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# 8 reasons

you need a strategy  
for managing information  
- before it's too late...

*document management, records management, email management,  
enterprise 2.0, imaging, scanning, collaboration, BPM and ECM*

## About this e-Book

My thanks to all the guest bloggers who contributed their work to this e-book.

The intention of this e-book and the other e-books in the series is NOT to provide a set of detailed technical requirements for how to create a strategy for managing information. There are other places for that -- the AIIM web site is a good place to start.

Rather, the purpose is to increase awareness across a broad cross-section of organizations and industries

about the kinds of issues you need to think about when you begin to adopt a more strategic approach to managing information.

So the purpose of this series is educational and evangelical rather than technical. You are free to share the link to anyone to download the book -- and we encourage you to do so.

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## 8 reasons you need a strategy for managing information -- before it's too late



*The Chinese use two brush strokes to write the word 'crisis.' One brush stroke stands for danger; the other for opportunity. In a crisis, be aware of the danger - but recognize the opportunity.*

John F. Kennedy (1917 - 1963), Speech in Indianapolis, April 12, 1959

Wikipedia has two definitions of a tipping point:  
1 -- The point at which a slow, reversible change becomes irreversible, often with dramatic consequences.  
2 -- The point in time at which some new technology becomes mainstream.

In terms of managing information, both definitions have implications for end users.

Let's start with the first definition. For many years, organizations have survived by "winging it" when it comes to information management.

"Yes, we need a strategy for managing the financial assets of the organization, so we'll invest in an accounting system."

"Yes, we need a strategy for managing the physical assets and their associated data, so we'll put in place an ERP system."

"Yes, our human assets are important, so we'll spend money on an HR system."

But a *strategy* for managing *information*? Treat our information assets with the same rigor and discipline as we do our money, inventories, and people? OK, maybe we'll automate a specific process. But in terms of getting our arms around the legendary "80% of the information in our organization that is unstructured," we'll get to that sometime, someday, thank you very much.

The sheer quantity of information that is descending upon our organizations is rapidly creating a set of circumstances in which we will not longer be able to just "wing it." The strategic imperative to manage information effectively will soon become irreversible -- with devastating consequences for those who assume it is otherwise.

In terms of the second definition, we are in the middle of the exponential increase in the quantity of unconventional information.

As our employees reach outside the firewall to access

critical expertise, networks, content, and markets -- and as we simultaneously require 365/7/24 availability -- the lines between what is "organizational" and "personal" become somewhat mindless.

Inside the firewall, there is a growing frustration with email as the primary tool that we use for collaboration. Many organizations are in the process of deploying an entirely new set of extraordinarily powerful collaboration and content creation tools -- often with no thought to how all this eventually add up.

Social media both inside and outside the organization is becoming mainstream, creating an entirely new set of tipping point imperatives.

So my first thesis is that we are collectively approaching an information management tipping point. And my second thesis: Organizations better get their S\*\*T together before it's too late.

How did we get here? How did all of this creep up on us?

I came across a blog post recently about a Newsweek article from 20 years ago. It was a technology forecast from 1988. Now for those my kids' age, 1988 seems like it was a million years ago -- maybe shortly after the Jurassic period. But for most of us in the business world, 1988 seems like it was just a few moments ago.

The technology forecast talked about all sorts of cool things we could expect in the next 20 years:

*Desktop computers will replace pens and paper.*

*Buildings full of books will be stored on optical disks.*

*Flexible software will allow students to write their own programs.*

*Machines will take calls, write memos, and organize the busiest of executive schedules.*

*Using groupware, machines will talk to each other.*

And so on and so on...

Lots of the coming revolutions could be viewed as the result of the logical extension of Moore's Law (that the density of transistors on a chip doubles every two years) and its impact on processing and storage capabilities. But as I read on, it dawned on me that there was something missing in the vision of the future.

Four things actually.

Care to hazard a guess?

Number one -- no internet.

Number two -- no fiber optics.

Number three -- no cellular technology.

Number four -- no 30G of songs in your pocket.

Wow.

These are the final ingredients to the Moore's law stew

that change *everything*. These are the final ingredients that have created the amazing technological convergence in which we currently find ourselves. This is a convergence that eventually *must* and *will* require a revolution in the way organizations approach the management of information.

So what are the characteristics of this convergence?

What are the 8 reasons why you need a strategy for managing information?

And why is there now an urgency for getting moving with this and finally managing our information assets as *strategic assets* rather than allowing them to pile up in an ever-growing digital landfill?

## **8 reasons you need a strategy for managing information -- before it's too late**

### **1 -- A tidal wave of information.**

A study by IDC a few years back concluded that there are currently 281 billion exabytes of information in the Digital Universe. So how much is this? Well...an exabyte is a million million megabytes. Thanks a lot. To put it in a bit of perspective, a small novel contains about a megabyte of information. So in other words, the Digital Universe is equal to 12 stacks of novels (fewer if the chosen novel is a big fat one like Harry Potter 6 or one of those Ken Follett Pillars of the Earth

deals) stretching from the earth to the sun. So it's a big number, whatever it is.

But I think the way to think about this is to note that IDC concludes that *30% of this information is business related*. And it concludes that the overall quantity of information will grow by a factor of 10 between 2006 and 2011.

The point here is that it is not unrealistic to think that your employees -- who currently say they are overwhelmed by the volume of information they must manage and who currently say they spend hours each day just dealing with email -- *will need to manage 10X as much information in the near future*.

How will they handle this tidal wave? Simply extrapolating the current tools and approaches to deal with this tidal wave will not solve the problem. A new approach is needed. And yet many organizations are frankly in a state of "they don't know what they don't know" at best and a state of denial at worst. 89% of organizations believe that effective information management is strategically important to their future. Over 60% believe that they could demonstrate that their electronic information is accurate, accessible, and trustworthy. We know from close examination of thousands of organizations that the latter *can't possibly be the case*.

## 2 -- Ubiquitous computing.

In his recent book *Free*, Chris Anderson quotes a French economist from the 1700s, Jean Baptiste Say -- "Supply creates its own demand."

Anderson's point in the context of information management is that the inexorable march of Moore's law relative to computing, storage, and bandwidth technologies is rapidly driving marginal costs of these capabilities to zero, which is driving them to be incorporated into *every facet of the economy*.

We are rapidly reaching the point, whether it is through the streamlining of PCs into truly mobile network devices (think netbook) or the enhancing of cellular devices into mini computing devices (think iPhone), where computing capabilities are truly ubiquitous. Clay Shirky makes the point that technologies don't truly become interesting and mainstream until they become boring, and that is where we are headed. In many ways, the "fashion statement" of network and cellular devices (I think particularly of the discussion with my daughter during our last phone upgrade) has become just as important (if not more so) than their technical capabilities.

The implications of this for organizations are profound. Your people are constantly connected. Your people expect instant connectivity. They expect to work the same way sitting on a beach as they do in the office.

Ask them what their most important applications are and they are likely to say things like Twitter and Facebook and LinkedIn and Google Docs and Flickr and a feed reader. Even if they have absolutely no malice in their hearts, they are likely to have organizational documents and information on their phones and on their laptops and on their home computers. *How will you exert some element of control over all this?*

At the same time, the customers of all this ubiquitous computing power are likely YOUR customers. And if not YOUR customers, then definitely the customers of your customers. Do you have a strategy to capitalize on this potential? Nationwide Insurance is currently showcasing an application for the iPhone in which customers can instantly report accidents and receive payment on the spot. What is the equivalent in your industry? Or are you just waiting for the phone to ring -- and likely have an automated response system in place anyway.

The point is that the strategy that organizations use to put this ubiquitous computing infrastructure to use will increasingly determine winners and losers. And if you haven't made this strategy a priority, how can you hope to come out on top?

## 3 -- Social everything.

I confess. There is much that is stupid on-line. A few

minutes on YouTube can leave you shaking your head about the future of humanity.

But to deny that there is *something* important going on is crazy. I remember in the early days of e-mail I had a boss who didn't like it and couldn't master the "reply" concept and used to just blindly respond to questions on email with answers like, "DAMN IT, NO" or "HOW STUPID CAN YOU BE?" There would be no reference to the original question, which obviously left many of us in some degree of career uncertainty.

My point is that many executives have a similar "hands over their ears and eyes" denial posture now when it comes to social media. "No, of course we can't allow employees to access Facebook on work computers." "No, of course, we can't allow employees to connect on Linked In." "No, you can't have a blog; it will be a time waster at best and a source of competitor espionage at worse."

At the same time, consider a few data points:

In a sign that yesterday's edge is tomorrow's yawn, in 2009 Boston University stopped issuing email addresses for incoming freshmen. The reason? Most Gen X and Gen Y types consider email irrelevant (Socialnomics).

According to Nielsen, visiting social sites is now the 4<sup>th</sup> most popular activity on-line, ahead of personal email.

34% of bloggers offer opinions about products and services -- YOUR products and services (Socialnomics).

78% of consumers trust peer recommendations (Socialnomics).

57% of social media users feel better served by companies that connect with them on social media (2008 Cone Business in Social Media Study).

Developing a more strategic approach to social networks and computing is not easy. One needs to have a thick skin. But if it is not part of your information management strategy you will increasingly be left behind.

#### **4 -- Collaboration without governance is a disaster.**

*The New York Times* recently ran an article about the wave of SharePoint implementations that are sweeping across corporate America. Most articles about Microsoft Office SharePoint Services (MOSS) point out that its \$1 billion in first year sales make it one of the most successful software launches in history.

Of course, SharePoint is only part of the drive to place corporate-hardened collaboration and social media tools on the desktop. In addition to SharePoint, other products like IBM's Quickr and EMC's CenterStage and Open Text's LiveLink and soon the Google Wave are sweeping through organizations, placing extraordinarily

powerful collaboration and content creation tools in the hands of individual knowledge workers and project teams.

Often, all this deployment is without a heck of a lot of governance or planning. According to an AIIM survey, 57% of organizations lack an executive-endorsed plan for where SharePoint will be used and where it will not. And I'm sure the same % would likely apply to deployment of the other tools listed above.

Let's see. This all sounds somewhat familiar. What does it remind me of? Oh yeah, 15 years ago we all deployed the most powerful document creation tools the world has ever seen to every desktop, without any thought whatsoever about what we wanted to come out the other end. The end product for most organizations is a mess of whacky shared drives and nonexistent file structures and taxonomies and in essence a digital landfill.

So a key part of creating an information management strategy for the next decade is thinking through what you are trying to do with all this collaborative capability, how it will fit together with the other information systems in your organization, how you will find stuff across these systems, and how you will eventually get rid of everything that you don't need to keep.

## 5 -- The era of simplicity.

We have a toaster at home that purports to do many things. It boasts that it is not merely a toaster -- it aspires to being a *toaster oven*. It can bake things at various temperatures. It can broil. It has a timer that can go off at a pre-defined time. It even has a little booklet to tell you how to use it.

Unfortunately, it also fails in its core mission -- to toast. When you put bread in it, there is no way to pop it up early if it appears done like you used to be able to do with a regular toaster. If you put anything unusual in the toaster slot, it tends to slide down into the oven part, get caught on the coils, and start burning. The only way to resolve this is to unplug it and rummage around with a fork in the toaster oven's internal organs.

My point of this story is that the revolution in computing, bandwidth and storage is pushing us in two conflicting directions in terms of our information management priorities.

One is in the direction of ever-increasing capabilities and enhancements and versions, many of which we fail to digest before the next version comes rolling out. And which likely will ultimately require unplugging and rummaging around in the software's internal organs.

The other direction is toward simplicity. The best example -- I admit I am biased -- is the iPhone. Who

would have predicted that a phone with an entirely new operating system would have a chance as a mobile computing device? Who could have predicted the thousands and thousands of new applications built upon this operating system? Who could have predicted this enormous success?

Well, frankly, anyone who used the device and compared it to the alternatives at the time. Even from the start, the iPhone was a pleasure to use.

"A pleasure to use" is not the phrase that many of our knowledge workers would use to describe the information management systems that we give them. It is also not the phrase that many of our customers would use to describe the experience of interacting with our externally facing web systems.

In *Work 2.0 -- Rewriting the Contract*, Bill Jensen describes a sort of Bill of Rights for the information management systems of the future:

- *Clarity*: My manager organizes and shares information in ways that help me work smarter and faster.
- *Navigation*: In my workplace, it is easy for me to find whomever or whatever I need to work smart enough, fast enough.
- *Fulfillment of Basics*: In my workplace, it is easy to get what I need to get my work done—right information, right way, in the right amount.

- *Usability*: In my workplace, corporate-built stuff (like IT, training, and support) is easy to use.
- *Speed*: In my workplace, that same corporate-built stuff gets me what I need, as fast as I need it.
- *Time*: My company is respectful of my time and attention, and is focused on using it wisely and effectively.

## 6 -- The Tree-Hugger's Time Has Come.

According to Gartner, corporate social responsibility will soon be a higher board- and executive-level priority than regulatory compliance. And key to this credibility will be the environmental footprint of an organization.

To put the information management part of this challenge into perspective, consider this: If the U.S. cut its office paper use by roughly 10 percent or 540,000 tons, greenhouse gas emissions would fall by 1.6 million tons — equivalent to taking 280,000 cars off the road for a year. There are over 4 trillion paper documents in the U.S., growing at a rate of 22% per year.

Key to cutting paper use is viewing it in the broader context of information management. For 56% of organizations, the volume of paper records is *increasing*. The average office worker uses 10,000 sheets of copy paper each year and wastes about 1,410 of these pages. With the average cost of each wasted page being about six cents, a company with 500 employees could be spending \$42,000 per year on wasted prints.

There is a very compelling *environmental* case that can be made for reducing paper use through the digitization of key business processes. But a key element for organizations to consider is that the *economic* case for reducing paper use is just as compelling. Among the benefits:

- Direct and immediate cost savings on paper and shipping.
- Increased process effectiveness and efficiency.
- The potential to fully integrate field staff and offices into the information capabilities of the organization rather than relying on daily overnight mail.
- Reduced real estate costs through the elimination of filing.
- Improved morale as an integrated information infrastructure allows for greater flexibility in working arrangements.
- Reduced off-site storage as the sheer volume of what needs to be physically preserved declines.

## 7 -- You can no longer do this manually.

Many organizations have survived the first wave of the information revolution by assembling a patchwork quilt of technology and manual systems:

It costs \$20 to file a document, \$120 to find a misfiled document, and \$220 to reproduce a lost document.

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<http://www.aiim.org/8things>

7.5 percent of all documents get lost; 3 percent of the remainder get misfiled.

The average document is photocopied 19 times.

Professionals spend 5-15% of their time reading information, but up to 50% of their time looking for the right information.

The viability of this manual patchwork strategy will increasingly be in question as the volume of information that must be managed rises. We are rapidly approaching the point at which only additional *technology* to *automate* information ingestion and digestion can solve the problem.

Very soon, organizations that rely on individual employees to smooth out the gaps and white spaces in their information management strategy will be at a distinct disadvantage.

## 8 -- Mismanagement risks are rising.

As the complexity of the information management problem increases, so too do the risks of making mistakes.

Often these risks are viewed purely in terms of the risk of non-compliance or the risks of being caught unprepared for an e-discovery request. While these are

important and are often an important driver of action because the costs can be easily quantified, they underestimate the risk exposure of failing to manage information properly.

There are a host of information management risks beyond those usually associated with "compliance" that are described later in this volume by George Parapadakis of IBM. "We didn't keep it." "It was on the disk that crashed." "Hey, that's not my signature!" "Where is it?" It is only by adopting a *risk management* mindset to information management (similar to the one you might take with managing finances) that you can fully appreciate the risks of mismanaging information.

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So what does this all mean?

There is a commercial for car repair where the mechanic says, "You can pay me now, or you can pay me later. But you will pay me."

The information management landscape is changing quickly and dramatically and the stakes of getting it wrong are rising. Now is the time to finally create and implement a strategy to treat your organization's information as a critical business asset.

Before it's too late.

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## 8 things you need to know about AIIM



This book is the first in a series of "8 things" books focused on pooling the expertise and experiences of those in the AIIM community.

Anyone interested in submitting a topic should contact me at [johnmancini@aiim.org](mailto:johnmancini@aiim.org) or visit my blog, Digital Landfill, at <http://www.aiim.typepad.com>. We try to have a little fun with these lists, under the idea that technology does not, by definition, HAVE to be boring. So if you want to submit a topic, have some fun with it.

Electronic copies of this book are available at <http://www.aiim.org/8things>. We are also preparing an audio book version that you can download at the same link. We can also deliver the "8 things" presentation as a keynote at industry and company conferences.

My thanks go to my daughter, Erin, who has been an assistant editor in this project. Anything that looks good is likely because of her. Any misspellings or horrible judgments in technology or grammar are most likely my fault.

For those of you who are unfamiliar with AIIM, I thought an "8 things" list describing *our* capabilities

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might be in order.

### 1 -- AIIM membership is free.

Yes, you saw that right. I know that's maybe a strange price for an association to charge. Why, you may ask? It's because we think our first objective is to make the educational and informational services of the industry available to as many organizations as possible.

Regular/associate membership is free. Feel free to invite anyone in your organization to be a member. Professional/premium membership is \$125, which provides additional special benefits.

Information on creating a regular/associate membership account (previously called "web users") is available at <http://www.aiim.org/Login.aspx>.

Information on professional/premium membership is available at <http://www.aiim.org/Join-Association-Professional-Membership.aspx>.

### 2 -- AIIM does industry research -- and again, it's free.

AIIM does six regular surveys under the Industry Watch umbrella, each focused on key issues associated with planning, buying, and using information management technologies. AIIM also does special surveys on

particular topics throughout the year.

In contrast to other industry research firms like Gartner and Forrester and IDC, AIIM makes this research available for free. Again, the reason for this is that we want the information available as broadly as possible, and see it as part of our mission to be an evangelist for effective information management.

If you're wondering, we cover the costs of this research through sponsorships paid for by some of the leading companies in the industry.

AIIM research is available at <http://www.aiim.org/research>.

**3 -- AIIM hosts a webinar every week -- and they're not infomercials -- and again, they're free.**

Sometimes I think we may have missed the lesson in business school on pricing.

However, again, our objective is to get information in the hands of people and organizations that need it. In addition, we make a conscious effort to keep our webinars focused on *education* by independent subject matter experts, rather than allow them to become glorified *infomercials* (much as Erin and I personally appreciate the "Magic Bullet" commercials).

Same deal as on the research; costs are covered by

sponsors.

A list of upcoming AIIM educational webinars can be found at <http://www.aiim.org/webinars>, along with a link to past archived webinars.

**4 -- AIIM may be coming to a city near you -- or already be there.**

AIIM does a series of free seminars in cities around the US and Canada. For a full list of cities and dates, go to this link: <http://www.aiim.org/ecmseminar>. Again, they are free.

There are also AIIM chapters in most major cities. A full list can be found here: <http://www.aiim.org/chapters>.

Most of their events are NOT free (they need to cover costs), but they are *very reasonably priced*, usually just to cover the cost of the meal provided.

**5 -- AIIM is the leading provider of document, content, records, and business process management training in the world.**

The [AIIM Certificate Programs](#) are designed from global best practices among AIIM's 65,000 members, and are available as classroom or online training courses leading to AIIM Practitioner, Specialist and Master designations. Courses are available on-line, in public

courses and in private courses on the following topics:

- [Enterprise Content Management \(ECM\)](#): Learn how to take control of your information assets.
- [Business Process Management \(BPM\)](#): Learn how to improve your business processes.
- [Electronic Records Management \(ERM\)](#): Learn how to take control of your electronic records.
- [Enterprise 2.0 \(E2.0\)](#): Learn the best practices of using 2.0 Web technologies to improve collaboration across the enterprise.
- [Information Organization & Access \(Search/IOA\)](#): Learn how to optimize findability and enterprise search.
- [Email Management \(Email\)](#): Learn best practices for managing your corporate email.

More information on AIIM Certificate programs:

<http://www.aiim.org/training>.

Better yet, if you want to try out one of the courses for free, go to <http://www.aiim.org/freetraining> and enter the code AIIM.

Our new [AIIM Essentials](#) programs are short online courses that are focused on very specific topics applicable to any organization, and are a perfect complement to the AIIM Certificate offerings.

- [Imaging & Recognition](#): Learn ways to improve your scanning and recognition processes.

- [Evaluating SharePoint](#): Learn to assess whether, where, and how to use SharePoint.
- [Evaluating SharePoint for Enterprise Deployment](#): Learn how to assess and plan a SharePoint installation beyond the department.
- [Fundamentals of Web Content Management](#): Improve your understanding of WCM technologies.
- [Introduction to Web Analytics Technology](#): Gain a thorough grounding in web analytics technology.
- [Fundamentals of Digital Asset Management](#): Improve your understanding of DAM technologies.
- [Fundamentals of Enterprise Portal Technology](#): Gain a thorough grounding in Enterprise Portal Technology.
- [Fundamentals of E-Discovery](#): Learn ways to build a successful e-discovery process.
- [PDF/A](#): Learn best practices for preserving your organization's digital documents using PDF/A.

More information on the AIIM Essentials programs:

<http://www.aiim.org/essentials>.

**6 -- AIIM has a great magazine, Infonomics, that is NOT boring.**

We take great pride in the fact that our weekly Infonomics newsletter (free), the bimonthly digital Infonomics magazine (free), and the premium print

version of Infonomics (for professional members, \$90 by subscription) provide the best source of regular unbiased information on the industry.

But we take just as much pride in the approach we take. We focus on end users and the fabulous things they are doing with information management technology. We also try to have some fun in the process.

[Subscribe to bimonthly digital Infonomics magazine](#) (free).

[Sign up for Professional premium membership](#) to get the print magazine.

## 7 -- AIIM does industry standards.

AIIM is the ANSI (American National Standards Institute)-accredited organization for information management standards. An overview of the standards program can be found at <http://www.aiim.org/standards>.

AIIM develops best practices, formal national standards, and international standards (through ISO). AIIM holds

the secretariat for a series of document management standards in the international arena, including the core PDF standard and the PDF archiving standard, [PDF/A](#).

## 8 -- AIIM really did get its start as the National Microfilm Association.

We take great pride in the fact that we have been around since the days before people even realized there was anything called content management.

Our roots as the National Microfilm Association reflect the fact that AIIM/NMA has always been first and foremost about the *process* of managing information, and secondly about the technology to do so.

So if you sell information management solutions, or help integrate or resell solutions, or pontificate about stuff going on in the information management space, or most importantly, *USE information management solutions*, WE WANT YOU AS A MEMBER. See #1 for details.

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## 8 things you need to know about information risk



George Parapadakis ([George.Parapadakis@uk.ibm.com](mailto:George.Parapadakis@uk.ibm.com)) is an ECM Advocate at [IBM](#), advising customers and partners on how to maximize the value from their ECM and BPM investments. He has also been monitoring the use of ECM

technologies in the Risk and Compliance field. After 20 years in the Document/Content management and Process/Workflow industry, he's still a believer! George has been an AIIM member since 1995 and you can follow him on Twitter as [@parapadakis](#) or his blog, [For. What It's Worth](#). All opinions expressed here are explicitly George's and not necessarily those of his employer.

Information is a critical asset of every organization. "Information Risk" can be defined as any possible event that prevents critical information from being used as the business intended it to. The most critical information risks are:

### 1 -- We didn't keep it (Non-capture) -- The risk of critical information not being captured into the system.

If the email gets deleted, the attachment is gone for good. Users, driven by delivery pressures and performance controls, often bypass or ignore good housekeeping practices needed for compliance policies and business continuity. By using process-controlled, automated declaration and classification procedures for capturing both paper and electronic records, this risk can be significantly mitigated.

### 2 -- It was on the disk that crashed (Loss) -- The risk of captured information being accidentally removed from the system.

In order to avoid the risk of information being accidentally lost from the system, organizations must invest time in selecting the right storage, availability and disaster recovery architectures. In a controlled environment, the system also needs to provide specific "hold" or "freeze" mechanisms that prevent normal information disposition schedules from inadvertently removing critical information, for example, when litigation is in progress.

### **3 -- That is not my signature (Malice) -- The risk of information being deliberately removed, corrupted or damaged.**

This is defined in the legal context as "spoliation of evidence" which is the "destruction or significant alteration of evidence, or the failure to preserve property for another's use as evidence in pending or reasonably foreseeable litigation." Records are a key part of any successful legal or regulatory defense, but organizations must be able to locate and produce their records with the assurance that they *have not been altered*.

In order to minimize the risk of spoliation, information needs to be captured in a controlled environment where access or deletion of records is only possible through a defined and security controlled disposal processes. All access to records must be monitored through a detailed audit log.

### **4 -- March.xls -- but which year? (Attribution) - The risk of losing the context and metadata describing the information.**

For information to be relevant and useful to the business, the organization needs to ensure that not only documents and content be retained and managed securely, but the context or information used to describe them (metadata, relationships and processes) also need to be carefully managed too. This is especially true in large enterprises where content may be captured

through many different systems and sit in different repositories, but is openly available across the organization through an Enterprise Content Management system.

### **5 -- Where did you get this? It's confidential! (Unauthorized Access) -- The risk of information being accessed by unauthorized persons.**

Information needs to be available to the right people only, for the right use and at the right time. Lax security can not only compromise confidential or sensitive commercial information but also personal details. Complex organizations require sophisticated security policies to stop access to information by any unauthorized person, as well as mechanisms to prevent authorized persons taking the information outside the authorized domain (information leakage).

### **6 -- The system is down (Unavailability) -- The risk of disaster or technical failures, preventing access to the information.**

There is very little value for information that is carefully preserved for posterity, but is not available when you need it to make a decision. IT systems in general are a key operational risk for the organization, posing a threat to business continuity. But whereas loss of electronic process and transaction handling could be temporarily replaced with manual processes, critical information that is locked away in a system that is unavailable cannot be

manually retrieved. Information availability should be managed within the context of an overall business continuity planning.

### **7 -- But where is it? (Findability) -- The risk of information being lost inside the digital landfill due to lack of sufficient classification.**

In most business environments today, information is generated, received or contained in a multitude of electronic mediums, formats, storage devices, etc. This explosive growth is an additional source of information risk. Being able to locate the correct information within the required timescales, be it a telephone enquiry from a customer, or a weeklong regulatory audit, is critical. Organizations can employ techniques such as automated content capture, classification and federation, to ensure that all relevant information is discoverable within short timescales.

### **8 -- Does anyone have SuperWriter 2.0? (Inaccessibility) -- The risk of information becoming inaccessible due to its medium or format.**

Format refresh is a particular issue with electronically stored information. We can read a scroll of papyrus that was written 3000 years ago. But we can't read a 5.25" disk with WordPerfect files from 10 years ago. Information that is locked into obsolete mediums or proprietary formats and systems is worthless to an organization. So long-term preservation, media refresh and format refresh need to be considered proactively. Information strategies that include the use of format standards (e.g. TIFF or [PDF/A](#)) and audited content refresh cycles will ensure that information remains accessible for the whole period that it is being kept for.

*Today, more than ever, access to electronic information is vital to an organization's operation. Carefully assessing your organization against the information risks discussed above is the first stage in identifying where your organization is most vulnerable and in defining a roadmap for implementing governance controls and monitoring to protect your information assets.*

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## 8 things you need to know to build an ECM strategy



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intelligence. You can contact [Chris](#) at [chris.walker@mtallstream.com](mailto:chris.walker@mtallstream.com).

### 1 -- Without commitment, there's no point in moving forward.

In my opinion the single most important element to building a strategy is commitment. I'm talking about the type of commitment you make when you jump out of a plane. Not that I'm suggesting ECM is like skydiving; if skydiving goes wrong the pain doesn't last.

Commitment can't be limited to a select few within the organization. For sure the senior leadership team needs to demonstrably show their commitment, but commitment needs to be present throughout the organization. Consider this: regardless of how committed the senior leadership team is, *if the rank and*

*file don't buy in failure is guaranteed.*

So how do you get commitment? Find out what resonates and build from there. Is the motivator risk mitigation, environmental responsibility, competitive advantage, or access to information? The likely scenario is that the motivator changes depending on whom you're talking to. Your job is to sell the program to your stakeholders on their terms, not yours.

### 2 -- Plan strategically, execute tactically.

You can't eat an elephant in one bite; start at the trunk and work your way to the other end. And no, you cannot avoid the nasty bits.

Since you can't implement everything in one shot, it's important that you plan the execution in a logical manner. When defining the plan, aim to reduce rework, reduce risk, leverage previous successes, and minimize dead time. Break your implementation into short, medium, and long-term time boxes. Adopt an iterative approach that incrementally builds out more and more of the strategy. Choose iterations that make sense in your organization: by business unit, by process, by location, and by function.

Accept that the tactics you employ will likely change over time. That's okay as long as you're always moving toward meeting the strategic objectives.

### 3 -- Communicate, communicate, communicate. Then communicate some more.

Some surprises are good -- like finding \$20 in your jacket pocket. Showing up at the office one day to find that you now have to get with an ECM program -- not so much.

Communication needs to start when the implementation of an ECM Strategy is at the concept stage. This does not mean that you tell everyone everything all the time -- you don't. As the implementation progresses the audience expands, the frequency of communication increases, you add more channels to the mix, and the story becomes more compelling. It's kind of like announcing a pregnancy -- initially only a small number of the affected stakeholders are in the loop. As the delivery approaches more and more people are informed (how else do you ensure all those gifts?).

One day far into the future you will have implemented your ECM strategy. BUT you still have to communicate! The nature of the communication will change. It won't be about what's coming, it will be about how to nurture what you have and continually improve upon it.

### 4 -- It's a marathon, not a sprint.

Developing an ECM strategy is like renovating your house; it seems like a good idea when you start, but 11 years later you're not so sure (because if you're like me you still haven't finished). However, unlike my house renovations, I'm certain that an ECM strategy is a good idea.

This is really about getting folks to adopt a "program" mindset. Unlike a project (sprint) -- which has an end -- an ECM program (marathon) has no end until your organization "operationalizes" ECM. By that I mean that the core habits of how business is conducted have changed to the degree that ECM practices are simply a part of your Standard Operating Procedures.

Of course, there are sprints within the marathon. These would be the numerous projects that occur to develop the strategy, develop governance models, inventory the content, deploy the solution, and on, and on... Yeah, there are a lot of projects required to implement an ECM program. However, just like a good general contractor engages the trades people to hasten progress, a good ECM program manager engages the right resources at the right times.

### 5 -- Define KPIs, then measure them.

When you're developing your overall ECM program and strategy, define the KPIs you'll be using to determine if

you're meeting objectives. Properly defined metrics prove success, indicate danger, and help identify adjustments; they're essential when you need to respond to the question "how are we doing?" Keep three things in mind when developing KPIs: 1) they must be directly related to, or supportive of, organizational objectives; 2) they must be realistic; and 3) they must be actionable.

Great! We've got a bunch of KPIs defined. Now what? Uhm, measure them. KPIs are like any other tool; if you don't use them they're no good to anyone. Put a plan in place to measure KPIs on a regular schedule. Think of it as a maintenance schedule for a really, really expensive car.

Allow ramp up time. Rome wasn't built in a day; neither did we reduce internal email volume by 50% in the first quarter after go-live.

## 6 -- Stakeholder engagement is critical.

A stakeholder is any person, group, organization, or system that affects or can be affected by your efforts. Within the context of an implementation, stakeholders break down into participants (active role) and non-participants (passive role).

Stakeholder participation is not optional. This does not mean that all stakeholders have an active, hands-on role. It means that you need to find appropriate avenues of engagement such as focus groups,

newsletters, lunch'n'learns, etc.

Identify stakeholders early and engage them appropriately. Don't assign a customer or vendor to a security or taxonomy working group -- this just doesn't make sense.

When assigning people to ECM projects, don't expect them to be able to meet their project and operational responsibilities as if nothing has changed. It's not realistic. Project work requires a different mindset than daily operational work.

## 7 -- "Suck it up, Princess" is not a change management plan.

While "suck it up, Princess" may be my mantra in terms of change management, it's probably not the best approach to take (though I've seen it work in a couple of private sector organizations). Change management is critically important when you're implementing an ECM strategy. Remember that the way that people do their jobs is going to undergo fundamental change. There are two basic streams of change management: 1) People change; and 2) Process change.

People change deals with the human element of change. People in the organization are going to be asked to take on new roles and responsibilities. In some cases, people are going to take on entirely new jobs or -- it's harsh but it happens -- they are going to lose their

jobs. Understandably they are going to be resentful, reluctant, resistant, and afraid.

Address these issues by using the Four Cornerstones of Change (there are also Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, but that's probably just a coincidence):

- 1 -- Communication -- see #3
- 2 -- Education -- training is great but it's mechanical and doesn't inform people of why they're being asked to do something. Real education engages the individual by articulating why they're doing something, how they impact their colleagues, and how they contribute to personal and organizational success. Education, properly executed, provides a sense of teamwork and ownership.
- 3 -- Participation -- see #6
- 4 -- Support -- it's more than just a 1-800-HOLY-COW hotline. Support means being aware that people are going to need time to get up to speed. Support means putting expert assistance in place at the local level -- Centers of Excellence. Support means encouragement from program sponsors.

Process change deals with how an organization conducts its business. Process change involves minutely examining end-to-end business processes, eliminating inefficiency, and monitoring for performance. Internal and external factors are the genesis of change. Take

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advantage of these opportunities to make your organization smarter, faster, leaner, and more profitable.

## 8 -- It's not all about the technology.

Most of the ECM products in Gartner's Magic Quadrant do pretty much the same thing. The differences are in how they do what they do and what type of infrastructure you need to run them. Are you a .NET shop or a java shop? Windows or Unix? It's been my experience that the technology decision is typically the easiest to make, therefore it's made far too early in the timeline.

Long before you start thinking about making a technology decision, you need to have a governance framework in place; you need to have new business processes ready to go; you need to be managing change; you need to be communicating. Put simply, your strategy roadmap needs to be in place and you need to be executing much of it.

Think of it like this: before the pizza goes in the oven, the ingredients have been gathered and assembled in the correct order (who makes a pizza with the cheese on the bottom and the sauce on top?).

Back in the day, an instructor of mine provided what I think is a great definition of a system: a system is the people, processes, and tools that work together to achieve objectives. If you accept this definition then it

follows that technology, while not unimportant, is the last variable to be addressed -- sort out the people and processes first.

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## 8 things you need to know about developing an ECM information architecture



Michael Elkins is an independent consultant with over 17 years of experience helping global clients with the design and deployment of enterprise wide content management systems. His clients benefit from his ECM experience including strategic guidance, information architecture and ECM/data governance programs. His company, Kestral Group LLC, is based in Denver, Colorado.

Information is our most important corporate asset, but the value of that information can only be realized if users can quickly find and use it. All too often, companies are handcuffed by numerous departmental or standalone content management systems, each with unique or incomplete information architectures.

Getting to enterprise information architecture requires careful consideration during the design process including:

### 1 -- Requirements and not just technology should dictate the architecture.

Solutions developed in a vacuum are far more likely to fail. Users must be involved in the definition process as much as possible. At the end of the effort, the desired result is that users can intuitively find what they need quickly and easily. The best solution is not always out of the box from the ECM vendor.

### 2 -- Start with what you know.

Nearly a third of all companies have implemented Master Data Management (MDM) technology in order to gain control of their structured data sources. Unfortunately, few companies are utilizing that data to assist with the development of their ECM information architectures. In most cases, the ECM system will be integrated with other systems such as ERP, Customer Relationship Management (CRM), and other core business systems. Take advantage of existing folder structures to understand how users currently categorize content and look for any industry standards that may exist. In most cases, one will find existing industry standards for elements such as metadata, thesauri and taxonomies. Taking the time to map out data sources will provide a considerable cost savings both during development and ongoing support of the information architecture.

### 3 -- Don't create something unwieldy.

It's important to have a comprehensive information

architecture that provides benefit to the company, but there can be a fine line between adding value and creating overhead. Users will gladly tag content if they know it will benefit them, but when tagging becomes a chore, the value is gone. The same can be said from a retrieval perspective. Even though an advanced search may help users narrow down their search results more quickly and effectively, many users still prefer the simplicity of a basic keyword search. Sometimes, less is indeed more.

#### **4 -- Inheritance is a good thing.**

So, how much is too much? The more that can be done for the user, the happier they will be and the better the data quality. There are a number of ways to default metadata values, including information based upon user profiles or folder locations. All efforts should be made to limit the impact of tagging on the user.

#### **5 -- Consider implementing a thesaurus to improve search results.**

Every industry, company and even discipline has its own language including acronyms and core terminology. Authors often revert to common acronyms without spelling them out. This simple act can affect a user's ability to find the documents they are looking for based on the terms they search by. With mergers or acquisitions, the acquiring company's terminology will tend to become dominant, and the acquired company's

legacy terminology will slowly fade away, often causing the documents from the acquired company to become "invisible" via the search process. Using a thesaurus can greatly improve the user's ability to find the information they need.

#### **6 -- Leave all options on the table.**

Typing a term into a search box is not always the best path for a user to get what they need. I don't know how many times I've heard that folders are not recommended or that they are outdated. In reality, there are situations where folders provide a very valid way for users to access information. Folders may offer an opportunity to find information that improves information quality and end user satisfaction. Multi-faceted taxonomies are not "out of the box" for most ECM vendors, but they do provide tremendous value for specific business applications. A strong information architecture should provide flexibility in how information is accessed.

#### **7 -- Data governance is critical.**

Developing the information architecture is not the end of the process, but rather just the beginning. The information architecture will surely change over time. Understanding what will change and controlling the impact of those changes is critical to the architecture's long-term viability. Data governance should be a core component of any ECM governance plan. From an

information architect perspective, it is important to identify who is responsible for the various components of the architecture including core data sources, metadata standards, and taxonomies.

## **8 -- Think big and think portable.**

All too often, ECM deployments are departmental in nature. As a result, only the implementing department's needs are taken into consideration at the time of the design. Other departments may rely on the information and should be a part of the information architecture design process. For example, the Finance department

may be implementing a solution, but the Internal Audit department may benefit simply by being a part of the discussion to ensure that their needs are met as well. Beyond the multiple departments, companies need to think multiple systems. Many companies have more than one ECM system and, without consolidation, those systems should be aligned. Developing information architecture standards will drive improved access to information across all platforms by providing a more consistent user experience.

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## 8 things that changed the history of document management



Leonard Johnson has been in the ECM field for nearly 20 years: first at SoftSolutions, and now as the VP of Marketing at [NetDocuments](#). At NetDocuments, Leonard has helped pioneer the concept of a SaaS document management system.

Over the course of history, the managing of documents has brought the human race much joy, as well as utter frustration. Though no one person can be accredited with inventing document management, the first known system was created by nomadic tribes writing on the walls of caves. Over time, this evolved to the scrolls system employed by ancient Rome, and as the world neared the end of the 1800s, the human race still relied on a very primitive form of document management. But over the next century, eight things happened that changed the history of document management forever.

### 1 -- The File Cabinet

In the late 1800s, a young man named [Edwin Seibels](#) saw a world with A.D.M.D. (Acute Document Management Disorder), and he knew there had to be a way to heal the world of this ailment. He soon invented

the file cabinet, and with this, Mr. Seibels changed the way humans stored and managed documents from that point on.

### 2 -- The Server

As the file cabinet worked well to manage documents, its popularity was also its curse, as they started piling up in office spaces everywhere. This changed however with a powerful and disruptive innovation that changed the game--computing. Commencing with powerful, centralized mainframes, and evolving to distributed client/server architecture, organizations were now able to store documents electronically.

### 3 -- The PC

When PCs started to get distributed and connected on a LAN (local area network), firms were then able to create and store documents on their computer—power to the user! But distributed PCs managed by the local area network sent unstructured documents scattered everywhere.

Network deficiencies in the way documents were organized (e.g., the eight-dot-three character naming convention and lack of control of documents) caused many problems. There existed no version control, no audit trail, and lack of security was rampant. Though the PC was a game changer, the unstructured world of

distributed PCs introduced the need for document management systems.

#### 4 -- Electronic Document Management Systems

When electronic document management ([EDMS](#)) started to gain popularity in the 80s, it was a complicated tool that could only be managed by a word processing center operator (may they rest in peace). As tools developed, the task moved to secretaries who created, named, and stored the documents. It wasn't until companies came around in the early 90s, with user-friendly systems, that the knowledge worker (e.g., business managers, attorneys) began using the DMS themselves. This continued to evolve and now document management is used not only by secretaries and their bosses, but is now utilized to foster complete collaboration with clients, co-council, and opposing parties.

#### 5 -- The Search Engine

With thousands of documents digitally scattered everywhere, the issue of locating documents became more and more important. This problem sparked another game changing innovation. DMS providers began to integrate full text searching seamlessly into the DMS.

Now, just like any [Trekkie](#) can go on Google and learn everything known to man about [Spock](#) and the [Vulcan](#).

race, firms can now get on their document management service and find any document in the system within seconds.

#### 6 -- The Scanner

Even with the proliferation of computers, paper documents were still everywhere to be seen. That changed in 1985 with the introduction of the first computer scanner. Although the work of converting a room full of paper documents to electronic documents probably caused migraines for many secretaries, it ultimately allowed firms to go paperless and achieve better organization and control over documents. Scanner technology has improved drastically and today, anyone can take a 50 page document, attach a barcode to it, and automatically scan it directly into their DMS ready to edit, share, and collaborate.

#### 7 -- The Cloud

When the Internet was invented by [Al Gore](#) (or someone else), the way firms managed documents was changed once again. No longer did firms need to buy expensive servers to locally host their data, nor pay a large IT staff to maintain it all. They instead, could outsource their servers, their IT staff, and their legacy software, to the [cloud](#).

With the software-as-a-service ([SaaS](#)) model, the DMS infrastructure is already built into the cloud and the

software is ready to go on demand accessed through a web browser. And because the documents are not stored locally in the firm's office, users can have the freedom to create, edit, and share documents on-the-go from anywhere in the world. The [SaaS](#) model has also enabled smaller firms, which previously could not afford a document management, to enjoy the benefits of a DMS because SaaS allows them to pay only for what they need.

## 8 -- The Smart Phone

As SaaS document management solutions allowed anywhere, anytime access to documents, we are seeing smart phones take that one step further by making *'information at your fingertips'* a reality. Users can now access their entire document database, as well search those documents and share them externally with anyone in the world directly from their [iPhone®](#), or any other browser enabled smart phone. As innovation continues at an ever-faster rate, we can only wonder what lays ahead for document management in future years.

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## 8 things you need to know to manage the explosion of information



Jean-Luc Chatelain is an HP Fellow and the Information Optimization CTO for HP Software and Solutions. Chatelain joined HP at the time of acquisition of Persist Technologies, where he was Founder and CTO, a world leader in grid storage and archiving solutions. This technology is the basis of the HP Integrated Archiving Platform IAP.

Information Explosion is making way for a new strategy to align business policies with people and technology. The following steps are my take on ways in which organizations can be successful in creating and implementing information management practices in this challenging environment.

### **1 -- Obtain senior executive sponsorship and cross-organizational involvement.**

This is the cornerstone for sustainable success of an information management strategy. A new strategy will involve investments and organizational changes. Without active and visible senior executive support and commitment, any strategy or plan will be set for failure from the beginning.

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Since most organizations consist of federated yet independent business functions or silos, it is important to involve all major constituencies at all stages - from definition through to implementation and ongoing monitoring of the business success metrics.

### **2 -- Paper is still cool: organizations need to leverage best practices from the physical world.**

Information management is not new. We have been managing information in one form or another since the birth of civilization. What is new is the electronic aspect of it. In nearly every organization, there are people who have been managing paper records for years. They understand how to index, classify, distribute and retain information -- they are usually known as records managers, archivists and librarians. Organizations need to leverage their domain knowledge and experience to the fullest.

It is crucial to understand that you cannot simply adopt the old policies and processes and make them electronic -- you will need to adapt them. For example, policies and processes for handling paper memos will not work for emails that have a different order of magnitude and contain a plethora of irrelevant content. There is a lot of "white noise" in emails that doesn't exist in the paper world -- rarely did someone type a memo to say, "let's

grab a coffee."

### **3 -- Define the policies that will govern your enterprise information.**

This is the most critical phase of executing a successful strategy. Policies need to be flexible to allow the organization to be agile and respond to changing markets, customer needs, business partner ecosystems and similar business changes. Policies need to be owned and executed by the business, and supported by technology. When defining policies, remember that not all information is created equal; one needs to identify the information assets that deliver business value to the organization -- information that has business, decision, risk or organizational impact. An example of such information includes legal documents, product catalogs, balanced scorecards and key performance metrics.

### **4 -- Define the processes you will use to manage the information.**

Business processes define how the policies are implemented and executed across the organization. While this step seems obvious, it is often overlooked. Process flows must mirror business flows, and they must be molded to meet the users' needs, not the other way around. There are many examples of failed information projects where the technology attempted to force users to work in an ineffective, rigid workflow. A key metric for defining the success of processes is that

they must improve business productivity.

### **5 -- Stay in constant communication and use a shared vocabulary.**

As with any major change program, dialogue is most important. Be cautious to not overlook that certain terms mean different things to different people. It is very important to clearly define and document what is meant at all times.

### **6 -- Educate, educate and educate again.**

Employee training is often underestimated and it is critical to user acceptance. Without training, policies will be ignored, processes will be short cut or, even worse, bypassed.

In one such example, a policy was communicated by email that states "No MP3 player content is to be stored on desktop or laptop computers." IT then runs a script every night to delete any MP3 files it finds. However, users want to listen to music while they work so each morning they re-download their MP3 files. What they don't know is that the reason the policy was brought in was to reduce corporate liability and risk from potentially pirated copies.

Best practices for training include a planned strategy from the beginning of the project. Human resources must be consulted at this stage in order to receive the

necessary support and funding. In addition, training must be repeatable in order to resonate, as well as support changes in regulations and compliance.

## **7 -- Recognize that technology is a means not the end.**

Technologies should help implement policies and execute processes faster and more accurately. As information expands, it must scale to meet new needs. It must be agile enough to respond to ever-changing business and information needs. Different sourcing models should be investigated to achieve the optimal total cost of ownership for the organization. Remember that if some technologies are selected incorrectly, they can doom the implementation of any information management strategy.

Today, IT manages business value, which is designed, built and delivered in the form of technology-enabled services. This increases the importance of an information management strategy since data will be consumed in a variety of new and different ways. The once tight coupling between applications and data is being broken, and centralized "ownership" of data becomes more difficult. This makes the consistency and quality of the data even more critical, putting more pressure on one's information management strategy to also include data quality and stewardship programs to help achieve a single version of the truth.

## **8 -- Don't forget to prove the business value.**

Finally, maintain momentum and executive support by showing and communicating ongoing demonstrable business value. It is critical to measure and prove the team's accomplishments in *financial and business* terms. Examples of financial and business metrics include: quantifiable impact on revenue, increased customer retention, reduced service calls and decreased inventory levels.

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## 8 things you need to know about workflow and business process engineering



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blog, [SharePoint Strategist](#) and is one of the driving forces behind SharePoint user groups in California.

### 1 -- Know your business.

It is extremely difficult to be a good Business Process Engineer (BPE) if you don't understand your native business processes. Take the time to understand the real needs of business users and the enterprise as a whole before jumping in to automating workflows and deploying sexy on-line forms and task queues. Do not - I repeat Do Not - mention specific technologies. Listen, listen, listen and then listen some more! You'll thank me later.

### 2 -- Automating a poor process is a bad idea.

The majority of the effort in automating workflows is with the people, not the technology. Getting good requirements and helping people to collaborate and work more efficiently is the heavy lifting. Often, you will need to have multiple meetings to get people on the same page about how the process should occur. Once you have agreement and documented it with a flow chart of some sort you will be ready to apply the technology to the process. Making this engineering process relevant to business users is critical to success. P.S. Don't forget to get everyone to sign that flowchart. Again, you'll thank me later!

### 3 -- Pay attention to the user interface.

If users do not understand and adopt your solution all your business process engineering is useless. It is very important that the user interface to your workflow product be agreeable and relatively intuitive to your user base. Take the time to brand it. Make it look like it belongs to your organization. Have some fun with this and get people talking about your solution. Never underestimate the power of water cooler buzz to make or break your project.

#### **4 -- Accommodating the mobile manager or executive is critical.**

To gain real adoption and success your executive managers need to be able to approve or deny workflow tasks on the run. Blackberry or Windows Mobile support may not be an obvious requirement of your system but it will drive adoption like very few other things. Several workflow vendors offer this as an OOTB (out of the box) feature. Look for it to aid your execs in utilizing the system and the rest of your users will follow. Besides, happy efficient executives are more likely to approve the budget for your next project.

#### **5 -- Utilize an iterative development best practice.**

If you try to re-engineer the Universe you will most likely fail and collide the wrong particles causing a megaton implosion of your career! Pick a small project that has some true value to your users and start there. When people ask for more features when they see how cool it is tell them on the "next iteration" of the solution. Create your own versioning system and stick to it. Leave them wanting more!

#### **6 -- Get someone from marketing or PR involved in your project.**

Let's face it; most BPE's are not all that creative when it comes to marketing our solutions. We may be code warriors or true systems experts but sometimes our

communication is challenging for regular users to understand. Get someone on your team who specializes in communication, both visual and verbal if possible. Let this person assist you in selling your project, spiffing up your presentations and beautifying your training guides. Have fun, use color and pick a good slogan. Then your solution will stick in the minds of users.

#### **7 -- Constantly validate expectations.**

Project documentation and communication is critical to making sure your user community, executive managers and vendors know what is going to be delivered to them and expected from them. Often times the pressure of a timeline puts this phase of project documentation on the back burner. Often times those same projects fail. Give yourself enough time to confirm with your project stakeholders, both in writing and in person that you are going to deliver what they expect. When you have launched your project make sure there is way for your user community to provide you with anonymous feedback as a part of your project post-mortem or quality assurance process.

#### **8 -- Deliver quality even if you have to change a deliverable date.**

As a BPE often we are doubling as the Project Manager. In this scenario you are in charge of the project schedule. Do not hesitate to pull the plug on your go-live date if you are not 98% confident your solution ...

a) meets expectations, b) is technically solid and c) looks great. Move your date if you must but do not deliver a half baked solution. Trust is the most important thing you can earn from your organization - don't burn it trying to rush to make a date.

*In every workflow or business process engineering process there comes a low point. Stay true to your ideal of making the workplace a more efficient, smoothly running machine. Don't let people's fear of change bring you down. Believe in yourself and the project you are running. Take heart - if people are freaking out then to some extent you are doing the right thing.*

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## 8 things small businesses need to know about document management



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Dan has presented at the AIIM Expo during each of the past four years, three times talking about SharePoint and once talking about working with a small budget. He has completed [AIIM's ECM Master course](#). His blog can be found at <http://www.SharePointStories.com>. He can be reached via e-mail at [Dan.Antion@gmail.com](mailto:Dan.Antion@gmail.com) and can also be found on LinkedIn and Twitter.

### 1 -- You are not too small for Document Management (DM).

Size doesn't matter; the junk drawer in your kitchen is just as big a headache as the pile of boxes in your garage. Not addressing document management means you are likely to fail at some point to find the right information for the job. It also means you might be paying to keep information you no longer need. If you're big enough to get sued, you're big enough to be forced into e-discovery. If you plan to stay in business

you are going to have new employees at some point. DM addresses all these issues.

### 2 -- DM offers value beyond the obvious.

Even small businesses can save money by reducing the cost of document storage. Beyond saving money, effective document management can improve the timeliness of your responses to your customers. DM can also improve the quality of those responses. Both of these benefits can help distinguish you from your competition. DM also improves knowledge transfer to new workers, aids in cross training and reduces the cost of researching problems. These things make your operation more effective allowing you to absorb more business volume into your existing staff.

### 3 -- DM is not a technology project.

Technical solutions may make the task of managing documents easier but technology doesn't drive the bus and it doesn't own the road. DM requires that a company consider what documents you have, who needs access, and in what form and through what channel will they want that access to flow. You also have to address how long documents should be kept. Those answers should come from the owners and users of information and the people familiar with the regulations affecting your company. These answers then help form the requirements of the technology solutions.

#### 4 -- Management support is required.

In order to overcome "... but we have always done <whatever> this way", you are going to need management support. To get management support you need to know what you are asking of the company and you need to explain what DM has to offer. If you are in management, you need to look beyond your department and consider the needs of others.

#### 5 -- DM includes costs that are not obvious.

You may end up saving money and improving response time and accuracy but DM isn't free. You may have to invest in technology to support DM -- you should plan to invest in training. You may decide to backfill some content that is currently in a difficult to manage form -- this may involve scanning or conversion. Once you bring documents under a management regimen, you are going to have things to maintain, things to back up and things to migrate from one generation to the next.

#### 6 -- DM technology doesn't have to be expensive.

There are free and Open Source document management platforms available. [Microsoft SharePoint](#) (our choice) is not free but it's not prohibitively expensive and offers many benefits beyond DM. You can put DM in the Cloud if you're comfortable with the service provider. You could probably even implement DM practices

within traditional file sharing technologies but I wouldn't want to try.

#### 7 -- Education is important and available.

More than anything, when you implement DM, you are changing behavior. You are going to be asking people to spend extra time and put forth extra effort, primarily for the benefit of others. Consider the time involved with proper classification of documents and the addition of metadata. If I wrote a document, I might argue that I don't need either of those. But, if I want my coworkers to be able to find my document, both are essential. People have to be trained to understand the benefit of these actions and they have to be trained in how to perform those tasks in order to achieve the benefits.

Education is available from many sources and much of it is free. There are tons of forums on LinkedIn, there are Blogs on [AIIM's web site](#) and the web sites of companies involved in this industry, there are digital magazines and e-Newsletters specializing on every nuance of document management. Depending on the scope of your project, you may also want to consider fee-based education. I can honestly say that attending [AIIM's ECM Master Course](#) was the best decision I've made many in years. DM can require a long-term effort and having someone on your team that knows where to go and what to do is critical.

## 8 -- All vendors are not created equal.

If you need outside help, give careful consideration to the vendor you connect with. You must make sure the people you are working with understand the technology you will be using and the goals you have for the implementation. They should be familiar with DM projects and they should be able to point to past success and qualifications in the field of DM. Again, you may need a vendor that isn't associated with the technology but understands [DM](#) or [Content Management](#) and help get your company moving in the right direction.

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## 8 things you need to know about using ECM for regulatory compliance



Daniel Chalef is CEO of [KnowledgeTree](#) Inc., a leading commercial open source document management software vendor. KnowledgeTree's free open source [document management community edition](#) has been downloaded over 650,000 times. The company's

commercial offering includes product support and features that assist companies in achieving regulatory compliance. Follow Daniel on twitter at [@danielchalef](#) or on the KnowledgeTree blog <http://www.knowledgetree.com/blog/>.

### 1 -- Regulations are complex and can't be ignored.

One of the challenges of being regulated is understanding exactly which regulations apply to your business. You may face "horizontal" reporting regulations, such as those contained in Sarbanes-Oxley that apply to all publicly held companies. Or, you may be subject to vertical market specific regulations such as HIPAA in health care or the FDA's 21 CFR 11 rules. Or, you may face a raft of regulations from different governments and agencies. One thing is for sure, you can't pretend these regulations don't exist or hope they

go away. Non-compliance may present a very real legal and financial risk to your organization.

### 2 -- While enterprise content management (ECM) systems can help, they are only one part of the compliance solution.

Any good ECM application can help you track and control document revisions, but keep in mind that they are only as effective as your underlying business processes. Don't implement ECM software with the expectation that it will magically solve your compliance problems; you have some hard work to do around standardizing and codifying your processes for document management.

### 3 -- ECM system vendors can't certify their products for regulatory compliance.

A product itself is not compliant, rather it is the entire operating environment that must be compliant. This takes into account the unique contributions and actions of people, processes and technology present at your location. Again, your ECM software is only one piece of the compliance solution that will also include scrutiny of your business processes, training programs, standard operating procedures, etc.

#### **4 -- Proper records management policies, retention schedules and document classes will keep the system from getting bogged down.**

Even in a regulated industry, not every document in your ECM repository is subject to regulation and compliance. There are plenty of document types that would not be examined in an audit and that could be excluded from compliance-oriented processes.

Examining types of documents and structuring classes, hierarchies and policies accordingly at the outset will save you a lot of extra work and system burden down the road. Adhering to stated retention schedules for archiving documents will also keep the system running smoothly.

#### **5 -- Understand the requirements behind electronic signatures.**

Many people confuse electronic signatures with encrypted signatures. Although documents can be cryptographically signed for security purposes, this is not required in most compliance scenarios, whereas electronic signatures are. An electronic signature assigns a clear identity to someone who has altered a document along with a timestamp and recorded reason for the alteration. This can occur in the form of authentication at the time the document is changed so that the action can be clearly recorded in an audit trail.

#### **6 -- Audit trails must be...auditable.**

Your ECM must provide not only the ability to create an audit trail but an easy way to access it! If you are ever the subject of an audit, you may need to produce reports on hundreds or thousands of document transactions. Make sure you can easily access and produce the document history and that it clearly shows the information needed during an audit.

#### **7 -- Consistency and automation are your friends.**

One of the very purposes of regulation is to ensure consistent and repeatable activities that conform to a set of standards. And there's no better way to achieve consistency than through automation. Your ECM system can aid you via workflow automation, especially around review and approval processes. Automated workflow reduces the risk for error by ensuring each step of the process occurs in order and receives the appropriate oversight. Tie back to point 2 -- once you've identified and standardized your business processes, you can carve them in stone with automated workflow.

#### **8 -- Don't think higher cost means better compliance.**

Because of the way compliance is determined, a more expensive solution isn't necessarily going to be better than a less expensive one. It's all about functionality and how the system supports your individual circumstances.

Especially for smaller businesses, a large expensive system is not an option and may in fact be more of a hindrance to compliance than a solution that is more affordable, and more easily implemented. Don't be afraid to look at open source products in addition to proprietary systems. You may find you can achieve compliance with far less cost and headache than you thought.

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