

In This Issue: – File Naming Update on Content Management

eOrganizedWorld
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for Information Professionals
from Charlie Sodano

File Naming

What comes to mind after you compose a document and go to save it (after selecting the storage area, which is another topic of discussion)? Do you have a pre-conceived plan for naming the file or do you shoot from the hip and make up a title on the spot. In the past I made up a name and thought that I'd change it later, especially if it had long term value. Of course, I seldom went back and changed it.

Many times we think that as long as we dump a file into a thoughtfully named folder, we don't really have to spend a lot of time naming it. I guess that's OK for files that have a low probability of reuse. However, if you do need to find them again in a folder that contains a few hundred other files, it may be difficult to locate.

I support a well planned system of nested folders, however it is rare to see an effective system within a community of users. File names in shared directories often range from an elaborate alpha number code to a terms that is only understandable by a segment of the community. Folder names should contain logical terms that anyone would use, now or in the future to find information.

I know that some of you have access to search engines that will index all of the words in your documents making it easier to find things. As an aside, the Windows 7 search utility is not that reliable. I gave it a concerted try about a year ago and gave up on it. It was very inconsistent for large dynamic collections of files. Of course if you have access to content management software you can add metadata values to your file to facilitate retrieval.

Let's just focus on file names, because even with good content and folder management they will help clarify what they contain.

You can use up to 256 characters in a file name. I've actually seen other people adopt this practice in their business environment.

Here's a for instance, "Off site meeting 8-21-07 at Phoenix Hilton discussed options for project XYZ decided to go after a new contract with ABC company instead of EFG company 155 Joe Smith Sam Brown Sarah Pallino George Roth attended"

On the surface it doesn't sound like a bad idea. It's like an abstract of the document. However, if you look at the title in Windows Explorer, you only get to see the first 50 characters or so and it's not too easy to read the whole title. There still is some software operations out there that will truncate long file names down to 7 characters with a tilde on the end.

I support the idea of a date in the file name. Use the yyyyymmdd convention. It may get confusing if you continue to alter the file, but if you are diligent you can version changes and save as v2. File naming is a lot like assigning metadata to a file. Think about what are the top three items that will help you find the file in the future, other than the date. In my long name file above, it would be the project, people involved, date and key reference: So a decent file name could be ProjectXYZ-EFGCompany-SBrownSPallinoGRoth-20070821V2.

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What's new?
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Content Management

Vertonghen acquired PearlDoc, a global provider of document capture and management solutions. Vertonghen is a global provider of Enterprise Document Management (EDM) and Enterprise Content Management (ECM) solutions and services that streamline the process of capturing mission-critical content for access from within business applications and processes. Its customers are high-volume banking and financials (both investment and retail), insurance companies, copyright and other high-volume administration companies but also more locally operating legal-, accounting- or secretary-offices.

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