealed emails from investigators into infant deaths at hospitals of the Morecambe Bay Foundation Trust in North West England.

Local Member of Parliament, Mr John Woodcock, who alerted the police, told the *Telegraph*: "If the health watchdog gave false information to the independent inquiry that prevented damning emails coming to light, those responsible could be criminally liable. The new managers at the CQC say they want to be more open but this latest scandal happened on their watch. They have serious questions to answer."

The latest allegations came within days of revelation by another MP that CQC was spending more than £750,000 (NZ$1.5m) annually on spin doctors, its 11-strong "public affairs team'. MP Ms Charlotte Leslie, a Government member of a Parliamentary health select committee, was quoted saying: "There is one very simple way for the CQC to get a good reputation, that's to do its job of protecting patients. The CQC should spend less time polishing its reputation and more time highlighting the awful things in hospitals. They need to sort this out."

Britain's National Health Service has been 'celebrating' its 65th anniversary this year amid mounting criticism and dispute over management efficiency and medical care. A *Guardian* newspaper 'leadership summit' in May heard King's Fund thinktank Director Leadership Development, Ms Nicola Hartley, announce that in a recent survey of 900 NHS professionals: "We found that 40% thought that the quality of leadership in the NHS as a whole was poor or very poor, in contrast with 11% who were critical of their own service or team."

New report released: Digital Forensics and Preservation

The Digital Preservation Coalition is delighted to announce the release of *Digital Forensics and Preservation* by Jeremy Leighton John of the British Library – the latest in its popular Technology Watch Report series.

"Digital forensics is associated in many people's minds primarily with criminal investigations," explained the author, "but forensic methods have emerged as an essential source of tools and approaches for digital preservation, specifically for protecting and investigating evidence from the past."

"There are three basic principles in digital forensics: that the evidence is acquired without altering it; that this is demonstrably so; and that analysis is conducted in an accountable and repeatable way. Digital forensic processes, hardware and software have been designed to ensure compliance with these requirements."

"Forensic technologies allow archivists and curators to identify confidential content, establish a proper chain of custody, transfer data without changing it and detect forgeries and lost items. They can extract metadata and content, enable efficient indexing and searching, and facilitate the management of access."

Cal Lee from the University of North Carolina, an authority on applying digital forensics to archival collections welcomed the report.

"Those who know Jeremy Leighton John's work will not be surprised that he provides a great deal of food for thought in this report. Jeremy has been a pioneer in the application of digital forensics to archival collections, and he has thought deeply about the implications of these activities."

The report will be especially useful to those collecting and managing personal digital archives. The diversity of objects and intricacy of their relationships make personal digital archives highly complex. Almost anything may appear in such an archive, from poet's drafts, astronomer's datasets, digital workings of mathematicians, and notes of political reformers. With their diverse content, organisation and ancestry, personal digital archives are the epitome of unstructured information and serve as a test bed for refining preservation techniques more generally.

This is the fourth report in the DPC Technology Watch Series to have been commissioned with Charles Beagrie Ltd as series editors: recent titles have included *Preserving Email, Preserving Digital Sound and Vision*, and *IPR for Digital Preservation*.

➲ DPC Technology Watch Reports are available online: www.dpconline.org/publications/technology-watch-reports

Government deal to restore NZ film holdings

The New Zealand Government has struck a big commercial deal with international film producer Sir Peter Jackson (*Lord of the Rings, The Hobbit*) to take over the last 35mm cinema film laboratory in Australasia. It had been threatened with closure since April.

As part of the deal, Archives New Zealand will start work immediately there on digital restoration of its holdings of historic, perishable New Zealand cine films, including the country's first royal visit in 1901, unique Napier images before and after the Hawke's Bay 1931 killer earthquake and of a deadly 1947 Christchurch department store.

Neither the laboratory, Park Street Post, in Wellington, nor Archives NZ would reveal the cost of the deal, but media reports said it was part of a NZ$2.8 dollar deal to restore much of NZ film holdings over the next five years.

Chief Archivist Greg Goulding labelled the price a "nominal sum" and said the archives would fast-track its mission to convert all its films to more durable, polyester stock. He remarked: "We didn't have to think too long and too hard before we realised we should do this. [These films] are a really important part of New Zealand's culture, we can't let them disintegrate and disappear." Archives would consider opening the laboratory for commercial film-makers to process celluloid film in the future, he said.


Greg Goulding

After preservation, the digitised films may be uploaded to the Archives YouTube channel. The laboratory was established in 1941 as part of the NZ government National Film Unit and was bought by the Jackson company 14 years ago.

Recall to become new company

Brambles has announced plans to separate its Recall information management business and establish a new company listed on the ASX.

Brambles had previously attempted to sell the business in 2012 but were unable to locate a buyer. Shareholders of Brambles will vote on the proposal late in 2013 with the intention to establish the new business in early 2014.

Half of companies have lost a device with important data

Research conducted by Varonis a provider of data governance software, has found that half of companies have lost a device with important company data on it, causing security implications for over a fifth of organisations.

Further, 57% of employees believe that BYOD (bring your own device) puts their personal data at risk as well. Despite these concerns, the study also revealed that 86% of the workforce are obsessed with their devices.

According to the findings, almost three quarters of employees are now allowed to access company data from their personal devices. In fact, regardless of whether they were in a BYOD-approved environment or not, employees equally appear to be device obsessed – 86% of employees use their devices for work all day and night, with 44% doing so even during meals. Additionally, 20% of respondents consider themselves 'border-line workaholic', 15% bring their devices on vacation, and 7% claim that their work and home lives are one.

➲ To download the full BYOD research report, visit hub.varonis.com/BYOD-report

CONTACT US ✉ If you have any news stories for *iQ*, please contact editor.iq@rimpa.com.au

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

So how can executive leadership use psychology to communicate to an organisation that corporate records management is now a priority?

By Craig Grimestad

What? You're saying executive leadership needs to use psychology to implement a successful record information management (RIM) program? I thought executive leadership says what to do and the organisation just needs to do it. No? The psychology part comes in how to best communicate this to your organisation. The communications – (words and actions) need to be crystal clear and unmistakable – like a bugle's call to action, not a time for a symphony or a jazz band. Words *and actions* need to consistently convey the same message. It's not what you say… it's what you do.

So how does an executive who gets it (that records are a corporate asset – see 'The psychology of records management: the foundation' in *iQ*, February 2013) clearly communicate that corporate records management is now a corporate priority that is to be accomplished by full cooperation and participation by the entire workforce – understanding that anything less than full compliance causes unknown and unacceptable risk to the company.

There are numerous ways to provide a clear message of support and encouragement from leadership. If your company is transitioning its RIM program from a focus on storage facilitation to a records governance focus – this is a big change. For the executive who wants to provide leadership, individual situations and circumstances will determine the specific communications and actions. However, here are some options to consider:

- **Finance the RIM full compliance project** – Funding a corporate mandate is one of the strongest signals that can be sent. Providing resources to accomplish an objective garners support and leaves little room for lack of accomplishment.
- **Be a spokesperson** – Provide introductory and regular communications supporting the program, explaining its goals, reporting on progress, and activities remaining.
- **Be an advocate** – Explain why it makes sense and is of value to the company.
- **Be a cheerleader** – Acknowledge and recognise those individuals and areas that have been successful in embracing and complying with the RIM requirements.
- **Lead by example** – Visibly embrace and comply with the RIM requirements in your area of direct control.
- **Assign respected individuals** – Fill positions of responsibility (from 'responsible executive' and records manager to department coordinators) with individuals who are known and respected for their capabilities and accomplishments. Include 'up and comers' (excellent opportunity to learn operations and develop leadership skills with minimal risk).
- **Participate in the RIM program** – Learn the details of the RIM program (not difficult) and consider becoming an instructor – perhaps for your direct reports?

With too much to do, and not enough time or budget to accomplish it all, employees try to determine what is really important to their leadership and then align their time and budgets with those priorities.

I digress – I recall a time some years ago when our division got a new executive vice-president as the CEO. This vice-president was a little different than his predecessors as he favoured cardigan sweaters rather than suits or sport jackets. It was interesting (and a bit amusing) to observe how members of his staff (and then their staffs) over time (never been seen in sweaters) also started sporting cardigan sweaters!

An executive who embraces, advocates, and 'wears' the new RIM fabric is a tremendous advantage for the RIM project and the subsequent ongoing compliance. For that company, it is a key success factor. ❖

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Craig Grimestad is a senior consultant with Iron Mountain Consulting. His specialty is designing RIM core components with a sub-specialty for RIM auditing. Craig holds a Masters of Science degree in Engineering and was the records manager for the Electro-Motive Division of General Motors where he participated in the development of the GM Corporate RIM program, and implemented and managed Electro-Motive Division's RIM program. This article was first published at http://blog.ironmountain.com/author/cgrimestad/

An interview with

Australia's first national Information Commissioner


Prof John McMillan

In August 2010, *iQ* interviewed Prof John McMillan, Australia's first national Information Commissioner about his new role and the role of the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) in regulating government information. Three years on, we check in to see how it's going.

iQ: **You were appointed Australia's first national Information Commissioner in 2010. How do you see your role has affected information management throughout the Australian public service?**

JM: There is strong recognition across government of the OAIC's key messages. One is that privacy and freedom of information are compatible objectives that must be balanced in a broader setting of responsible information management. Another message is that we must value and manage government information as a national resource to be shared with business and the community. In short, it is better described as 'public sector information'.

A new challenge facing Australian government is to recognise that we are behind some other countries in embracing an open data culture that is linked to innovation, economic growth and community participation in government.

iQ: **The FOI reform package has been the most significant reform of Australian administrative law in over 20 years, and the Federal Government claimed it would transform information management in Australian government. Has this been the case in your opinion?**

JM: On balance, the FOI Act is working far better as a result of the 2010 reforms. Access to information issues have

greater prominence in government. FOI documents are routinely published on disclosure logs. There is frequent media reporting based on FOI releases. Members of the public find it much easier to make requests and to test their concerns through the OAIC's independent complaint and review processes. And there is greater consistency across government in FOI handling.

There is nevertheless room for improvement in agency performance. Three common complaints are delay in FOI processing; poor communication with applicants in revising large and complex requests; and reluctance to release documents that might cause political discomfort.

The 2010 reforms have also thrown up issues that need attention. The removal of the FOI application fee and the simplification of FOI request processes mean that routine information requests are often framed unnecessarily as FOI requests. There is also over-use of the FOI Act by some requesters. The resource pressure on government agencies has been increasing at a difficult time for many agencies.

Agencies must protect personal information while also being transparent and proactive in releasing information. Balancing those demands should be thought of as a unified challenge, rather than competing tensions.

***iQ:* What are the highlights in policy reforms that you have seen over the last 3 years?**

JM: Effective information management poses new challenges for government in a digital age. More data is being collected and managed; there are heightened concerns about privacy protection and information security; and strong pressures are felt for more open government and information sharing.

The OAIC is directly involved in meeting two of those challenges. We are responsible for implementing significant changes to the *Privacy Act* that commence in March 2014. A central feature is the new Australian Privacy Principles that will apply uniformly to government and business.

The OAIC has also published the *Principles on open public sector information* to outline key measures agencies must put in place. Foremost is Principle 1 – that open access to information must be the default position in government. Interestingly, the Open PSI Principles are very similar to the Open Data Charter adopted by the G8 nations in June.

The OAIC also takes an active interest in information policy reforms being led by other agencies – such as the Digital Transition Strategy, led by the Archives Office; the Big Data Strategy, led by AGIMO; the Digital Economy reforms, led by the Department of Broadband; and joining the international Open Government Partnership, led by the Attorney-General's Department.

***iQ:* The FOI Act now conveys a stronger message that government agencies should pro-actively publish information. You are required by the FOI Act, in the first five years of your office, to review how each of more than 200 government agencies are complying with the publication scheme. How is that going?**

JM: The OAIC is pleased that most government agencies adopted our advice on publishing a plan on how they would implement the new Information Publication Scheme (IPS). Pleasingly, many agencies publish on their website homepage the IPS and Disclosure Log icons developed by the OAIC. This makes it easier for people to find what they're looking for across government websites.

In 2012, 191 agencies voluntarily participated in an OAIC survey on how they were managing and publishing public sector information. The results are encouraging. Over 85% of agencies publish the required categories of information on their websites; 94% publish operational information that provides guidance on how decisions are made that affect members of the public; and 93% have assigned responsibility for IPS compliance to a senior agency officer.

***iQ:* One objective of your role was to remove barriers that impede the free flow of information from government to the community – for the public service mindset to change from 'information control' to 'information sharing'. Is that being achieved?**

JM: The OAIC recently published a report based on the 2012 survey, *Open public sector information – from principles to practice*. The report found that government agencies are actively embracing an open access and proactive disclosure culture, but policy challenges and practical obstacles must be tackled if government information is to be readily discoverable, accessible and reusable.

Among the changes needed are more active sponsorship of this philosophy by agency leaders; re-design of existing systems for record keeping, information governance and user consultation; improved technical awareness within agencies about attaching metadata, improving accessibility and adopting open and standards-based formats; and revising the open access licensing guidelines.

The OAIC also urges agencies to publish arrangements for 'administrative access'. That is, agencies should have clear procedures that enable people to obtain information without having to use the more formal processes of the FOI Act that still require a request for a 'document'.

***iQ:* Have you been given sufficient resources to complete the task? If not, what extra resources will you require?**

JM: I have publicly aired my concern that the OAIC's resources have been diminishing due to the efficiency dividend and other pressures, while our workload has been increasing.

We are receiving an annual increase of between 10-15% in privacy complaints and FOI complaints and review applications. We will also have to publish more than 50 guideline publications for the extensive privacy reforms that are soon to commence.

One casualty of these workload pressures is that we have suspended our program for monitoring and surveying agency compliance with the Information Publication Scheme requirements. We are also unable to do as many privacy audits as we would like.

***iQ:* In your opinion, are your powers adequate? If not, how should your powers be strengthened and to what end?**

JM: In relation to FOI, the OAIC Commissioners can undertake merit review of an agency's or minister's decision that a document is exempt. That is, we can override that decision and require that a non-exempt document be released. We also have effective powers to require answers and evidence from agencies.

However, the FOI Act framework is a bit rigid and I would like more flexibility as to how we go about reviewing and deciding cases and remitting them to agencies for reconsideration. Our proposals for reform are under consideration by government.

In relation to privacy, the OAIC's investigation and monitoring powers are greatly extended by the reforms that commence in 2014. The new powers enable a Commissioner to conduct privacy performance assessments of government and business organisations; accept undertakings for remedying privacy breaches; and to approach a court for a civil penalty order when an undertaking is breached.

***iQ:* Do you see any inherent conflict between FOI (release of information) and Privacy (restrictions on release of information), and if so, are combined FOI and Privacy offices / commissions a good idea?**

JM: A great strength of the Australian model is that we have combined privacy, FOI and information policy in a single scheme. Agencies must protect personal information while also being transparent and proactive in releasing information. Balancing those demands should be thought of as a unified challenge, rather than competing tensions.

***iQ:* How will the reforms to the federal Privacy Act that commence in March next year improve privacy protection in Australia?**

JM: A single set of harmonised Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) will apply to businesses and federal government agencies.

The APPs impose a clear obligation on those entities to have a Privacy Policy that clearly states how they handle personal information, whether they are likely to send information overseas and how to complain about a privacy breach. There are new rules on how entities can use personal information, people can opt out of direct marketing, obtain access upon request, seek correction of inaccurate information, for protecting information that is transferred overseas, and on credit reporting.

Overall, the privacy reforms will ensure that individuals can be far better informed about how their personal information is handled, and make choices based upon that knowledge. The new enforcement powers for the OAIC and the harsher penalties for privacy breaches also make the privacy framework more rigorous.

***iQ:* Thank you, Professor. We look forward to hearing you speak at inForum.** ❖

ABOUT THE AUSTRALIAN INFORMATION COMMISSIONER

Prof John McMillan AO was appointed Australian Information Commissioner in November 2010 to head a new office responsible for freedom of information, privacy protection and advice to government on information management policy.

John was formerly the Commonwealth Ombudsman from 2003–2010 and the Integrity Commissioner (Acting) for the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity in 2007. He is an Emeritus Professor of the Australian National University. He is co-author of a leading student text, *Control of Government Action*.

In the 1970s, John was a founding member of the Freedom of Information Campaign Committee, which led the public campaign for enactment of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*. He is a National Fellow of the Institute of Public Administration Australia, a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Law and former President of the Australian Institute of Administrative Law.

EMPOWERING YOUR MOBILE WORKFORCE

Crafting the right information governance plan that serves to protect enterprise assets while still allowing the flexibility that makes mobile strategies so effective is imperative.

By **Joe Hewitson**

Today's workforce is equipped with marvelously advanced mobile technology that enables them to be more productive without sacrificing flexibility. However, any great technological advancement comes with inherent undesired side effects, and this recent mobile movement is no exception. For this reason, it's imperative that we develop well-structured information governance policies that serve to protect enterprise assets while still allowing the flexibility that makes mobile strategies so effective.

THE IMPORTANCE OF MOBILE GOVERNANCE

How does one go about conjuring this perfect policy that both protects and enables? Well, truth be told, you're going to have to make some compromises when developing an information governance plan for your needs. For example, the biggest concern for many enterprises comes with figuring out how to prevent users from putting unnecessary data on their mobile devices. The fear lies in potentially catastrophic security issues, should the device fall into the wrong hands.

If you place too many restrictions on mobile data, you risk stenting productivity. On the other hand, if your mobile data rules are too relaxed, you risk severe security issues. It's important to avoid getting carried away with these compromises and straying too far from the core purpose of information governance. After all, an information governance policy should provide a focused strategy, implementable standards and effective tools to enable your teams to unlock the technology's full potential. Enterprises across the board are in need of this standards-based governance to provide a focus to the chaos that often permeates mobile infrastructure.

Fortunately, there are some methods to empower your mobile deployments and govern mobile information at the same time. The first way you might go about employing an information governance policy is to provide adequate training on mobile devices. While adding more training for your

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workforce will likely warrant a few eye rolls, the simple fact is that arming your staff with actionable knowledge on expected mobile device use is the first – and often times best – defense against future issues.

Solid training gives your team the tools to use their mobile devices (and the data stored within) effectively, but by taking away the ability to step outside the rules of your governance plan, 'accidental' misuses can be all but eliminated. When using mobile technology's best friend – the cloud – sensitive data is immediately accessible yet kept from the wandering storage of mobile devices. This act of working with data from mobile devices using virtualisation and cloud services provides a digital barrier that naturally enforces your information governance policy.

PRESENT STATE OF GOVERNANCE STRATEGIES

This begs a question: what are you doing to govern your mobile workforce? That can be a hard question to answer, and as a recent Gartner[1] report shows, you're not alone if you struggle to come up with a plan that's actionable and effective. One of the biggest issues plaguing current enterprise mobile deployments is an isolationist perspective.

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The desire to deploy mobile solutions that are specific to each area of the business often leads to a fragmented mobile environment that's difficult to effectively govern. Compartmentalising also conflicts with the very mobile nature of technology that allows it to be used in a variety of roles and environments simultaneously. However, utilising the methods above, a broad, overarching information governance strategy can be effectively implemented.

NOW'S THE TIME TO TAKE ACTION

Information governance will continue to grow in importance as mobile infrastructure takes center stage in the business world. After all, a recent survey[2] of small- and medium-size businesses shows that 78% of mobile devices are used to access work-related information. With that said, you should begin putting careful thought into a mobile policy that's strong enough to enforce protection of the critical flow of business, yet flexible enough to enable the power of mobility across all business arenas.

By focusing on all areas of your organisation that are part of a mobile device strategy, and understanding the dynamic relationships weaving them together, you'll no doubt begin to see how to craft the right information governance plan that suits your needs. ❖

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Information governance: the term that captures it all

This article looks at the governance of critical aspects of records and information management (including electronic records management), information life-cycle management and data management and the term that seems to capture it all.

By **Susan Goodman**

There is obvious consensus that to effectively manage a firm's information, a very broad-based approach must be taken. Information governance must include all media, all repositories/locations, all types of data, etc. I have always advocated and practiced a very comprehensive approach toward records and information management (RIM) that includes the governance of all data and information in the organisation.

Data under management essentially includes it all – ranging from long-term critical digital assets to ephemeral/transitory data that should be disposed after only a brief period (or not retained at all – such as text messages for many organisations). The whole spectrum of data is potentially discoverable, it all costs (potentially enormous sums) of money to manage, and value can only be derived (return on investment of information assets) if people know that the information exists, is accessible to them and is in usable form (eg, in reusable formats for secondary purposes when needed).

Structured (eg, content in databases) and unstructured data (eg, MS office documents, text messages) are in scope in the electronic records world. Not all data has equal value – but all data must be evaluated for its value (or lack thereof) and retained, disposed and/or protected according to that assessment.

Information governance is fast emerging as the best term to use to describe this and the word 'data' is being used more and more interchangeably with the word 'records'.

Key components and tenets of information life-cycle management apply to information governance/electronic records management. All of these remain important in the information governance arena. (I'm going to use data, information and records interchangeably here).

1 Creation or collection of needed data (content, structure, context) in needed formats. This includes system and records specific metadata (see guidance/defacto standards like MoReq and Dod5015.2 and other sources for examples of electronic records metadata).

2 Retention of information in a manner that ensures 'trustworthy' records and record-keeping systems. Ensuring trustworthiness is the *only* way that an organisation can to truly become 'electronic' or 'digital' – because it needs to ensure that its electronic records/data will be acceptable to regulators and admissible in court.

UETA and the E-Signature Act in the United States have established the equivalency of electronic records and signatures and physical records and 'wet' signatures if the electronic records are reliable and there is no other law requiring a different format. Requirements for trustworthiness can be found in ISO15489, Rules of Evidence, etc. and relate to requirements such as access controls/protection, unalterablity, integrity, authenticity, etc.

3 Efficient retrieval/usability. Retrieval includes, but is not limited to, the use of metadata (information about information), key words, crawler technology in a manner that will enable quick retrieval of needed information (with a minimum of 'false hits'). A system is only valuable if intended users are able to perform intended activities in a manner that is relatively easy to use.

4 Distribution and use of information in a manner that complies with all (sometimes competing) requirements for that data/information. For example, marketing and privacy requirements are sometimes competing priorities in firms that must both be satisfied.

5 Retention of records/data for necessary time periods to satisfy legal/regulatory requirements and considerations and business needs (documented in retention schedules/policies).

6 Placement, management and release of legal holds (ie, ability to place legal holds, suspending disposition when data is needed for litigation; to broaden or narrow the scope of the legal hold; release legal holds by matter, in a manner that allows records/data to re-enter the disposition stream).

7 Defensible/responsible data disposition when retention periods are met and the records are not needed for litigation or other legitimate 'holds', in a manner that obliterates the data. Firms today have a significant (and growing) need to dispose of huge volumes of data that are not needed (including 'junk', duplicates, etc). This is because it is expensive to manage that data and search through it/ potentially produce it during litigation) – as aptly stated by John Mancini, AIIM Executive Director.

Firms today have a significant (and growing) need to dispose of huge volumes of data that are not needed

8 Protection of long-term data (eg, records that are archival due to their evidentiary and/or historical value) that are needed for the life of the corporation – often requiring migration to new platforms; ensuring that media does not become obsolete, etc.

9 Application of all requirements for appropriately managing and protecting information as dictated by the following requirements/considerations: privacy, cross-border/in-country global requirements, information/data security, back-up/ replication for business continuity purposes, contracts (eg, to retain specific data on a separate server), etc.

Additionally, the following infrastructure elements, among others, are needed for broad-scoped information governance:

- Dedicated staff and sufficient budget
- Charter and governance structure (eg, RIM advisory committees, information governance oversight committee, or equivalent with key stakeholders – legal, compliance, information technology (IT), risk, finance, privacy, quality, business representatives, etc.
- Records retention schedule – covering all documented information content, described in 'functional' buckets
- Data mapping – identifying content in specific systems/repositories and mapping to retention schedule
- Business unit management level and administrative support level liaisons
- Policies, standards and procedures based on legal and business requirements, standards, industry best practices, etc
- Enabling tools (eg, ECM, DM, ERM software)
- Reporting, monitoring and audit

The information governance field is multi-disciplinary, requiring the involvement of and collaboration with a broad range of internal (and, as applicable, external) stakeholders. Buy-in of key internal stakeholders (eg, senior management) – as we always say – is critical.

All of the components above – and several additional ones – continue to be critical aspects of records and information management (including electronic records management), information governance, information life-cycle management and data management. The term 'information governance' – does seem to be the high-level umbrella term that captures it all. ❖

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Change we must

Information governance programs enable organisations to maximise the value of enterprise information while minimising cost and risk. In order to realise this value, employees and business applications require simple, secure, and rapid access to content – regardless of source, format, platform or storage media. This article outlines why organisations must embrace information governance and outlines steps to shift the organisation to an 'Information Governance as a Service' model.

By **Tamir Sigal**

Today's business world is moving fast. Thanks to new technologies and fierce competition, employees are more empowered today than they were five years ago. The current worker has turned to an array of technologies to achieve objectives – tablets, cloud applications, smart phones, and even personal applications installed on home computers.

Because of these technologies, The Gartner Group predicts information will grow 40% to 60% a year – an astonishing and scary rate. Information today is a highly volatile mixture: part priceless business value, part unknown business risk. The value comes from information relating to a company's intellectual property or competitive advantage. The risk lies in content of unknown or zero business value 'lying around', unmanaged, retained far beyond mandatory retention periods, and potentially subject to discovery in the event of an unforeseen legal proceeding.

Companies rely on information governance to mitigate this risk, particularly since a number of high-profile cases have proven information mismanagement costly in terms of fines, brand reputation and outrageous legal fees. However, information is an asset that fuels business growth – helping to discover buying patterns, drive product innovations, and uncover new opportunities. The challenge for many organisations is to find a balance between the risk that information incurs and the value it provides.

This is a vexing challenge because unlike many initiatives in the enterprise, governance remains a complex and siloed effort, understood only in the shadowy realm of corporate counsel and records management, and at best sparsely implemented across the company. The current approach to address the information management challenge relies on 'siloed governance' – individually defining and hardwiring policy to the repository where the content physically resides. For example, customer contracts may be stored across three different systems from three different vendors. Today's approach requires you to define governance controls and retention three times: once for each system. Plus, what happens if these contracts are stored across a number of shared drives and desktops?

This situation must and will change dramatically in the coming years, and the impact on both cost and risk is dramatic. Employees and business applications require simple, secure, and rapid access to information – regardless of source, format, platform or storage media. As a result, information governance is quickly moving toward an enterprise service model – enabling companies to deploy shared services across the complex IT infrastructure. Information Governance as a Service, or IGaaS™ eliminates such dependence on users, and enables uniform governance across all applications and systems.

However, in order for this to happen, change is needed:

- At the executive level
- In the IT infrastructure
- With the business users

CHANGE COMES FROM THE TOP

The importance of executive level sponsorship cannot and should not be overlooked. To address the information governance challenge, an executive must stand up and drive the initiative. Every organisation is different, so this executive can be the chief information officer (CIO), chief compliance officer (CCO), or the general counsel. This executive is responsible for organising a cross-functional committee.

> *"It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change."*
>
> *Charles Darwin (1809-1882)*
> *English Naturalist*

This is easier said than done. In order to be effective, the committee must include stakeholders from across the enterprise. Often these constituents have diverging interests that may be difficult to align with an information governance strategy. Corporate leaders may also be reluctant to join 'another committee'.

Information governance touches virtually every function within the organisation and a failure to understand the needs of various business users can ultimately derail the success of a program. Statements of support from the CEO are very helpful in getting members of siloed organisations to take seriously the topic of information governance. Regardless of the challenges, securing an executive sponsor is critical for the success of any information governance program.

IT MUST ALSO CHANGE

As with the development of earlier enterprise service capabilities, the move to information governance as a shared service will hurt some, and reward others.

Those most subject to pain from this transition will be those who support proprietary governance capabilities tied only to their proprietary application or system. ECM vendors, enterprise business application providers or developers, and email systems with their own policy enforcement services will be forced to refactor their applications to provide their organisation with the obvious benefit of having federated policy control and enforcement across all of their critical information assets.

Leaders in the IT department must proactively manage this pain by explaining the new IGaaS™ system and process. The IT managers must outline plans for the future so that their staff doesn't feel as though their jobs are threatened. Furthermore, they must explain the benefits that information governance will bring to the company, as well as how this shared service will benefit end-users. By involving the department early on, managers can help IT employees feel secure, ultimately bringing change to the organisation smoothly and rapidly.

IT'S GOING TO TAKE ME FIVE SECONDS TO DO THAT

Every company has a unique 'governance dictionary' which defines the terms that establish information as business-critical – what we used to refer to as 'records'. Companies develop taxonomies of these terms, which are used to drive semantic analysis of content as it flows across the corporate network – be it in email, in shared drives on the network, or in business applications and databases.

Classification is a bad word to many users. Current approaches to records management rely on the end user to properly classify documents, which takes anywhere from five

⇒

seconds to 45 seconds. In a world of Google, Amazon, and eBay, users expect this type of intelligence in their business applications. They don't want to guess or remember how to do something with a document or where to place this document when they are done. Users shouldn't need to dramatically change their behavior in order to comply with governance mandates.

Classification should be done intelligently (not always automatically) by the IT systems. The change in IT infrastructure and the mandate from an executive sponsor will help the organisation to achieve its information governance objectives without greatly impacting the end-users. The transformation to a comprehensive information governance program will occur much faster.

FINAL WORDS

Information governance helps management focus on the business mission while offering greater transparency to the board of directors, investors, customers and employees. Everyone is on the same page in terms of how information is governed.

Employees are equally rewarded by having information that is accurate, current and in a suitable format for their use. It allows them to be more efficient and to make authoritative decisions. Furthermore, removing duplicate and unnecessary content helps reduce the time needed to find the valid information that is required for making critical business decisions.

To help address the information governance challenge, many companies hire a 'director of change management' to help employees embrace strategic changes. Another option is to come up with strategies that make sense; then employees will embrace them.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Tamir Sigal is Vice President of Marketing and Strategy at RSD, a leading provider of information governance software solutions. He has over 16 years of experience in governance, enterprise archiving, document management, records management, and regulatory affairs. He has worked with dozens of global organisations on various topics such as compliance, archiving strategies, eDiscovery requirements, and information governance.

Before joining RSD, Tamir held senior level positions at Aris Global and Mobius Management Systems. Tamir earned a Bachelor Science degree in Marketing from the University at Buffalo and has presented at numerous industry events as well as other company related conferences and seminars.

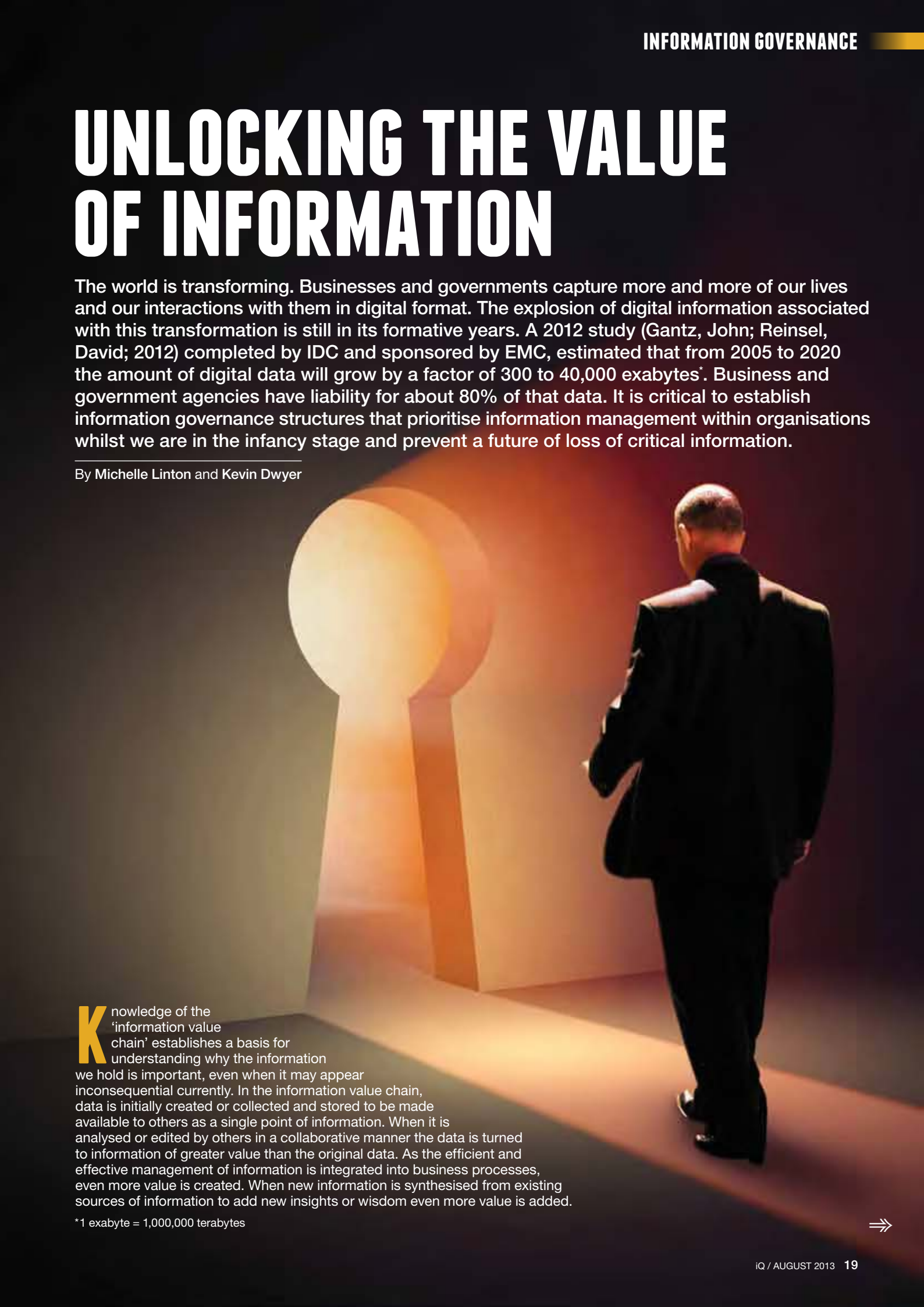
RSD solutions for information governance, output management, and document archiving and retrieval support millions of users worldwide.

Over the next three years, organisations have the opportunity to tame inadequately governed information assets – stored across multiple content management systems, data warehouses, physical warehouses, desktops, file shares, back-up archives, mobile devices, cloud services, and even on employee's personal computers. All they have to do is accept the challenge and welcome the change. ❖

UNLOCKING THE VALUE OF INFORMATION

The world is transforming. Businesses and governments capture more and more of our lives and our interactions with them in digital format. The explosion of digital information associated with this transformation is still in its formative years. A 2012 study (Gantz, John; Reinsel, David; 2012) completed by IDC and sponsored by EMC, estimated that from 2005 to 2020 the amount of digital data will grow by a factor of 300 to 40,000 exabytes*. Business and government agencies have liability for about 80% of that data. It is critical to establish information governance structures that prioritise information management within organisations whilst we are in the infancy stage and prevent a future of loss of critical information.

By **Michelle Linton** and **Kevin Dwyer**



Knowledge of the 'information value chain' establishes a basis for understanding why the information we hold is important, even when it may appear inconsequential currently. In the information value chain, data is initially created or collected and stored to be made available to others as a single point of information. When it is analysed or edited by others in a collaborative manner the data is turned to information of greater value than the original data. As the efficient and effective management of information is integrated into business processes, even more value is created. When new information is synthesised from existing sources of information to add new insights or wisdom even more value is added.

*1 exabyte = 1,000,000 terabytes

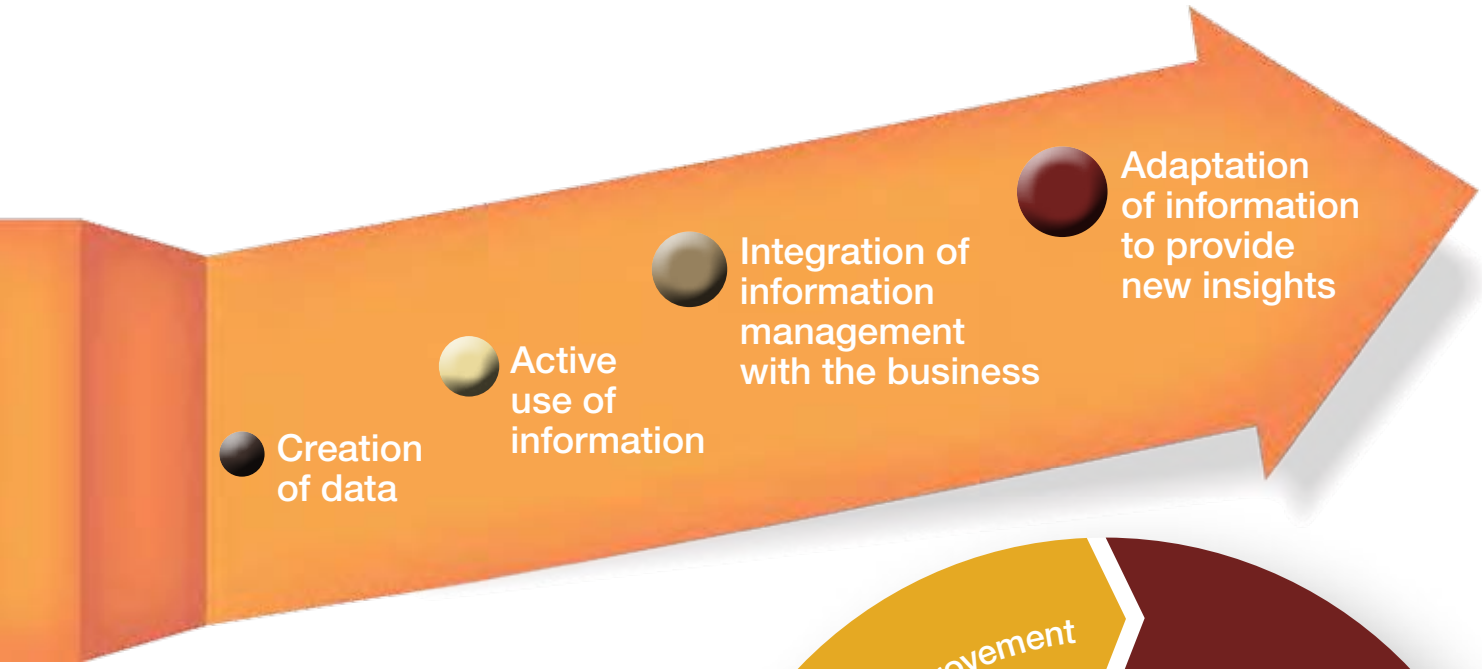


Figure 1: Information value chain

Organisations currently operate at the lower end of the digital information value chain. They create and store and view records of information, but according to the IDC study, less than 1% of information is currently analysed. To effectively move information further up the value chain and increase the value for organisations requires excellence in information management. Effective information management enables people to utilise complex data sources and improve business process.

The foundation in achieving the greatest value from information is an effective governance framework. Effectiveness can be measured by the degree of resistance to adoption and realisation of productivity gains and risk reduction resulting from controlling the flow and accessibility to information.

THE CURRENT APPROACH TO GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORKS

Most governance frameworks concentrate on the policies, processes and procedures that support generally accepted principles of records management, with legislative compliance being the foremost principle. Senior management therefore provide token support; in principle they support records management, in practice they provide the minimum leadership or initiative.

Yet senior management are well aware of the value of certain information they hold in achieving organisation strategies and goals. These gold nuggets of information are information assets. They are the currency senior management trade in, internally and externally. Governance frameworks that actively recognise and protect the organisation's information assets gain leadership support and action. They drive the adoption of recordkeeping across an organisation.

Creating and sustaining an Information Asset Governance Framework contains six key components: strategy, policy, systems, support, quality assurance, and continuous improvement.

These six components may be identifiable within the varied traditional governance frameworks, but the formality of approach to them, relationships and weighting are likely to be very different to that used in an Information Asset Governance Framework.

Figure 2: Creating and sustaining an Information Asset Governance Framework

Traditionally the priority that forms strategy is compliance with regulations and recordkeeping principles. The records management strategy is determined in reaction to the RIM unit convincing the senior management team of a need to comply by a specified date. There is little consideration given to the management of the information value chain as a part of business strategy which, in turn, drives records management strategy.

Disconnecting the records management strategy from the business strategy in this manner creates a poor governance structure which has flow-on effects for other components of good governance.

For example, return on investment for compliance is difficult to calculate with any precision and there is little motivation to calculate a return on investment. For small projects comprising small numbers of staff in a single location this is a small barrier, but for projects involving more than 500 staff or more than

story snapshot

The foundation in achieving the greatest value from information is an effective governance framework.

Governance frameworks that recognise and protect an organisation's information assets gain leadership support.

To create a governance framework for information assets, six key components must be considered: strategy, policy, systems, support, quality assurance, and continuous improvement.

five locations this is a large barrier, mainly due to the project implementation time. Long project implementation times means that there are many opportunities for alternate projects to be proposed which have a definite return on investment and thus compete for ongoing budget to achieve the desired adoption rates and maturity of recordkeeping practices.

The RIM unit faces an uphill battle from the very beginning to drive recordkeeping adoption through a disengaged management hierarchy.

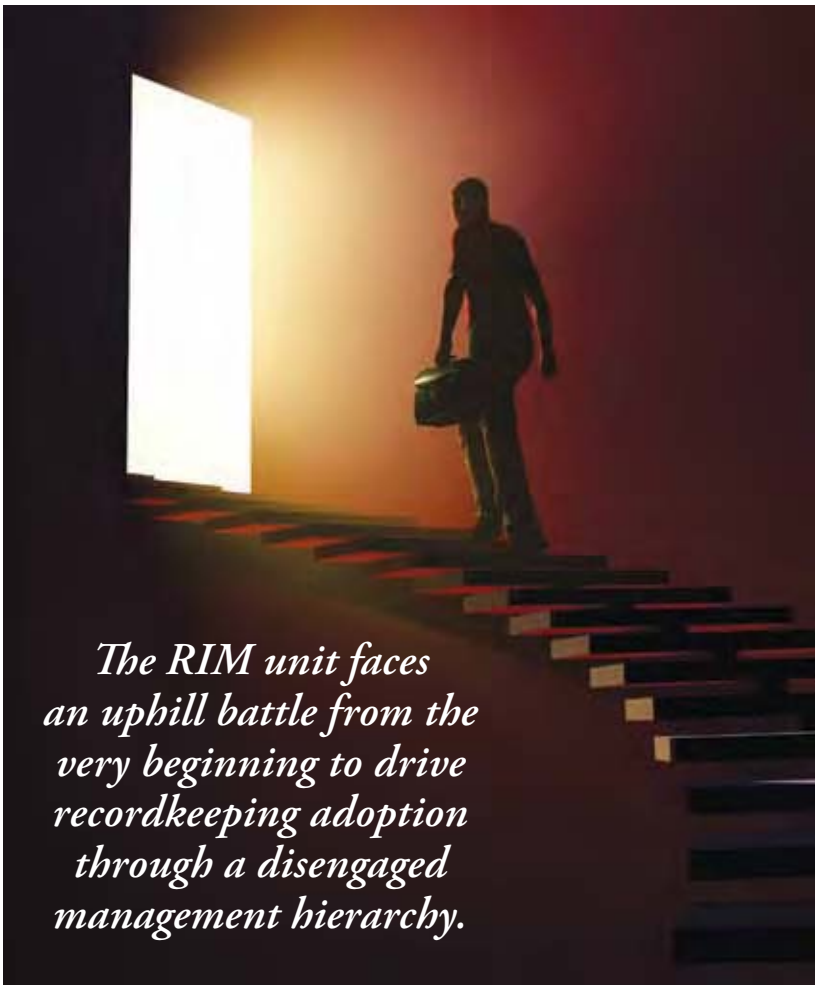
Records and information management policy is then set in an environment where the only criteria set by the senior management team are those supporting compliance. When RIM units attempt to include in policy statements rules which support the broader aims of good records and information management practices they receive pushback from the senior management team.

System selection and configuration is developed with a compliance outcome rather than a productivity improvement and risk reduction outcome in mind. In the worst cases, the system is not seen as a critical system as information is not appropriately seen as an asset.

The systems view is limited to the selection of an EDRMS in isolation of a broader view of the role of all business systems now and in the future in the management of the information value chain. This causes sub-optimal decision making about the systems architecture of the organisation as it is uninformed of the benefits of future integration of systems.

The development and execution of support components such as training content and delivery, communications plan and content, change management approach, Help Desk resourcing, Super Users and procedures and processes for accessing support is inadequately governed. The design and development of crucial tools to engage the organisation and change individual behaviour are left to a collection of the RIM unit, learning and development and internal communications staff without appropriate oversight and challenge of their adequacy. Inappropriate and insufficient support is a key precursor of low levels of adoption.

Quality assurance is limited to the capture of records and correct titling much of the time, which although essential elements for value, are only a small component. Measures of success in the actual management of information and the business results are rarely developed and reported on. ⇛



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Michelle is a Learning & Development professional with 24 years' experience in the planning, design and delivery of training programs. Michelle has developed and delivered innovative, outcome focused EDRMS training for over 30 government and private organisations since 2005. Michelle's pragmatic approach to learning strategies leading to application adoption has been enthusiastically welcomed by the industry, and she is a regular speaker at RIM events and contributor to industry magazines. Linked Training is the training partner in the REX project which was awarded the J.Eddis Linton Award for Excellence – Most outstanding group in 2010.

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Kevin is a Change Management professional with more than 30 years' experience in the planning, design and delivery of change management programs. Since 2001, and the establishment of Change Factory, he has been involved in many Change Management projects ranging from re-engineering of customs processes to reduce risk to creating and revising performance management systems to improve customer service outcomes at five-star resorts. His first EDRMS project was as the Change Management partner for the REX project which was awarded the J.Eddis Linton Award for Excellence – Most outstanding group in 2010.

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The lack of a visible connection with business outcomes sends a signal to managers that the results of the project are not business critical. Projects are thus further demoted in importance, interest levels of management lost, and momentum of skill improvement and EDRMS use evaporates. People revert to old habits and never make it through the digital transformation.

Formal continuous improvement processes to evaluate the benefit of future changes in policy, procedures or process do not take place. Feedback from measures of adoption, advances in EDRMS functionality and business processes and the challenges and opportunities they present are not undertaken. Improvements in the use of the EDRMS and recordkeeping practices are done in an ad-hoc manner and the management of the value chain of data is inconsistent and lags behind industry best practice. Higher risks and lower productivity levels are experienced than is necessary.

UNLOCKING RECORDKEEPING RESISTANCE THROUGH GOVERNANCE

A structured approach to information governance provides clarity on responsibility for input and outcomes for the RIM team, senior management and IT. The Information Asset Governance Framework provides that clarity for senior management and their role.

Strategy

The mindset of data as an asset governs the development of strategy. Senior management are consulted by the RIM unit to identify the information assets. They proactively determine strategic requirements for the management of information and records using the RIM unit as subject matter experts. The strategy seeks to enhance the information value chain. In developing strategy in this way, senior management set the risk criteria for policy development for the RIM unit. The criteria cover both positive and negative risk.

The very act of the senior management team thinking about what information is an asset and to what level in the value chain they wish to see it managed defines what is important to them. It elevates records and information management within the organisation.

Compliance requirements remain a necessity of the strategy, but are secondary to the requirements of the business.

Policy

The criteria for the development of policy are set through senior management determination of the strategic value of information and thus provide the RIM unit with the information that the policy is based on. Examples of criteria are:

This top-down approach to determining what is covered by the policy generates business commitment from the senior management team to drive good recordkeeping practices.

EXAMPLES OF THE CRITERIA FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF POLICY	
Security in post disaster operations	Retention of company knowledge
Proof of company decisions	Improvement to decision making
Transparency of decision making	Consistency of practice in operations / information storage across organisation
Security of information	Reduction of business risk
Accountability for actions	Flow of information
Meeting legal requirements	Find information
Meeting regulatory compliance	

Systems

Systems are specified as part of the overall IT strategy. In the information asset framework, the IT function is well aware of the value that senior management place on information as an asset and the manner in which they want it managed. IT formulates their IT architecture strategy governed, in part, by the records and information strategy and policy. The RIM unit are regarded as subject matter experts contributing to the development of the specification and participating in the selection of the EDRMS.

Competition between IT and the RIM unit for primacy of advice and influence stemming from fundamentally different views of the value of information can be effectively managed within the Information Asset Governance Framework, as the value is established by senior management. The framework is not specific to EDRMS. It acknowledges all business systems, and assesses them for their contribution to the management

of the information value chain. The framework provides the opportunity for evaluating the ROI of integration of systems to improve the flow and control of information and progress the information along the chain.

Support

The support model is determined by the needs of the business in managing the information value chain and to achieve the desired return on investment.

When the value of actual documents handled by staff has been established it is straight forward to identify the value of either required support, or distribution of support to achieve the objectives. Simple matrix evaluation tools can establish primary, secondary support requirements and the things you can safely ignore. This approach forms the basis of the training needs analysis and training model whether in implementation or adoption phase of a project, from which the required resourcing and tools are identified. Governance of support is ongoing.

It also provides employees with the foundation for understanding their role in managing information in whatever job role they are placed and why different sections of the business may receive priority support at a given time.

The mindset of data as an asset governs the development of strategy

Quality assurance

Quality assurance encompasses not only the quality of records management but also the Information Asset Governance Framework itself. It moves beyond titling and record quantity measures, extends to true ROI and measures the effectiveness of the governance framework's ability to support the business objectives. The RIM unit can accurately design, develop and regularly assess measures of success to inform the senior management team, business units and the RIM unit of the impact of adoption of good recordkeeping practices. The measures include lead as well as lag indicators of adoption. For example, the attendance at training and the assessment of the level of knowledge retention from the training are both forerunners of adoption of good practices within a business unit. So, if knowledge retention is 20% lower than the targeted figure, then the % impact on business operations can be extrapolated.

Audit is engaged to include a review of information management practices against the policy and processes promulgated by the senior management team as part of their annual audit plan. The audit approach treats information as an asset to be managed.

The combined measures from the RIM unit and audit inform senior management about progress or otherwise of achieving the desired strategic outcomes. Senior management take decisions based on the measures to ensure that deviations from the strategic vision of managing the information value chain are corrected.

Continuous improvement

A formal process of evaluation of the current state and recommendations for changes is established under the information management governance framework. A formal information asset approach designates responsibility and accountability for the evaluation of internal and external influences which may impact the strategy and policy settings for the management of the information value chain to specific roles.

Continuous improvement is rarely granted the formal structure within governance frameworks that is a necessity for proactive strategic improvement to be achieved. Most continuous improvement is reactive; effected as a direct response to an issue that needs an immediate solution. In reality this is daily management of quality assurance.

The process evaluates elements including but not limited to regulatory changes, business process changes, mergers acquisitions and divestments, new applications and functionality of software, deviations from current strategic settings, and business control incidents resulting from poor management of the information value chain.

The results of the evaluation inform senior management of the risks and opportunities and recommended changes to strategy, policy, processes, systems, support, evaluation and continuous improvement processes needed under the overarching governance framework to maximise the value of information within the organisation.

And the cycle continues… ❖

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End users: the key to successful SharePoint records management and governance

Effective IT governance is an often-sought but notoriously elusive goal for many organisations. One of the most important operational strategies underpinning governance in the IT space is effortless and systemic document management. SharePoint has gone a long way towards helping organisations attain this, but its lack of user friendly integration makes it a troubled platform for many. Here, the author discusses the influencing factors of effective document management and governance.

By **James Fox**

With the constant development of new technologies and proliferation of mobile workforces, it's more important than ever for businesses to keep their document and knowledge management strategies working efficiently.

In this context, SharePoint has become the default for improved practice and process. I live and breathe SharePoint and one thing that I consistently hear through stakeholders is that many organisations are still struggling with their SharePoint deployment. As such, they risk undermining the governance of their document management strategies.

Why is it that so many companies fail in their first attempt at SharePoint deployment? Is it because they lack confidence in the technology and therefore, don't use it to its full capacity? Or is it a case of not knowing how to motivate end user adoption?

In my experience, the two most important factors that influence governance in the knowledge and document management space are user adoption and change management. Both concepts are raised consistently in the SharePoint community, conference after conference. And both are essential to guarantee successful governance. So, let's take a closer look at these concepts now.

GOVERNANCE

Before we can effectively investigate how to ensure that it runs smoothly, we need to have a good grasp of what governance means and what good governance should look like.

In the IT space, governance is the direction that an organisation gives to its IT resources. This direction should always be in line with strategic business goals. Great IT governance facilitates optimal delivery, resource use and performance. Implementing effective governance requires everyone to be involved in managing IT outcomes at operational levels. Document management and knowledge capture are fundamental aspects of this management. SharePoint is the platform that ideally allows all levels of the organisation to have confidence in their document management approach—and confidence here is essential to smooth, effective governance.

Alas, the native integration of SharePoint with familiar desktop platforms is anything but user friendly. Still, many organisations are relying on that native integration to handle the job without any further strategy or planning. As a result, vast amount of important information is still being trapped within user desktops and personal folders.

PLANNING FOR END-USER ADOPTION

IT governance is only possible when you take into consideration the end user in the strategy and planning phase. For any document and knowledge management platform to work properly and ensure proper governance, the end users have to be advocates of the platform. This means that they find it easy to use, they would prefer to use it and they would suggest using it to their colleagues.

Of course, you have to understand the document management behaviour of your staff before you put steps in place to engender user adoption, and this means understanding the company culture and managerial environment. And every organisation is different. Still, the work put in at the planning stage will ensure that your strategy is right from the beginning—but be ready to adjust your plan as new user and system requirements come to light.

…the work put in at the planning stage will ensure that your strategy is right from the beginning

FACILITATING AND MANAGING CHANGE

Change management is the backbone of user adoption. When you deploy a document management platform you are essentially asking users to change their working habits to enable better management of information. Most users are keen to be on board, but change is never easy—especially when you are asking people to change the way they work. It is important to minimise the disruption that deployment causes at a grass roots level by integrating SharePoint with familiar document sharing and storing tools such as Outlook.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

James Fox is CEO at Scinaptic. He is responsible for growing the OnePlaceMail brand and overseeing the development of the company's leading information solution worldwide. He is passionate about driving continuous innovation for Scinaptic's global clients, resulting in seamless user adoption of collaboration platforms such as SharePoint.

It's also important to remember that people who have been through deployment stages in the past will pave the way for a well-maintained document management platform and greater IT governance. Build and engage an experienced team – including internal stakeholders – and pair these people up with a preferred SharePoint partner who has been through other deployments. Consider drawing on the many reputable Microsoft ISV's you meet along the way who can deliver proven solutions to business problems.

In sum, governance is completely achievable by encouraging user adoption and managing change in your organisation. Keep smooth governance in mind throughout your document management strategy phase and remember—plan for user engagement by minimising behavioural change and drawing on the professional resources you have at hand. ❖

So you're about to write a business case, but have you asked WHY? You need to be very sure of the answer before you get started.

By **Glen Morgan**

Too often people plunge head first into writing a business case without fully appreciating that a business case provides a basis for change. Change is often the great unknown – not wanted by everyone – seemingly making their heads spin and often yours as well.

To understand if this change is what you are after, you need to examine in your business case the total lifecycle costs, benefits, risks and implementation requirements – and what will need to keep happening to make the change ongoing.

And you need evidence to substantiate all of this – so let's go back to the why?

Usually the reason why a business case is needed is because a gap or opportunity in your organisation's service delivery is identified – whether that is internal or external or one intermingled with the other. Your business case is about how to best address or remove this gap.

But is it a real gap or opportunity, or is it a matter of realigning what you do now and making what you have work better for you. Remember, a successful business case means you have the go ahead to make change – real change, noticeable change, change that returns on the investment made through the business case. Change that's measurable.

UNPACK THE 'WHY'

Before you start putting fingers to keyboard, brainstorm your arguments as to why; a mini workshop with peers and others that the change could impact on may bring unexpected results. Even an hour of bringing these people together can help unpack the 'why'.

Often people will say "yes we definitely need to do something..." but, when faced with what this *something* involves, these same people may come up with alternatives or realise they hadn't really properly explained or understood the problem in the first place.

story snapshot

A business case provides a basis for change.

It needs to stand up by itself to independent scrutiny.

It needs to be a well-researched, evidential document that builds a credible case for change.

It is better to get people into the right head-space for what is going to happen before you even start down the track of writing a business case. I have found that sometimes this step changes what the problem is or identifies some ways to address it which are already available without the need to go down the path of writing a business case. Too often I have heard "we need this or that – just write us a business case" without any proper analysis of the perceived problem. At the minimum – a sense of purpose and hopefully clarity regarding the problem will emerge.

However, if you are going down the path of a business case, check who else may benefit from the change. Often there are multiple business units that need to become part of the initiative. There have even been instances where more than one organisation was partnered as they had similar needs eg, not-for-profit organisations.

So the decision has been made that there is a 'real' gap or opportunity that warrants a business case. Remember that a business case is usually the reference point for the procurement and implementation of a project or program and needs to contain critical parameters such as cost, schedule, social and environmental issues all documented in a way that clearly demonstrates your capacity for the timely delivery of the project or program.

Confused? Yes, the beginning can be confusing and often frustrating when you are trying to work through all the requirements. If budget funding is required and you are within the public sector, then the Queensland Treasury site needs to be visited to identify if they have any specific requirements or layout. If non-government or private, then check for any equivalent requirements.

At the end of the day, a business case needs to stand up by itself to independent scrutiny. This means it needs to be a well-researched, evidential document that builds a credible case for change.

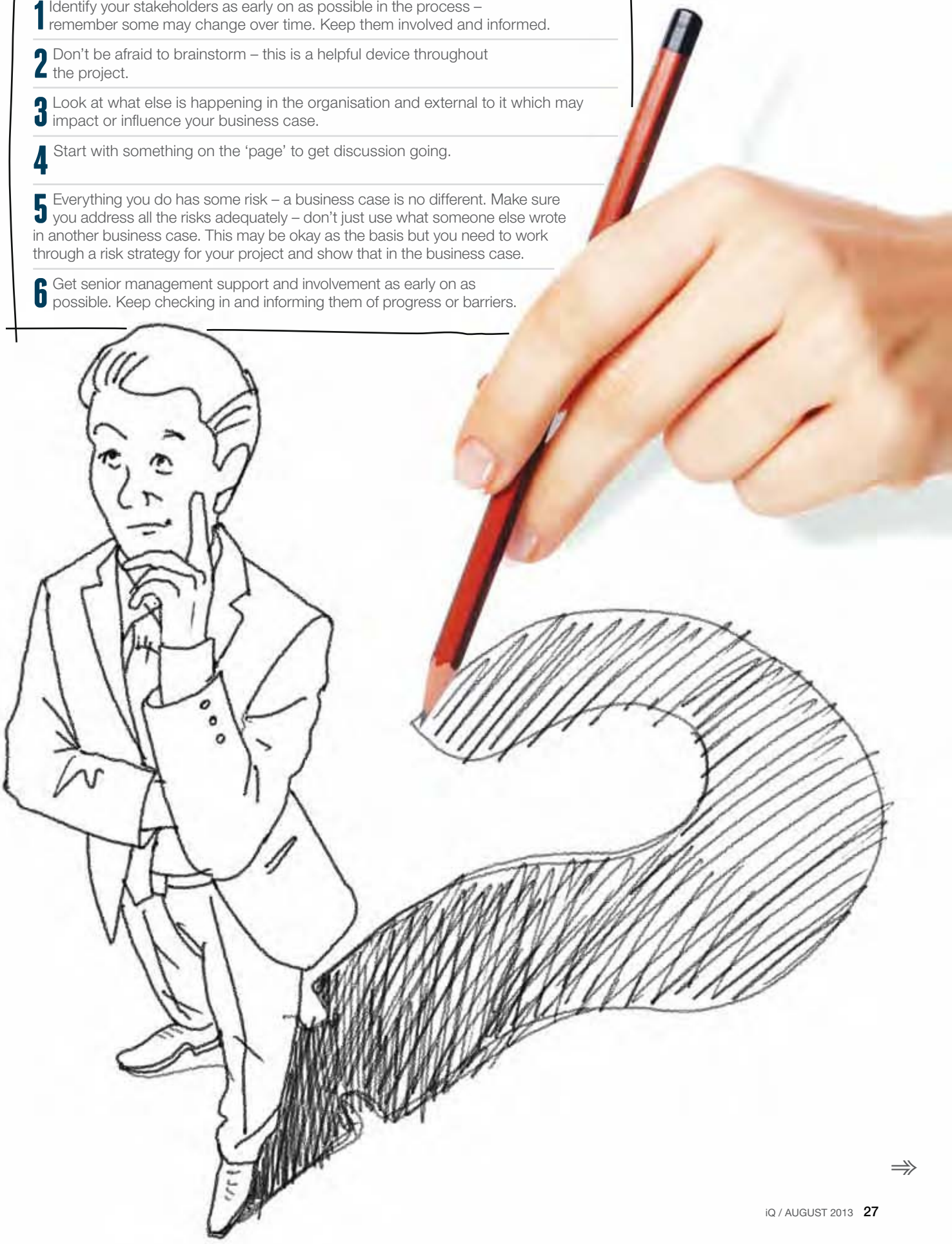
SO WHAT SHOULD YOU INCLUDE?

- Service need including any boundaries
- Proposed purpose – a brief description of overall project aims and how it meets service need
- Objectives – try using the SMART model:
  - **S**pecific
  - **M**easurable
  - **A**chievable
  - **R**elevant
  - **T**imely

continued on p28

HINTS AND TIPS

1. Identify your stakeholders as early on as possible in the process – remember some may change over time. Keep them involved and informed.
2. Don't be afraid to brainstorm – this is a helpful device throughout the project.
3. Look at what else is happening in the organisation and external to it which may impact or influence your business case.
4. Start with something on the 'page' to get discussion going.
5. Everything you do has some risk – a business case is no different. Make sure you address all the risks adequately – don't just use what someone else wrote in another business case. This may be okay as the basis but you need to work through a risk strategy for your project and show that in the business case.
6. Get senior management support and involvement as early on as possible. Keep checking in and informing them of progress or barriers.



- Project description – be concise and include what's in and what's out
- How your project relates to others internally and externally eg, EDRMS procurement relates to ECM project, digitisation to disposal
- Timelines and milestones – be realistic – think about what could impact during the time
- Extent of impact of project on your organisation's systems, work practices and activities
- What capability is available within your organisation and what will need to be brought in externally to successfully carry out and deliver the project

A robust business case needs to identify all the options – including doing nothing

A robust business case needs to identify all the options – including doing nothing. Don't fall into the trap of pre-selecting the option. It is critical that you explore all options and not reject any option too early. Remember – it is rare that there is only a single solution to any problem or opportunity. By considering all possible options you are more likely to be objective which is the best way to deal with a given situation.

As a gateway reviewer and someone who has written successful business cases, I have found continually asking why has always helped. On one occasion, part way through the task, the organisation morphed and the original gap no longer existed. This does happen. Never take it personally. Take what you have learnt and apply it elsewhere.

Writing a business case is not easy or even rewarding sometimes but, when it comes together and you get the approval to go ahead, it is a day worth celebrating with everyone involved. ❖

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Glen Morgan MA (Research), bapsc(Inf), MRIM is Principal Consultant, Consulting Business Information Services and has many years' experience working in strategic and operational management roles in the public and private sectors. Commencing her career in the construction and mining sector, Glen explored how she could better utilise information in her operational roles. She then went on to lead major information management and business improvement projects, writing policy and successful business cases, implementing government reforms and legislation as well as developing information strategies and business contingency plans.

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The changing landscape of information and records management

The author takes us on journey into the past, and identifies that where we find ourselves today is simply history repeating itself as new technologies appear on the horizon. She suggests a possible way forward in which the information records management professional becomes the centre for knowledge in the virtual world of information asset management, Cloud, Big Data and eGov 3.

By **Linda Shave**

The human need for textual based information is as old as the art and science of writing things down. The invention of the printing press made possible the production of multiple copies of documents possible. The copying of business letters, reports and correspondences were hand written. Such hand-written documents needed to be catalogued, filed and stored for future reference so that the information they contained would not be lost.

From 1867, a technology revolution arrived in the form of the 'typewriter' and typed written textual documents began to be created. Typed textual documents that everyone could read and with carbon paper copies could be made. Copies were generally filed in hard copy folders and placed in filing cabinets. Security was easy. Different colour folders for different classifications were placed into locked or unlocked filing cabinets. For the highest security, folders were placed into filing cabinets inside a locked secured room. Archiving was simple. When the folder was no longer needed, full or the filing cabinet was running out of space, we boxed them and had the boxes moved to a prescribed storage area.

The typewriter produced skilled secretaries, typist, typing pools and clerks whose entire career was based on the creation, storage and retrieval of textual documents but not necessarily the management of hard copy folders or boxes between the filing cabinet and storage area. The combination of these people, the typewriter, carbon paper, shorthand notebooks, correction fluid, eraser pencils and filing cabinets could be said to have set the first generation blueprint for a document and records management system for business and government. The birth of the records manager evolved at the end of Word War II to resolve the chaos of managing the mountains of hard copy documents, folders and storage boxes.

The records manager and records management team (in simplistic terms) sat between the filing cabinet and storage area. Their primary role was to pick up storage boxes, catalogue, track, protect, archive and return hard copy folders and storage boxes on request. In 1969, the Records Management Association of Australia was formed and this marked the dawn of professional records managers and records management in Australia.

At this point we will take a detour and a few round-about turns to reflect on the time line of changes that were gradually appearing on the horizon.

These changes marked the start of a changing landscape for record managers. One of these changes goes back as far as 1961 with the introduction of the IBM 7090. It allowed users at different terminals to log into the computer and transfer files they were using onto the computer's central hard disk thereby effectively using the operating system as a mail box. The sending of text-based messages between computers in this way therefore predates the existence of the World Wide Web and the internet.

story snapshot

A historic time line of events is offered, then linking with today's technology conundrum and providing examples.

It aims is to motivate the information and records management professionals and open a dialogue as to the way forward.

As RIM professionals, we can be proactive and a take a leadership role in exploiting the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead.

In 1985, we saw the introduction of the first Microsoft Windows PCs and word processing packages. This was the start of the explosion of hard-copy printed documents and the gradual demise of typing pools; the typewriter and carbon paper became a memory of the past. Moving ahead 10 years to 1995, the first 'webmail' (known today as email) programs were demonstrated, such as Microsoft Outlook. IT and business embraced the adoption of webmail as a business communication tool, and the printing out and filing of business-related emails commenced. During this period the records manager and the records management team's role and tasks remained primarily the same. Although volumes of hard-copy documents had grown, the records manager and the records management team still sat between filing cabinets and storage area and their role still included picking up storage boxes cataloguing, tracking, protecting, archiving and returning hard-copy folders and storage boxes on request.

Remember that PC and word processing was introduced in 1985, yet 10 years had passed before the start in 1995 of webmail tools such as Microsoft Outlook. This is an example of the changing landscape for record management as the combination of word processing and email had an adverse impact on records managers and the records management team. This technology phenomenon contributed to a range of record management deliberations by industry professionals. Some outcomes of these ponderings were to provide theories, frameworks, standards, policies and guidelines on how to manage and preserve the volume growth of printed hard-copy documents and the associated record management challenges.

The 1990s also saw the expansion of capture, digital storage, scanning, Optical Character Recognition (OCR), Intelligent Character Recognition (ICR) and business software applications such as EDRM (electronic document and records management). It is interesting to note that from the mid-1960s OCR was being used by companies for tasks such as bill payments and sorting mail. It was possible to connect OCR systems directly to computers, thus producing data as electronic files. ICR for data extraction from handwritten and textual documents started to emerge as a business tool in about 1993.

By 1995, 34 years had passed since OCR and Omni-font were available. PCs were now embedded into the daily business routine with documents not only being printed but also saved onto network drives, floppy disks, USB and other storage devices. It would be another couple of years before digital scanning of hard-copy records was to be considered as an IT solution to the growing hard-copy document problem. This IT initiative was possibly the next change on the landscape for records managers and the records management team with IT taking control of 'information and data' management functions.

Business applications, email inbox management and driving business solutions including scanning of paper to digital records became part of the IT domain. It might also be supposed that the escalation of technology innovation and solutions, business dependency on IT, analyst, vendors and IT consultants may have influenced the mind-set of the business in designating record managers as hard-copy document, records and archiving custodians only. IT became the centre of knowledge in managing business applications, information and data assets, not records managers.

The late 1990s and early in the first decade of this century saw IT departments having greater access and influence on senior staff and executive management. IT managers were now responsible for managing budgets, maintaining technology equipment, procurement of new technology and strategic planning. Starting up projects to review, tender and acquire hardware and software applications in order to meet the growing business needs became the IT role. Added to all of this, the IT department was put in control of corporate 'information and data' assets, security and information governance. Around this period we welcomed the introduction of the CIO (Chief Information Officer) role with the emphasis being on 'information'.

Big Data is a repercussion of the data explosion, not a new technology

During this same period the business had become technology savvy and worked closely with the CIO and IT departments. Records managers in many cases were not included in business and technology innovation programs nor in the decision-making process. Records managers in many cases were not trained in new business applications unless these new business applications had a direct impact on the record management function.

In 2013, many record managers and records management teams are still expressing frustration at not having a say, not being heard and having to take a back seat.

Despite the records manager's genuine attempts, the gap between becoming business and information technology savvy continues to grow. Yet information and record management challenges appear evermore daunting with the rise of new business and technology drivers such as Cloud, semantic web, mobile technologies, eGov 3, and Big Data.

Is this really so? Let us take a snap shot of some events. The term 'Cloud' was introduced back in 1997. The concept is to provide cost-effective and efficient network connectivity. Providing a Cloud-based platform that brings disparate groups of people, internal, external customers and partners together in order to collaborate, share resources, data, information, workflows and processes. Cloud adoption is about maximising the value from shared resources, storage and data in order to create new value chains, products and services. The first SmartPhone was also introduced in 1997 with web 2.0 applications arriving in 2003 and Twitter in 2006.

Let us just go back once more to the past and do some predictive modelling. In about 1899 telegraph industry operators were 'twittering' to each other via Morse code and these messages were recorded on punch cards. Wireless transmission was used via mobile packs and phones for example in the field during the Second World War and as far back as the mid-1970s telex machines and punch tapes were being used for overseas communications and languages such as IBM GML were used to format and print documents from mainframes.

Moreover, in 1969 the first concept of resource sharing computer networks which was named ARPANET (Advanced Research Projects Agency Network) connected four universities – the University of California, Los Angeles, University of California, Santa Barbara, the University of Utah and the Standford Research Institute. The first electronic mail was sent and the introduction of file transfer protocol (FTP) was used to transfer files between these universities. ARPANET and the concept of resource sharing could be considered to be the predecessor of the Cloud-hosted services of today.

Big Data is a repercussion of the data explosion, not a new technology. Business is capturing terabytes or petabytes of fast-changing data. A petabyte is approximately 1,000 terabytes or one million gigabytes. IT and the business are now struggling to manage data sets that are too large and too unstructured for analysis using traditional relational database techniques and tools. IT are now facing Big Data problems in much the same way as the hard-copy document invasion experienced in the post-World War II era and again by records managers by the introduction of word processing, email, technology and business applications from the 1990s.

The impacts of Big Data and Cloud are dissolving old business models by melting down traditional boundaries between business units, agencies, partners, customers and the citizen. One can say that there are new rules, new tools and new opportunities for records managers and professionals in the shifting world of information and records management as the game and the landscape is once again changing. There is a necessity to be innovative and develop information-centric designs and approaches for information and records management.

SO IS HISTORY REPEATING ITSELF?

If history is repeating itself, why don't we as records managers and professionals use our experience, knowledge and skills and take a leadership role and exploit the current opportunities thus providing sustainability for our future? Let us become a new centre of knowledge within our organisations by designing, developing, implementing, reviewing and managing the new virtual world of information asset management and take advantage of Web 3.0 semantic technology concepts, workflows and the Cloud.

We need a Cloud information and process-centric approach in which data can be well defined, tagged, shared, secured, managed, audited, protected and presented. We need solutions that provide a uniform approach allowing automation and optimisation for managing all information assets regardless of location. All the functions, tasks and activities are driven by the creation of knowledge process-centric workflows and business rules for the Cloud, sitting in a single Cloud or multiple Clouds. Welcome to the world of Virtual Information Asset Management (VIAM). VIAM will require an understanding of the business and technology drivers. VIAM will require sound knowledge of how to apply risk management, workflows, business rules and auditing as these are essential for the next generation, the virtual information asset and record managers.

BECOMING BUSINESS SAVVY

VIAM transition requires a better understanding of your organisation and business applications, regardless of their location. A knowledge of how 'data and information assets' are captured, managed, utilised, stored, archived and preserved. You will need to understand what triggers an event, what business rules to use during the decision process, how to manage the process, what closes an event, what data and information assets you should expect, where these data and information link and are stored, the information and records life cycle, who is involved, when are they involved and where are they? Figure 1, below, is a simple workflow life cycle which reflects a helicopter view.

Business savvy is thinking holistic not silo. Virtual information asset management is like a large case folder with real time transactions happening across multiple applications in single or multiple clouds. This necessitates a new way of thinking. Business processes and workflows will form the foundation for collaborated processes and the link between people, data, business applications and technology – see figure 2 over page.

INITIATION PROCESS	DECISION PROCESS	MANAGE PROCESS	COMPLETION PROCESS	INFORMATION AND RECORDS LIFE CYCLE
INPUTS			**OUTPUTS**	
Fax	Policies	Client/case/project	Fax	Sentencing
Letter	Procedures	Management	Letter	Archiving
Application form	Legislation	Time tracking	Application form	Preservation
Email	Best practice	Pending/unpending	Email	Disposals
Scanned	Standards	Physical file management	Scanned	Transfer/destructions
Internet (eForm)	Roles	Electronic file management	Internet (eForm)	Secondary storage
Other corporate documents	Responsibilities	Approvals	Other corporate documents	Storage short/long term
Data extracts (imports)		Audit trails	Data extracts (imports)	Electronic records
Core technologies		Governance	Core technologies	
		Reporting		

Figure 1 – Simple workflow life cycle

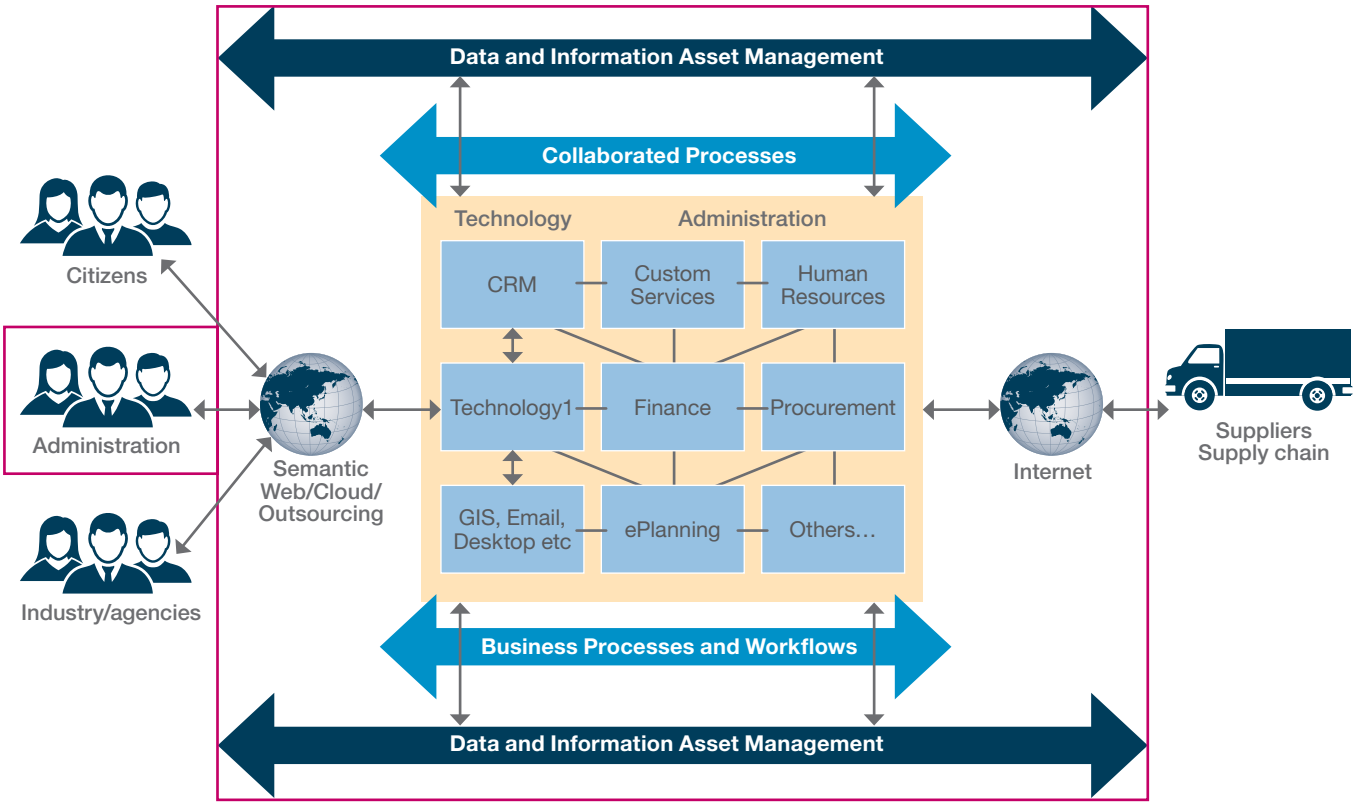

Figure 2 – Sample collaborated process linking people, processes, workflows, data, business applications and technology

The virtual world will be fast changing. As virtual information asset and records managers we will not necessarily need to be technology savvy across all areas. However, sound ability in the areas of business processes, workflows and risk management is essential; as is working more closely with the business to better understand its drivers for customer products and services. These skills will form the basis for the new centre of knowledge and go a long way to meeting the challenges ahead.

INCORPORATING RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk management is not new. The example below shows a risk analysis for an EDRM system. Take for example that we have sound policies, procedures and training programs in place… we could happily say that in a risk management framework for 'People' we have minor risk (pink) for 'People' and Business Process & Systems. For 'Reputation' and 'Financial' risk impact we might be blue reflecting insignificant risk as we undertake annual record management reviews and the budget impact is low.

ISO:31000:2009 Risk Management – Principles and Guidelines	EDRM RISK AND CONSEQUENCE				
People	Knowledge of systems and processes	Knowledge of systems and processes	Knowledge of systems and processes	Knowledge of systems and processes	Knowledge of systems and processes
Reputation	Internal review	Inspection required by internal committees or internal audit to prevent escalation	Inspection required by external committees legal General's Office, or inquest, etc	Major loss of reputation, seriously compromising major operations	Significant asset destruction or other
Business process and systems	Minor errors in systems or processes requiring corrective action, or minor delay without impact on overall schedule	Policy, procedures and business processes occasionally not met or services do not fully meet needs	One or more key accountability requirements not met. Inconvenient but not impacting service levels	Strategies not consistent with compliance requirements. Findings show service is fragmented.	Critical system failure, bad policy advice or ongoing non-compliance. Business severely affected.
Financial	1% of budget or < $5K	2.5% of budget or < $50K	> 5% of budget or < $500K	> 10% of budget or < $5M	> 25% of budget or > $5M
Risk	1. Insignificant	2. Minor	3. Moderate	4. Major	5. Catastrophic

Figure 3 – Sample risk management framework approach

If as records managers, we undertook this approach on other business systems, we may find moderate to major risks, for say 'Business Process & Systems'. Adopting risk management into your information and records management health check today and into the future will help in raising your profile and go a long way to making it easier to start communication with IT, senior management and executives.

UNDERSTANDING WORKFLOW MODELS

Workflow models are not new, nor are they rocket science. As early as 1999 and 2002, I presented at a number of conferences on topics such as 'Out of the fog into the mist' and 'Bridging the gap'. These presentations focussed on demystifying the various workflow and business process management (BPM) models for managing information and record assets into the future. Again the concept of using workflows and business process modelling is not new although we have some new terms such as Social BPM. The application of workflow solutions into the cyber world just makes the challenge all the more exciting.

Workflow models are not new, nor are they rocket science

Figure 4, below, is a copy of a slide from one such presentation and reflects three workflow models: Ad Hoc, Transaction, and Knowledge Based. Suffice to say Knowledge-based (process-centric) modelling will be the foundation for Cloud-hosted workflow and Social BPM models for the future of virtual information asset management.

Knowledge-based (process-centric) modelling and business prefix-driven taxonomies will not only trigger workflow events but enable multiple intelligent tagging at the birth of the asset regardless of its object type (eg, data, record, document, audio, GIS, video, social medial, messaging etc). We as records managers or professionals do not need to be UML modellers or even Java script writers We do need to understand how to capture, document and communicate the high level functions, activities and tasks as well as identify the touch points between business systems and what information assets we need. We need to know what to expect, what to capture, what to manage, archive and preserve regardless of locations as this will contribute to both technology and business innovation programs by adding value to the process.

A CLOUD AND PROCESS-CENTRIC WORKFLOW VIEW

Figure 5, over page, is a simplistic view and for demonstration only. Its aim is to reflect on the activities, tasks and touch points between business systems and what information assets you might need to expect, capture, use, manage, archive and preserve regardless of location. It looks at an invoice scanning process. Preparation, scanning and registering of invoices into an EDRM/ECM system remain much the same as any internal scanning of paper documents. In this example we will utilise OCR/ICR technology for the automated data extraction and FTP to push the metadata into the financial system. The metadata updates the financial system and then triggers the financials systems own internal 'approval' transactional workflow. This financial transactional 'approval' process is subject to a number of business rules and checks confirming if the invoice is able to be paid. If the 'approval' process meets all business rules and checks, it will automatically escalate to the next step, which is the 'approval to pay' in Accounts Payable Cloud. Accounts Payable in the Cloud has a secured dynamic link to the EDRM/ECM system to view the invoice and other supporting documentation. If the invoice is cleared for payment, the Accounts Payable in the Cloud workflow will trigger the 'approved for payment' process. The 'approved for payment' workflow will then escalate to the Payment Transaction in the Cloud. Once the payment transaction is complete, a notification is automatically sent to the Supplier in the Cloud.

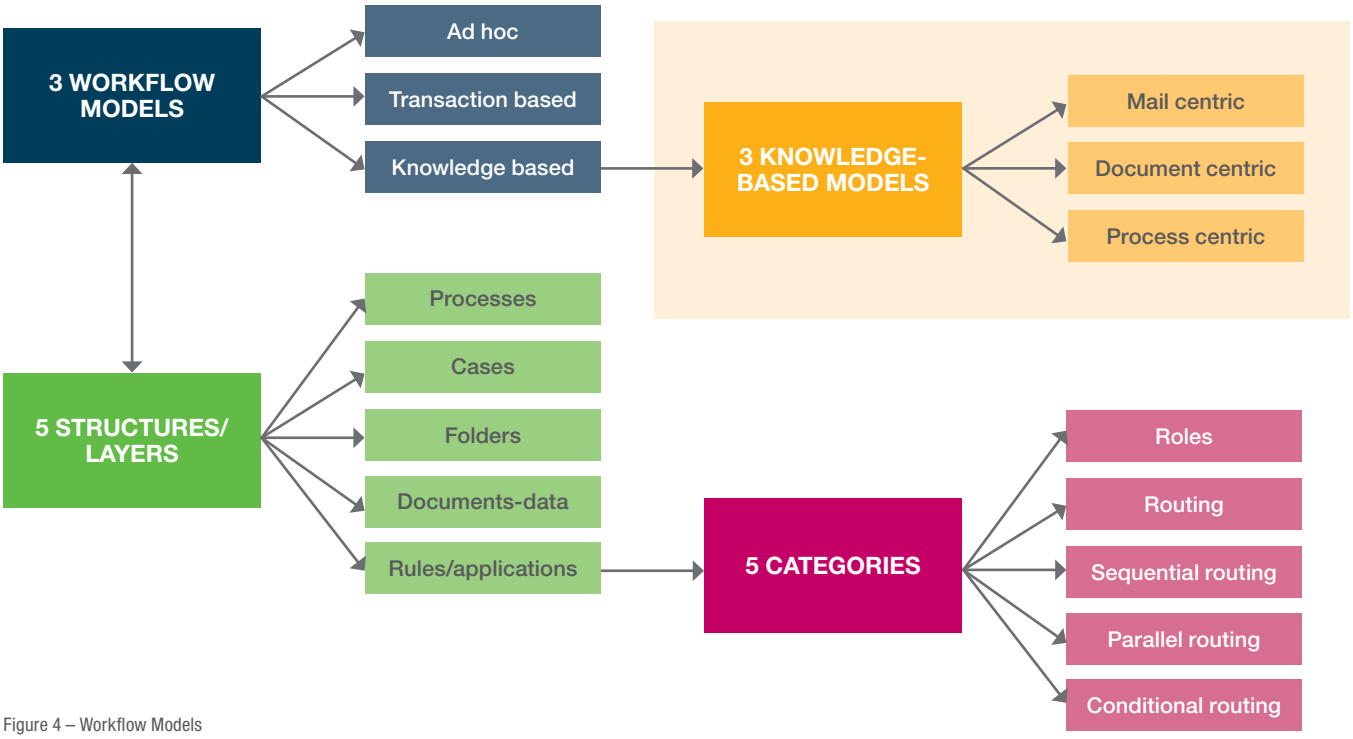

Figure 4 – Workflow Models

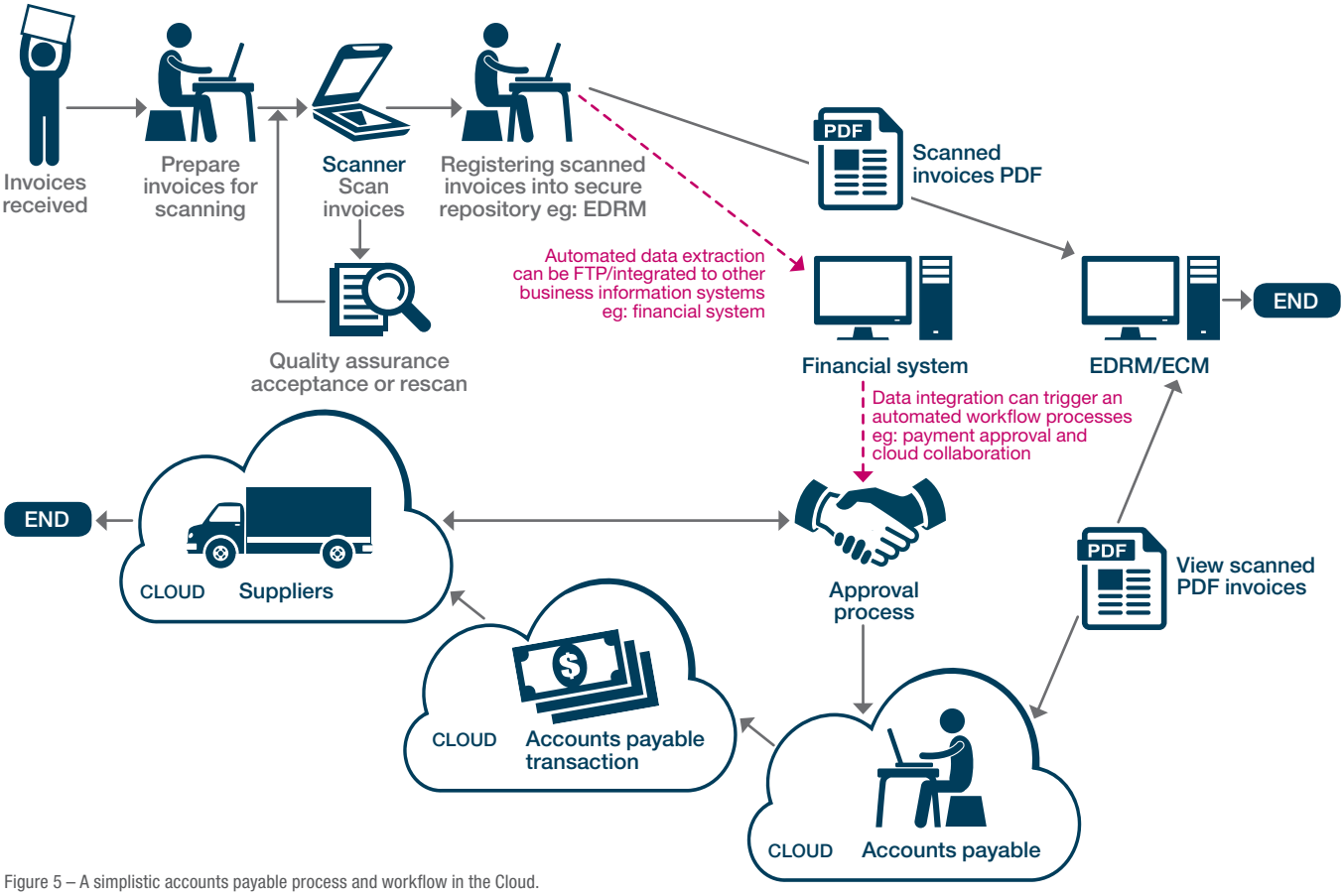

Figure 5 – A simplistic accounts payable process and workflow in the Cloud.

Can we build and use a business prefix taxonomy? Will it help us start the journey of semantic tagging by building relationship between internal and external workflows? Can we build a single view across boundaries? Can we build a single view across multiple government, private organisations and multiple locations and Clouds? The answer is 'yes' to all these questions.

The future is not tomorrow, it is today. All of the questions above have been asked and addressed. This concept of knowledge process-centric modelling is not 'pie in the sky'. It is reality. Has this approach been tried, tested and successfully implemented? Again the answer is yes.

We need to change with the times. Let us not miss out on the opportunities provided by Web 3.0 semantic technology concepts, workflows and the Cloud. The present challenges offer us the prospect to grow and learn from the past. Let us step up to the mark by becoming the leaders as the new centre of knowledge for virtual information asset management. ❖

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Linda Shave is a researcher, consultant and analyst in areas of virtual information asset management, business process management, workflow automation, corporate governance and risk management. She is a former CEO, CIO and is a member of numerous professional organisations. Linda was the recipient of the 2010 ComputerWorld Honors Program Gold Medal laureate for government innovation for her work in delivering information, record management and technology services that added value to government and the citizen.

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Connecting with employees during Information Awareness Month 2013

Wannon Water is a regional water corporation servicing the south-west region of Victoria. This article highlights how the Wannon Water's Knowledge Services team have actively increased the reputation and visibility of the team within the organisation by using Information Awareness Month (IAM) to promote both the team and the importance of the organisation's information assets.

By **Alison Toohey** and **Ann Goode**

The Wannon Water Knowledge Services team jumped into IAM 2013 feet first, taking the tag-line 'Connecting Information and People', putting on their sneakers and running a marathon with it!

The kick-off was the presentation 'Experiences and lessons learned from the aftermath of a Major Fire'. Tim Newbegin, President, Records and Information Management Professionals Australasia (Victorian Branch), accepted our invitation to speak in Warrnambool to Wannon Water managers and other local records and information management professionals. The presentation was extremely well received, generating discussion around the continued drive to create a 'less-paper' office, and to identify and manage areas where excessive dependence on paper-based documents presents an organisational risk. With the management buy-in we've received to date we will be able to coax and persuade employees to work towards identifying business processes that can be undertaken more efficiently and with less paper.

A FIERCE CONNECT 4 COMPETITION

Our team took a more tenuous approach to the 'Connecting Information and People' theme by stepping away from their records desks to host the inaugural Wannon Water Connect 4 Competition. Six teams took part, with allegiances formed early on: upstairs versus downstairs, Assets versus Strategy & Innovation, seasoned expert versus first timer. The lunchtime event allowed employees to work and compete together on something other than their usual workloads.

Fierce competition – A fight for a berth in the Connect 4 grand final

It also enabled the Knowledge Services team to continue to promote records and information themes by linking the event to IAM, without uttering one syllable on compliance, standards, recordkeeping, etc. Competition was fierce in the final two rounds with the individual and the team victors winning a named Connect Four Tile within the illustrious Silver Connect 4 Board Trophy.

Throughout the month we ran various classroom sessions, with team members donning a flattering hi-vis orange TRIM vest and 'walking the floor' to provide assistance at employees' desks. This was a great way to get people asking questions and presenting TRIM-related problems/issues, without the sometimes daunting classroom experience.

Records administrators go 'hi-vis' with a twist for Walk The Floor sessions

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Alison Toohey ARIM is Records Team Leader – Wannon Region Water Corporation. Alison has worked in Recordkeeping within the Water Industry for 6 years, recently completing her Advanced Diploma in Recordkeeping. Alison is currently developing a recordkeeping and TRIM training and development program for all Wannon Water employees.

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Ann Goode ARIM is Manager Knowledge Services – Wannon Region Water Corporation. Ann has more than 30 years' experience working in data and information management in State and Local Government and is now working on the implementation of Wannon Waters first Records Management Strategy and is committed to establishing a programme of best practice Records Management across Wannon Water.

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The Knowledge Services team had a great time connecting with fellow employees, and connecting our employees with information, assistance and history

As Victoria's second largest regional urban water corporation by service area, our region extends over approximately 23,500 square kilometres, so we took the TRIM vest out to regional offices and spent time with these employees within their own environment. Office-based staff in Hamilton, Portland and Camperdown benefited from this one-on-one assistance.

Over the month a fantastic display on the 75th anniversary of the construction and use of the North Otway Pipeline was available for employees to wander through. Presenting employees with historical information relevant to their area of expertise is an effective way of promoting recordkeeping, demonstrating how relevant historic information can still be of value today. The display also highlighted some photos of less-than-safe construction processes of days gone by, providing a talking point around current versus historical occupational health and safety requirements.

A VERY WELL ATTENDED MORNING TEA

The month culminated in combining our Historical Photo and Artefacts Project launch with The Biggest Morning Tea. Our industry photos and artefacts display was very popular and enabled us to add further identifying information to our items and their stories. The Biggest Morning Tea has always been well attended, and this is the second year that we have promoted IAM by launching projects and presenting prizes for the month's events. What better way to get a captive audience? The Biggest Morning Tea this year also coincided with Library and Information Week. Combining these events enables our Knowledge Services department to use state and national events to draw attention to the importance of our work.

However, the highlight of the month for the team was to receive two Sir Rupert Hamer Records Management Awards Certificates of Commendation: one in the Regional Rural Agency Category for our 'Taking the Risk out of Records at Wannon Water' project; the other in the Community Archives Category (Preservation of Records of Significance) for our Records Transfer to Places of Deposit at Hamilton, Casterton and Warrnambool.

Combining the Historic Photos and Artefacts Launch with The Biggest Morning Tea provides maximum visibility for the launch

Fantastic Four: Team winners of the inaugural Connect 4 competition

The Knowledge Services team, whilst having a very busy Information Awareness Month in 2013, had a great time connecting with fellow employees, and connecting our employees with information, assistance and history. Plans are underway for next year and we would encourage everyone to start thinking about IAM and including it on your organisational calendar by providing relevant and interesting information to employees, and combining it with some food and fun! ❖

QUALITY, ACCURACY, CONSISTENCY *(what's happened to them?)*

In this article, the author expresses his concern about data quality – in particular, poor data quality, and the incredibly negative impact it can and does have on our day-to-day work.

By **Dave Stafford**

We skip over important details, we don't bother to spell-check or even try to use correct grammar... we are sloppy, careless and inattentive. The information we create to work with, is inaccurate, inconsistent and, very often, out of date. We are careless about where our information comes from, we perhaps don't always check that we have the latest, most accurate figures and facts upon which to base information we create – and, services suffer when this poor quality information is circulated; in fact, we all suffer.

We are unaware of standards, from the tiny, helpful ones (such as Title Case) to the big, difficult to understand but incredibly useful ones – such as the LGCRS (Local Government Classification Retention Scheme) – a very adaptable, customisable standard folder structure for local government information classification.

We have new and powerful tools for categorising, renaming, identifying duplicates, identifying obsolete information – and much, much more – yet, we barely understand what these tools do, we don't use them, or don't use them well enough to actually get useful benefits from them… so our data actually continues to decline in quality, as duplicates, obsolete files, and meaningless files (also known as ROT – 'redundant, obsolete, or trivial' files) continue to increase in quantity.

We also, more often than not, don't trust in the expertise of the staff we have in house, trusting instead, in the word of expensive, external consultants – who have no interest in improving data quality – often with further disastrous results for our legacy data.

Meanwhile – we are not applying retention rules to our information, we are not regularly cleansing or purging bad data types; the resultant poor quality data both frustrates us in our work as well as not supporting service provision well, so service to customers suffers – again, because of poor quality data.

This concerns me, because it's not just a matter of being

professional, getting it right, being accurate, being careful – bad quality data actually can hurt us, and hurt us deeply – in the pocketbook, in the quality of the services we provide, in maintaining accurate and consistent business information, and in many, many other ways, some of which I will touch on here.

DUPLICATES – THE SILENT KILLER

I am a data analyst by trade, with a lot of practical experience in content management out in the private sector, but now, with more than five years' experience in Local Government, as well, I have seen first-hand how duplicates, obsolete information, and generally a serious glut of poor quality, inaccurate, inconsistent 'information' – when used to inform our business decisions, can be disastrous. One of our worst problems is duplicates, and their even more evil counterpart, near duplicates.

Most people don't realise how badly their information is duplicated – between 10% and 60% in some cases. Each time you save an email attachment, you are probably creating a duplicate or near duplicate. Each time you send an email attachment, you are setting up the recipient(s) to create many duplicates (when they each save a copy of the attachment) and/or, forward your attachment to other recipients who also then save/forward, ad infinitum.

Each time you save an email attachment, you are probably creating a duplicate or near duplicate

The presence of these duplicates and near duplicates is disruptive in several ways, foremost of which, is the increase in general 'clutter' or 'noise' (basically, far too many files to sift through during our normal work day) – the amount of 'noise' files has risen so high, that we can no longer easily locate the increasingly rare high-quality data files that we try to use for service provision.

I've done a lot of analysis on duplicates across very large servers, and some of my scans have returned some very revealing statistics, with surprisingly large percentages of duplicates across large servers. As one example: 35 versions of the exact same file, containing identical information (I use a 'byte-by-byte' duplicate tool, so it disregards the 'name' of the file, and verifies that the content matches byte-for-byte) – with perhaps, 20 different names, residing in 35 different folders across a server.

Of course, sometimes, too, you find still more copies of the same document saved on other servers. The spread of duplicates and near-duplicates is very nearly viral in the way it happens – in the blink of an eye and, before you realise, your nice clean data areas are riddled with copies and near-copies of your real information – like a needle in a haystack.

As the number of duplicates increases almost exponentially, the quantity of unique, high quality data files shrinks, and the many, many objects on the server cause confusion and make finding the increasingly rare 'high quality data' even more difficult than it already is.

"Just email it to me" – perhaps not the best idea we ever had

How duplicates are created: when an important document is sent as an email attachment, and then several people save it to their network drive – that creates several duplicates. Then, some of those recipients email the document on, forwards, to still more recipients, who then also save the document – including some possibly altered 'versions' (creating yet more duplicates, and, near duplicates if altered) – and within just a few days' time, there can easily be 30, 40, 50, 70 copies, or more, of that document – with different names, sometimes, slightly altered by some recipients – in the end, creating between 10 and 100, or more, copies of the original file sent by one person (you, unfortunately!); 100 or more duplicates or near-duplicates can easily exist, based on the 'innocent act' of one person sending out one file. Needless to say, this adds up very quickly, and seeing servers with 20-30% duplication is not uncommon. Or worse.

A scenario similar to the one just described, can take place over a very short period of time… 72 hours or less. So instead of a single, unique copy of a document, stored in an agreed, shared folder location that all participants have access to – we've chosen the easy way out – "just email it to me" (surely, the five most destructive words ever uttered in the office environment) – and the result of that decision is basically, a duplication disaster.

Which version contains the accurate information?

Firstly – how do we 'know' which document, out of our example 35 duplicates, is the 'real' one – the master document? Answer: we don't.

Secondly – how do we 'know' which one is accurate – what if one of the variations (near-duplicates, modified by a recipient and then saved again) accidentally has a cost figure changed from $100,000 to $10,000 – no one realises – they use this duplicate, non-original, non-unique copy to base a project's funding on – and there it is – a project goes seriously over budget.

That may seem fanciful, but believe me, it happens. I have seen the 'wrong numbers' used in more than one instance, and that was simply because they were 'pulled' from a duplicate or a near duplicate instead of the original master document – it's that simple. An easy, but potentially deadly, mistake to make… but incredibly and surprisingly common – use the wrong figure, from the wrong version of a document… get the budget wrong… go seriously overbudget. In the blink of an eye.

Obviously, we need to have version control for our documents for a start, sure, but we also need to rethink our behaviour with regards to email. As well as being the prime suspect in the creation of duplicate documents via attachments and the repeated saving of attachments in many different locations, email is also seriously misused in a number of ways.

story snapshot

Bad quality data actually can hurt us, and hurt us deeply – and one of the worst problems is duplicates.

Storing 'important stuff' in your email 'quasi-database' can lead to all sorts of trouble.

Data stored in an email account goes out of date very quickly indeed.

There is a solution – think before you attach!

IT'S A MAILBOX, NOT A DATABASE

The worst offence is email accounts and/or archives being used as a sort of 'quasi-database' where we keep 'important stuff' – attachments, reports, raw data, emails with 'important information' in them – but:

- We keep far too much information, for far too long, in email accounts and archives
- Nothing is subject to retention
- Nothing ever gets deleted – and this, of course, creates a huge FOI risk
- Email accounts and archives become a place to 'squirrel away' information

I would gently remind you that email is a communications device – not an information storehouse. (That's what databases, spreadsheets, and documents are for – storing information; email is for sending electronic mail). For some reason, this distinction has been forgotten, or was never understood – and unfortunately, not understanding has led to the situation that so many of us find ourselves in now – our email is full of important business documents, or even worse, important business information is contained in the body of the emails themselves.

The actual, original purpose of email

Email means, of course, electronic mail. Email is meant primarily to allow colleagues to communicate – yet, so many use it like a secret document library, 'filing away' documents that they feel are important or contain important information 'to use later'. These are then magically pulled out in certain situations, usually involving the person who has kept it for all this time, playing a sort of 'hero' role – as if to say: "Look how clever I am, I kept this in my email, and now we need it again – I am a hero!". Years ago, at a less mature age, I used to do this myself, until I realised that most of what I was keeping, was seriously out of date, an FOI risk, and possibly a danger to my employer if real business decisions were made based on the very obsolete information I kept hidden, out of circulation, in my private email 'data silo'.

Using email as a quasi-database or information storehouse, causes two distinct problems:

- When you store your information in what is an essentially inaccessible data silo, our managers and colleagues cannot access those crucial, critical business documents when you are away on holiday or out ill. This in turn has a direct negative effect on the customer, who cannot access the information that they require, just because a single staff member is not in the building on a particular day.
- Data you've hidden away in your email file or archive is highly, highly suspect in terms of quality, accuracy and consistency anyway. So even if they could get to it, it may not be that useful until it has been made unique and brought up to date.

DATA ACCESSIBILITY IN YOUR ABSENCE

Regarding the first problem, accessibility – if a customer calls, and needs information about a specialised service, and the person in question who handles that service is on holiday, and the customer needs an answer, the colleague who had the unfortunate 'luck' to pick up the phone, will truly struggle, because the information he needs to answer the unhappy

⇛

customer's query is locked away in the specialist's email account, and cannot be accessed until their return.

That information should be available to everyone (since it is Council information), so that colleagues can pick up your calls for you when you are ill or on leave, and they can access the information that you are the caretaker of, and share it with customers – everyone wins.

In the 'email data silo' scenario, no one wins, because the customer is told "the person you need to speak to isn't in, and won't be back for a week, and I don't have the information you want" – and that is not the way to respond to any customer, I am sure you will agree. It is vitally important that we keep all of our working information transparent and available to all colleagues, and our managers, so they can assist customers in your absence.

DATA AGING – FASTER THAN YOU MIGHT THINK

Regarding the second problem, If you think about it, an important email you saved a year ago, probably actually went out of date within 30 to 60 days of you saving it – simply because time doesn't stand still, underlying figures and facts change – rendering that precious piece of hidden data in your email archive useless. Sure, there are some types of data that last forever – tables of standard weights and measures, or temperatures, or other 'constants' – but everything else is quickly rendered non-viable simply through the passage of time. An unfortunate situation, but utterly true.

What we often don't think about is, the quality, accuracy and up-to-dateness of that saved information. No matter how brilliant your document is, the one you are saving in your 'secret email archive' (the same silo or archive that your manager and your colleagues cannot access information from when you are ill or on leave) – if you really think about it, it goes out of date very, very quickly indeed. Because documents and information are created from raw data, often in the form of figures, and those figures change constantly out in the real world.

IT IS COUNCIL INFORMATION – NOT YOUR INFORMATION

The silo mentality is based on a very simple misconception: that this information is 'my information'. That is where we go wrong – your information is not the information you have at work – it's the information you have at home! At work, you are the caretaker or custodian of your employer's information – or, in the case of local government, the rule I would state would be: "It's not your information, it's Council information".

And therefore, by rights, that Council information, especially if it's specialised service provision related, must be accessible to all, at all times – your manager, his or her manager, your colleagues, etc. so that they can act on your behalf in supporting customer enquiries using that information. It's that simple.

So we need to dissuade ourselves from this strange concept of "MY data" – it truly, truly is not. You are a caretaker of valuable Council information, developed by Council staff, to help customers and to assist in service provision.

This also has the added benefit of presenting a very cohesive and consistent set of answers to customers – if all colleagues are working on the same basis – literally, 'singing from the same hymn sheet', every customer will get the same high quality answer based on that unique, high quality piece of Council information that you and your colleagues share – and that consistency is hugely important in today's business world, as well as making our service provision as consistent and as modern as possible – that is the way to go.

THE SURPRISINGLY LIMITED LIFESPAN OF A DOCUMENT

In creating a document, basing it on current figures, then saving it away in your email, and expecting that you can use it again later – that concept actually makes no sense whatsoever.

If you really think about it, within even 30 days, that information is suspect, because the underlying figures used to make whatever calculations or statistics, or other information it holds, will have changed.

In 60 days, even more suspect, in 90 days, you might as well scrap the whole thing – because if you want your information to be of quality, and to be accurate, and to be consistent – well of course, the only way to do that, would be to start over from scratch, using current, up-to-date raw data to prepare your document. So really, keeping documents for years in your email – doesn't make a lot of sense (in my personal opinion, it doesn't make any sense at all!).

I routinely see email accounts and/or email archives containing not months, but years and years' worth of obsolete, useless information (which to the owner, is precious work that they have proudly saved to pull out in an emergency, or to say "a-ha – look what *** I *** kept, I am a hero!!) but sadly, that 'secret weapon' that you may feel very proud of has lost all potency due to it's many years of incarceration, locked inside an email account (read: inaccessible data silo).

Finding three, five, seven or even 10-year-old information within email accounts or archives is sadly, not uncommon –

documents, attachments, and information – all utterly useless and redundant due to the change that went on in the outside, real world.

The ultimate test question to assure information's validity

I have developed a test question that I ask about files that are suspect, and that I encourage customers to ask themselves when considering their own files, which is: "Does this file have current, business value, in [current month name here], [current year here]?"

- If the answer is no, the document is scrap.
- If the answer is yes, it should be retained via records management retention rules, and destroyed at the appropriate time per the same retention rules (based on an agreed retention trigger).

I recommend looking at documents that you are keeping, whether in email or on your network drive, and asking yourself this question. You will be surprised how many documents fail this test; how many documents bring a no response – when you actually think about it against the razor edge of this question.

That report you did six months ago on 'Statistical analysis of emergency service response' – well, it meant something six months ago, but right now, it has no value, because if you need analysis of current statistics, to analyse and report on – of course, you have to start over, with new raw data, and a new document (not to mention, the new data covering the last six-month period that is not in your old report!). There's no other choice – that's the only way to ensure accuracy.

How much risk are you willing to take?

Certainly, you can keep a report's template, and refresh the data – that's a perfectly valid, and in better-organised companies, oft-used and successful technique. But my point is… for anything older than 30 days, you really should refresh any and all underlying data, or else risk presenting an inaccurate report to management.

Ninety days is 'young' for what's found in most email files or archives – people keep these 'important documents' not just for days but for months and years. I've seen email archives 13 GB in size stretching back eight years, and yet, 98% of the 'secret information' in that archive is almost certainly useless, rotten, out of date, inaccurate, inconsistent, indeed risky and sometimes downright dangerous – information that should never have been kept. It's also a more than significant FOI risk – just ask your own records management staff who will confirm this.

Finding three, five, seven or even 10-year-old information within email accounts or archives is sadly, not uncommon

Your secret database

So hiding this old information away, because you think it will 'save you time' because you won't have to re-make it is naive. It will kill you – because if you pull out a 90-day old document, and (somewhat naively) accept it's information as gospel – well, you are possibly being both naive and foolish – because that information must absolutely be checked against current raw data – which will differ in almost every case.

You may get away with it once or twice, if you are a very lucky person, but in the end, depending on this sequestered, silo-based data that no one else has checked or validated in any way, and that has not been refreshed with current data – it is pretty much a guaranteed road to disaster.

Sure, some pieces of important information, such as weights and measures, don't change. So keeping a chart that shows the conversion between, say, metres and feet, or gallons and litres makes sense – because they are constant, unchanging. But so few of our documents are of this type – unchanging constants. That's a rarity, the norm is change, and pretty quick and often dramatic change, too.

SO WHAT ELSE CAN I DO?

This is one area where we can make a huge, positive change even if we just begin with the first three bullet points below:

- Cease internal email attachments (thus removing the problem of duplicates and near-duplicates almost entirely).
- Instead of attachments, set up shared, collaborative workspaces where you can ensure that each document that you create only exists in one unique, controlled instance.
- Properly identify draft status or version number for each and every unique, original document.

- Use a standardised folder structure, such as the LGCS (Local Government Classification Scheme), to store unique files in.
- Use agreed standardised file naming, including date, version and other identifying elements to enforce file-naming consistency.

CONCLUSION

In order to be accurate, consistent and up to date, in order to produce information of quality, it's helpful to do the following:

- Do not keep 'old information' around in email or other data silos (private drives, local drives, memory sticks, etc) – it can be risky or downright dangerous to you and your organisation.
- Create a single master document, with version control, that is available and accessible to all collaborators.
- Ensure that all relevant team members have unfettered access to their colleagues specialised or generalised service-based information, so that they can seamlessly help customers in your absence (out ill or on leave).
- Stop all internal email attachments (the primary cause of duplicates).
- Regulate and monitor external email attachments to ensure only one version is saved.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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- Purge old information regularly using tools that identify obsolete information.
- Any actual information that arrives by email, save outside of your email system as a document, then delete attachment and/or email (there are many tools now that assist you in stripping away email attachments and/or saving information from the body of an email).

I have focussed fairly sharply on a single source of inaccurate, inconsistent data of fairly poor quality: duplicates (and near-duplicates); and also on the main 'carrier' of duplicates, the email system, including ordinary email accounts and the larger, older, more dangerous 'data silos' that is the ubiquitous 'email archive' – but there are many other issues which inform and contribute to problems with data quality, which I will hopefully be talking about in future articles – until then, please… think before you 'attach'! ❖

This article was first published in the IRMS Bulletin, UK (May 2013).

Gearing up for inForum 2013

Records and Information Management Professionals Australasia's 30th convention, inForum 2013, is being held at the National Convention Centre, Canberra from 8 to 11 September 2013. In this issue of *iQ*, we take a look at the presentations available through the Vendor Stream. The full inForum program is available at www.inforum.net.au, where you can also register for this year's convention.

INFORUM is the peak industry event for information professionals in Australasia offering a diverse but relevant multi-stream program, a trade exhibition and multiple networking opportunities.

The theme 'Information Governance' explores a holistic approach to managing corporate information by implementing processes, roles, controls and metrics that treat information as a valuable business asset.

A feature of the program over the past several years has been the vendor stream, where vendors in the records and information management industry present on informative and interesting topics which are relevant to both their company and delegates alike. This year is no different with a number of diverse presentations available as part of the program. Here are just some of the presentations on offer.

Everything is a record

Paul Taylor and **Melanie Rogers, iCognition**

With the volume of information increasing in organisations each year how can records managers keep pace? One solution is to consider everything in the organisation a record. With this policy approach, you will increase compliance, reduce training and storage costs and build better engagement with ICT and system owners.

THE SPEAKERS

Paul Taylor – Principal Consultant
Paul has in-depth knowledge of information and records management best practice, legislation, business processes and systems. He has 15 years' experience in information management and has worked on a variety of EDRMS and information management projects with the Federal Government.

Melanie Rogers – Principal Consultant
Melanie has over 10 years of experience of providing records and information management advice and has over 20 years of experience in the not-for-profit, private and public sectors. Melanie specialises in information management best practice, solution design, integrations, content management, collaboration and workflow. She is skilled at the elicitation and conceptualisation of business improvement solutions to assist organisations increase productivity and compliance.

iCognition
Knowledge in Context

FOR MORE INFO

Visit the conference website
www.inforum.net.au

Records for free

Dr Miles Ashcroft, RecordPoint

This presentation will discuss the conundrum of balancing the end users' needs with the compliance obligations of the organisation and how it is possible to get 'Records for Free'. Records for Free means that end users and records teams get what they need as it builds on the following principles:

- End users needs are different from those of records team – they don't care about records.
- Users want to be able to do their job and be confident that they able to find content and easily store what they have created – classifying and arranging content from a records perspective is not intuitive to users.
- Solutions need to support users first and foremost or they will fail!

The Records for Free concept supports both outcomes with no compromises for either the end user or the records manager.

- The system allows users to just do their job in an intuitive, relevant easy to use and compliant tools environment.
- The records team still has all of the tools it needs.

This presentation will draw on real-world examples at the Australian Communication and Media Authority, the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade New Zealand.

THE SPEAKER

Dr Miles Ashcroft is the Head of Consulting and Operations at RecordPoint Software. Miles holds an Honours degree and a PhD in History and Politics from University College London. Miles has managed a number of complex projects and programs over the past 15 years, working for NRMA, Freehills, DSEWPaC, QLD Treasury and Department of Climate Change just to name a few. At RecordPoint, Miles is responsible for running the consulting and support practice.

RecordPoint

The second coming of electronic records

Anthony Woodward, RecordPoint

Until now, electronic record keeping and has been space-based, like a magazine stand; we use spatial terms such as 'second from the top on the far left' to identify a particular magazine. A diary, on the other hand, is time-based: One dimension of space has been borrowed to represent time, so we use temporal terms like 'Thursday's entry' or 'everything from last spring' to identify entries.

Time as a metaphor may seem obvious now, especially because it's natural for us to see our lives as stories, organised by time. Yet it took us more than 20 years in computing and record keeping to get here. The field has finally moved from conserving resources ingeniously to squandering them creatively. In this new environment, we can focus on the best way – instead of the cheapest, most conservative way – for the capture and management of records to work.

This presentation will explore the concepts associated with function of the recordkeeping as not just a capture tool but also as way to deliver the *latest* information mixed with its references from the past. That's why so many time-based structures have emerged on the internet: to satisfy the need for the newest data. Whether tweet or timeline, all are time-ordered streams designed to tell you what's new.

Of course, we can still browse or search into the past: Time moves forwards *and* backwards in the enterprise (or even the internet). Any information object can be added at 'now', and flows steadily backwards — like a twig dropped in a brook — into the past. You can drop files, messages, and conventional websites (those will appear as static, single elements) into the stream, which acts as a content-searchable in the compliant 'cloud file system'.

THE SPEAKER

Anthony is the one of the founders of RecordPoint Software and a technology professional with 15 years' experience in information technology focusing on records management and collaboration.

Currently the Chief Technology Officer for RecordPoint Anthony has worked with a broad range of corporate and government business problems including enterprise content management, technical publishing, product data management, and records management. Anthony is also a member of the Microsoft SharePoint Partner Council and a Microsoft Virtual Technical Specialist for Microsoft (focusing on records). Anthony and his team are focused on building the next wave of collaboration centric and cloud based compliance applications for SharePoint and beyond.

RecordPoint

Business process digitisation for both hard copy and electronic records

Fabian De Angelis, EzeScan

Business process digitisation forms part of the daily routine for many organisations needing to create digital objects of hardcopy records. In this presentation the speaker will focus on how customers utilise EzeScan to initiate intelligent automated business workflows on records that enter the business in an electronic format.

Make your life easy!

- Process incoming electronic records automatically
- Reduce manual data entry
- Ensure regulatory compliance
- Ensure digitisation standards compliance
- No ongoing volume charges.

THE SPEAKER

Fabian is the Support & Services Manager for Outback Imaging Pty Ltd, the home of 'EzeScan'. Although he has the challenging role of keeping the support and reseller network up-skilled in everything about EzeScan, Fabian enjoys regularly visiting his customers onsite. Many of which are part of the records management community. Fabian has been working in document / records management for over 10 years and has worked on many EDRMS implementations.

ezescan. transforming paper into knowledge

Transitioning from paper and content chaos to a digital dream!

Dean Beatty, Recall ANZ

Did you know that a third of small and mid-sized companies and over 20% of large companies have yet to embrace any paper-free processes? Do you know how your company compares? This session will help you identify where your company stands today on the digital maturity spectrum versus your peers. Dean will also share case studies of companies who made the choice to move ahead on the digital maturity spectrum and how they are benefiting from that decision.

THE SPEAKER

Dean Beatty has over 19 years' experience in sales leadership, cross boarder business development and outsource solution design and delivery. Dean joined Recall in 2008 after serving three years with Macquarie Bank as Head of Relationships in Sydney. Prior to this Dean spent 16 years with American Express and held several leadership positions including Area Director South and East Africa based in Johannesburg and Vice President Sales North America based in New York.

recall™ Your Information. Securely Managed.

Beyond compliance – information governance, the enabler of productivity, efficiency and collaborative working

Paula J Smith, OpenText

When we hear the term 'governance', we often think of compliance and rigid regimes that stop the business from moving forward. In this session, we will explore the true value of information governance as an enabler, providing you with real-life examples and perspectives from a range of organisations, management levels and professionals. We will give you practical tips and advice to not only help you sell ⇒

your governance program to the executive, but also share our learnings with you so that you may execute your plan and lay the foundations for long-term success.

THE SPEAKER

Paula has been involved in the records and information management industry for over 10 years, in a variety of enterprise content management (ECM) roles both in the UK and New Zealand. Her extensive experience spans across operational records management, project implementation and strategic ECM/Information Management, where collectively, she has filled roles as project sponsor, project manager, resource manager, information architect, strategist, governance advisor, subject matter expert, system implementer, change manager, trainer and process designer.

She currently works for OpenText as Senior ECM Consultant, and is working with a number of clients on a variety of projects across the ECM space, as well as being the team's self-confessed records geek.

OPENTEXT
THE CONTENT EXPERTS

Achieving defensible governance for on-premise and Cloud-based records

Bassam Zarkout, RSD Information Governance Solutions

Life used to be simple – information was very well structured, lived in a handful of well-managed repositories and the lifecycle of information was straightforward. Over the last decade companies have amassed vast quantities of business information, stored across content management systems, data warehouses, physical warehouses, desktops, file shares, back-up archives, mobile devices, and now cloud based services. To complicate matters, information is also scattered across jurisdictions and business units – each with its own requirements, laws, and regulations.

The cloud is exciting and new for some organisations, offering great benefits to users and IT – but at what cost? As more and more companies and employees see the value in cloud offerings, organisations struggle to deliver governance according to corporate policy and regulations. Today, most executives understand the need to evolve their organisation's records management program into global information governance for all information. Although many organisations recognise they need to establish and implement an information governance program that's defensible in the courts and audit, the challenge of actually doing it seems Herculean, so for them, progressing to information governance is deferred.

THE SPEAKER

Bassam Zarkout is a thought leader and public speaker in the Enterprise Information Governance Platforms space (conception, design, development and implementation). Zarkout has over 19 years' experience in information governance solutions, including records management, ediscovery, regulatory compliance, data privacy, and audit trail management. He has a deep understanding of the impact of laws, regulations and standards in these areas and also has in-depth experience with various document-centric technologies including ECM, email archiving, report output archiving, imaging, and workflow. Over the past 10 years, Zarkout has been involved in enterprise information governance projects at large enterprises, including US Department of Defense, major global financial services organisations (banks and insurance companies) and major automotive manufacturers.

rsd

THE TRADE EXHIBITION

Another key feature of inForum is the Trade Exhibition, featuring records and information management relevant businesses on more than 40 stands. During session times the exhibition is open free to the public and many exhibitors have invited their customers to visit them during these public opening times. If you aren't attending inForum but would like to take advantage of having so many vendors exhibiting in one place and at one time, drop by during the following times:

EXHIBITION OPEN TO PUBLIC	
Monday 9th September	9.30am-12.00pm and 1.30pm-4.30pm
Tuesday 10th September	9.30am-12.30pm and 1.30pm-4.30pm
Wednesday 11th September	8.30am-12.30pm

CANBERRA SITE VISITS

2013 also represents Canberra's Centenary and as Canberra is Australia's information capital as well as its capital city, inForum 2013 features site visits to the National Film and Sound Archive, the National Gallery of Australia, the National Library of Australia, the National Archives of Australia, the Australian War Memorial and the National Museum of Australia.

Each site visit includes an exclusive presentation, behind-the-scenes tour and a viewing of their current exhibition. ❖

Clockwise from top left: National Gallery of Australia; National Museum of Australia; Australian War Memorial; National Library of Australia; National Film and Sound Archive

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: TOURISM AUSTRALIA (3); AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TOURISM; NLA; NATIONAL FILM AND SOUND ARCHIVE

ARE YOU IN THE RUNNING FOR THIS YEAR'S ARTICLE OF THE YEAR AWARD?

The Recall RIM Professionals Australasia Article of the Year Award will be presented next month, along with a host of other RIM Professionals Australasia awards, at the inForum convention in Canberra in September.

All articles published in the last four issues of *iQ* – November 2012 to this August 2013 issue – written by RIM Professionals Australasia members or employees of organisations which are corporate members of the RIM Professionals Australasia, automatically go into the running for the award.

From a shortlist of three finalists, the winner will be determined by a panel made up of the Editor of *iQ*, Heather Millar, Debbie Prout, A/Chairman of RIM Professionals Australasia Board, and a representative of the award's sponsor, Recall.

The judges are looking for articles which are original, engagingly written, display a thorough grasp of the subject matter, and which contribute to industry information and debate.

Past winners have included a dramatic account of a famous RM legal case, case studies, an entertaining look at the future of recordkeeping which went on to be republished in the UK's *Bulletin* – and last year's winner *Digital data hoarding and the implications for digital storage*, by Kate Cumming and Janet Knight (August 2012).

Articles eligible for this year's Recall RIM Professionals Australasia Article of the Year Award include:

- **Nov 12**
  - Cutting across silos for a new RIM/ICT future. By Janet Upton
  - Transform your EDRMS outcomes. By Michelle Linton & Kevin Dwyer
  - Ending the cold war between RIM and ICT. By Leith Robinson
  - Tensions heat up ICA's Brisbane congress. By Mike Steemson
- **Feb 13**
  - The future of records management: a personal view. By Deborah Talbot
  - Access denied – navigating the digital information security maze. By Michelle Linton & Kevin Dwyer
  - The case for aggregated information management roles. By Joy Siller

- **May 13**
  - How to write a recordkeeping policy. By Glen Morgan
  - Survey shows best and worst news for RIM. By Mike Steemson
  - The Getting of Wisdom. By Allen Hancock
  - Information governance: new approach or old news? By Kerri Siatiras
  - Embracing the digital future. By Michelle Linton & Kevin Dwyer
- **Aug 13**
  - Writing a business case. By Glen Morgan
  - The changing landscape of information and records management. By Linda Shave
  - Unlocking the value of information. By Michelle Linton and Kevin Dwyer
  - Connecting with employees during Information Awareness Month 2013. By Alison Toohey and Ann Goode ❖

This year's award winner will receive a ColesMyer Gift Card valued at $250. Three finalists will be advised prior to inForum, and the winner announced at the Canberra convention.

A word from our sponsor

Recall is again excited to be the sponsor of the Australasia Article of the Year. The articles have been of extremely high standard and very informative. The nominated articles this year show us that as an industry we are looking at a very exciting future with a drive towards innovative solutions.

Recall is committed to maintaining the exemplary quality of records management that we enjoy here in Australia and the Pacific and we continue to lead the way forward by bringing together state of the art technologies and quality industry experts to provide the best service and solutions for our customers. Our aim is to be their partner in business, and provide effective, secure and technologically advanced solutions.

Seeing beyond the sea of big data

A silent storm is surging across a landscape of legacy IT systems, outdated information management processes and rigid inter-departmental data silos, tearing them apart. This storm is called big data. Across Europe, mid-market firms are struggling to cope, overwhelmed by the volume and variety of information impacting the business. What can they do to meet the challenge and why is it so important that they do?

By **Christian Toon**

story snapshot

A study conducted by Iron Mountain into mid-sized firms in Europe found a broadly consistent picture emerged of well-informed companies eager to embrace the potential of big data across the business – but hampered by under-resourced IT departments and looking for outside help to cope with the rapidly increasing volume of information.

Earlier this year Iron Mountain set out to discover how mid-market firms in Europe feel about big data. We wanted to understand their hopes and concerns, and to gain an insight into the practical, everyday realities mid-market IT departments are facing when it comes to managing big data. We spoke to 760 front-line information managers in different departments and business sectors in the UK, France, Germany, Hungary, the Netherlands and Spain.

In particular the study found the following:

- **IT departments across Europe are being pushed to the brink by information**. They are struggling with a surge in data volume and variety at a time when budgets are being cut, headcount is being reduced and targets are being increased. Other challenges include a loss of control over the IT budget and a shortage of data science skills.
- **There is a chasm between companies' understanding of big data and their ability to harness it for business benefit.** Half of European businesses have no idea how to make the most of big data and 21% say they won't even try.
- A small but significant 10% of respondents say that **senior executives do not believe big data is an issue**, a figure that rises to 21% in the manufacturing sector.
- **This lack of action is not down to ignorance about big data**, but rather the fact that most firms are still very much at the start of their big data journey. Companies are focused mainly on the challenge of data volume (used to define big data by 54% of respondents) and flow (nominated by 45%.) Traditional interdepartmental boundaries and fragmented responsibilities are also hampering the effective use of big data.
- **There is clear evidence that job roles and responsibilities are evolving to reflect the impact of big data – with greater change to come**. Around a third (38%) of respondents believe big data is making their role significantly more important to the business and nearly three quarters (71%) of all respondents believe that big data will have a greater impact on their role over the next three years.
- **Just over half (51%) of all businesses surveyed say that although they have not yet started to change the way they manage information** in response to the challenges raised by big data, it is becoming more pressing to do so.
- **Mid-market firms understand the many potential benefits of big data – and around a quarter of firms are already using big data to achieve some of these goals**. Companies believe that most business areas, in most sectors, stand to benefit from the effective management of big data, with the biggest winners considered to be customer-centric, data- and process- intensive and research & development-based organisations.

THE BIG PICTURE ON BIG DATA

In February 2011, an industry analyst at Gartner typed the words 'big data' into an online search engine. The search returned 2.9 million results. When he tried again in 2012, the search returned 22 million results. There is an awful lot of data about big data.

Companies trying to understand what it is all about and what big data really means for day-to-day operations are often left trying to navigate their way through the hundreds if not thousands of reports and articles available, or just trying to tackle each day as it happens.

The standard definition of big data is 'datasets whose size is beyond the capacity of typical database software tools to capture, store, manage and analyse.' However, there is a growing appreciation that big data is about more than just volume; it is about the ever-increasing velocity of data, the growing variety of data (including both structured and unstructured forms such as emails and social media messaging), its veracity (how reliable and 'clean' the data is) and its value.

Companies tend to progress through this list as their ability to harness and use big data becomes more sophisticated. Our study confirms that most mid-sized firms are still very much at the start of this journey – and are looking for help to address the challenge of volume and move on to the next stage.

⇒

A storm is full of energy, and the information storm is no exception

Why is it so important that firms get to grips with big data?

According to Gartner[1] worldwide information volume is growing annually by 59%. Every day, we create 2.5 quintillion bytes of data (2.5 followed by 18 zeros), and 90% of the data in the world today was created in the last two years. This data comes from everywhere: sensors used to gather climate or electricity meter information, digital pictures and videos, e- and m-commerce transactions, and mobile phone GPS signals, to name but a few.

Social media is in the vanguard of this trend. The world creates around 12 terabytes worth of tweets every day (in seconds a terabyte is equal to 32,000 years). Consumer brands need to know how to collect, analyse and harness the insight from this for better customer awareness and service.

Real-time data access and analysis is becoming the norm. Financial payment firms need to know how to scrutinise the millions of transactions taking place simultaneously in order to spot and intercept potential fraud. The police need to be able to monitor the output of hundreds of surveillance cameras in order to identify points of imminent unrest.

These are just a few examples; in today's fast moving and competitive business environment, big data offers mid-sized firms across all sectors an opportunity to find new insights, improve customer relations and supply chain management, make the business more agile and responsive and answer questions that could previously have been beyond its reach. The financial returns could be phenomenal.

The Centre for Economic and Business Research[2] expects the value of big data to be worth £40.7 billion a year to the UK by 2017; with some of the largest gains expected in the manufacturing (from £6 billion today to £45 billion by 2017), retail (£3.4 billion to £32.4 billion) and professional services (£3 billion to £27.6 billion) sectors. These gains will come from areas such as improved customer intelligence, supply chain management, product innovation and fraud prevention.

According to McKinsey[3], the use of big data in retailing could generate a 60% boost in net margin, with a 0.5 to 1% annual productivity growth. In the manufacturing sector it could lead to a 50% reduction in product development assembly costs.

In short, big data also comes with some pretty big numbers. Yet for many mid-market firms without endless resources or expertise, the truth is that today big data is more of a hindrance than a help.

THE OBSTACLES: THE EVERYDAY TERROR OF TERABYTES

Our research among mid-sized firms confirms that IT departments across Europe are struggling with a surge in data volume and variety at a time when budgets are being cut, headcount is being reduced and targets are being increased.

The practical day-to-day demands of dealing with the data deluge include the following:

- Information volumes and formats becoming unwieldy, using up valuable disc space and bandwidth and causing IT systems to slow down. Data-intensive formats such as video or image files forming part of mountains of structured and unstructured data – all coming from a wider range of devices (resulting in data duplication), are proving near impossible for over-stretched IT teams to handle. Costs are soaring and more resource and additional expertise are needed to manage and make the most of this data as demanded by the rest of the business.
- An urgent need for increased bandwidth to access and move all this data. More 'pipe' costs money and can further congest and slow down IT systems. Even when data is stored in the cloud to address the storage and universal access challenge, the need to up- and download data can slow down the service and affect productivity.
- More complex and time-consuming data back-up and storage needs. For example, there may simply not be enough time to complete a comprehensive data back-up outside office hours (such as overnight).
- This results in significant business continuity risks. Should a crisis occur where data is lost or damaged, it will take considerably longer to restore information and get the company back up to full speed.

IT departments in medium-sized firms also face other challenges that have repercussions for the management of big data. **The most notable of these is a growing loss of control over the IT budget.**

According to Gartner, five years from now the chief marketing officer will spend more on IT than the CIO; and by 2015 around 35% of the IT budget will be controlled by departments other than IT[4]. A recent global study by the Economist Intelligence Unit[5] revealed that for nearly half (48%) of the companies surveyed someone other than the CIO now drives the firm's big data processes.

Not all big data will come from outside the business. With the number of business users with two or more mobile devices expected to grow more than three-fold over the next four years – to 27% from 8% in 2011 – and data-intensive desktop video conferencing to surge by 43%[6], organisations across all sectors face considerable challenges in managing their own day-to-day information load.

The challenge of departmental boundaries and fragmented responsibilities

Big data is challenging traditional departmental boundaries. To effectively collect, analyse and draw insight from big

data companies need to break down information silos, and the organisation must learn how to communicate and share results across the business. This requires changes in employee behaviour and culture as well as process – and change can be painful.

Furthermore, the mid-market trend for information management – and thereby big data – to be the responsibility of different individuals, including records managers, heads of department and IT, for example, could mean no one has overall insight or authority.

The C-suite has a vital role to play in both these areas: setting and communicating company culture, and unifying and integrating big data across departmental responsibilities. So it is worrying to see from our research that in 10% of firms' senior executives do not believe big data is an issue. This is supported by a global CapGemini[7] study which found that as many as 55% of companies feel big data management is not viewed strategically at senior levels of their organisation. It is vital that this is addressed as a matter of urgency.

Finally, there is the skills issue. Big data analysis demands a new and sophisticated skill set, one that combines mathematics, programming, data analysis and visualisation skills with curiosity, creativity and story-telling expertise. The 'softer' creativity and story-telling skills are the ones that will ensure the insight of big data is of benefit to the rest of the business.

THE OPPORTUNITIES: BUSINESS WITHOUT BOUNDARIES

Companies believe that most business areas, in most sectors, stand to benefit from the effective management of big data, with the biggest winners considered to be customer-centric, data- and process-intensive and research & development-based organisations.

This is reflected in companies' own aims for big data use and implementation:

- There is significant enthusiasm for using big data in customer-relationship management (26% are already using it and a further 59% plan to)
- To support better decision-making (35% already use it and a further 45 plan to)
- To support marketing campaigns and strategies (27% already use and a further 48% plan to)
- To support operations and supply chains (26% already use and 56% plan to)
- To help in quality control procedures (28% already use and 47% plan to)
- To assist in audit/compliance and other legal processes (26 already use and 48% plan to)
- To better manage risk (28% already do and 56% plan to)

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THE REALITY CHECKLIST

The challenge of big data is not one that can, or should, be solved on one day.

We believe that the place to begin is with a robust, yet flexible information management framework. One that acknowledges the realities and constraints faced by a European mid-market firm and provides practical steps a company can implement and build on as the full impact of big data becomes clear:

1 **Start at the end**. Define the business goals and objectives and build your big data strategy around it.

2 **Shrink the problem: make the challenge manageable**. Everything is changing so rapidly that trying to find the perfect solution that addresses every eventuality is impossible. Decide on the information of greatest potential or risk to your business and focus your time and resources on harnessing that.

3 **Get to grips with incoming data**. Prioritise data coming in, understand what you need to keep and simply delete the rest. Big data can be messy, so don't waste too much time cleaning everything that comes in – again focus on what you want to keep.

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4 **Have a plan for what's left**. Segment data by date, for example; anything older than a particular date can be archived on back-up tapes in a secure archive. Dispensing with junk mail alone could free up between 30 and 40% of the data space on your servers. **Tape remains the best medium for long-term data storage: more environment-friendly and cost-effective than disk and more reliable and secure than the cloud.**

5 **Establish company-wide, scalable, big-data-resilient information management systems** that will help you to channel, analyse or archive unstructured digital content such as emails and social media.

6 **Know your legal obligations**. In technology, law always lags behind practice and in the big data world it is particularly important to understand emerging data protection and privacy law around social media, real-time consumer data and location-based information.

7 **Avoid analysis paralysis**. Big data informs and enhances judgement and intuition, it should not replace them. Big data volumes have immense potential for improved decision-making, but can also cause delay as managers try to sift through thousands if not millions of data points in order to make a decision.

8 **Opt for progress over perfection**. Getting something in place is the most important. Design data management policies in good faith and them implement them consistently across the business. What you decide will touch everyone in the business so it is vital to get all employees on board.

9 **Make it easy for all departments to see your information**. People need access to the data, but they want it to be painless, transparent and easy. Ensure employees know how to search for and analyse the data so they can release its value. Integrate paper into the process by digitising it.

10 **View the data in context**. Data in isolation is essentially worthless. Don't get so lost in the detail looking for patterns and trends that you lose sight of the big picture.

11 **Consider your carbon footprint**. Tape consumes a fraction of the power of disk, and even less than all that data stored in the cloud (which in reality means on a permanently switched-on, artificially-cooled server in a data centre somewhere.)

12 **Know where the data is and who is accountable for it**. Always.

CONCLUSION

Big data is a transformational force whose impact we are really only just beginning to grasp. Away from the fog of hype and the over-inflated promises that invariably accompany an emerging trend, this study has tried to focus on the every-day challenges facing hardworking mid-market firms across Europe trying to get to grips with a surge in data on top of all their other responsibilities and goals.

We have hopefully shown that realising the huge potential of big data insight is wonderful, but needs to be set against the challenge of backing up a vast volume of data while employee desktops are shut down, everyone has gone home for supper and the cleaners are vacuuming the carpet.

Our reality check list aims to address this. It is a list that companies everywhere – not just mid-market firms – can use to structure their information management and prepare for the future.

A storm is full of energy, and the information storm is no exception. To harness this energy for your business you don't need all the answers today. But you do need an approach to information management that can bend without breaking in the gales to come. ❖

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Christian Toon holds the position of Head of Information Risk for European Operations at storage and information management company, Iron Mountain. An extended version of this paper can be downloaded from <http://eu.ironmountain.com/forms/BigData>

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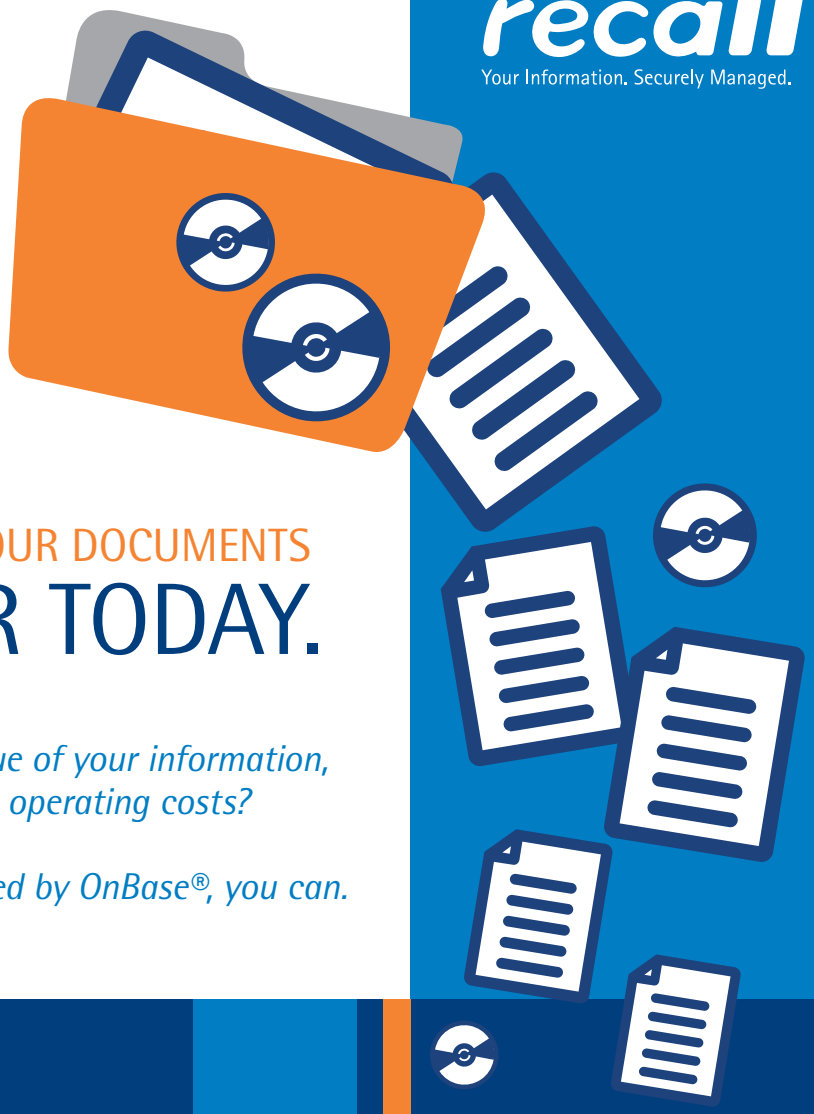

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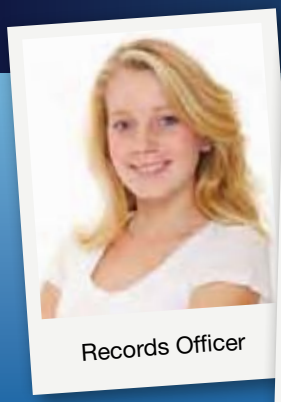
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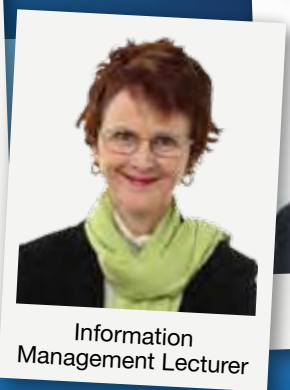
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