

In This Issue: Records Management Standards
Updates on ELNs and Archiving.

eOrganizedWorld
the Online Information Management Newsletter
for Information Professionals
from Charlie Sodano

Records Management Standards

Several years ago I came up with a scheme to file electronic records. All of my friends and family loved it. I even designed a template that made it easy for people to follow the scheme. About a year later, I asked one of my friends how the scheme was working out for them. It turns out that they had made it even better and were using a different template. I had created a standard which was followed by a group of people and lead to an improved version of the standard. Cool!

There are a number of organizations, such as ISO, ANSI, AIIM who produce what is termed consensus standards relating to information management. These standards are arrived at via group meetings where each concept (and each word) of a proposal are discussed and agreed to via majority consensus. I participated on a standards committee in the past and found the experience tedious. But that's me. Most of the other participants were quite content to have long discussions on the choice of a single word. The value of these standards is that they represent a compromise of thought, which is quite different from my stair step "standard". I like to think of the ISO type standards as a stair step landing where a lot of people can gather in agreement.

If you are new to a specific area, consensus standards are an excellent place to start.

ISO 15489:2001 states that records management includes:

- setting policies and standards;
- assigning responsibilities and authorities;
- establishing and promulgating procedures and guidelines,
- providing a range of services relating to the management and use of records;
- designing, implementing and administering specialized systems for managing records; and
- integrating records management into business systems and processes.

It doesn't tell you how to get things to work within your environment which may have limitations, restrictions and specific areas of focus, but the outline is great.

You have got to tailor each item. For example, "setting policies and procedures". Look at the format of policies and procedures currently being used in your organization. If you don't use this format, people will tend to not take it seriously. It's truly amazing how much variation there is in these formats between organizations. Some are compact and "to the point" and others have layers of details. There is no right or wrong, only what works.

A helpful hint for "assigning responsibilities and authorities" is to keep your friends close and your enemies closer. Include all who are as excited and supportive as you are as well as those who have strong opposing views. If you exclude them, they will snipe at you relentlessly. Better to have them in the fold.

Perhaps the most important thing to have when you are establishing a new standard is the visual support of a senior manager. He/she is the one to refer to when someone asks “why are we doing this?” They will continue to complain, but will participate in the process.

Please pass on this EZine to those in your network.

To leave list or change email address, scroll to bottom.

A link to the EZine is also found at www-eorganizedworld.com

Contact us (consultants@eorganizedworld.com) for additional information about getting your records management program started. We'll give you more free advice and explain how we can continue to work together.

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What's new?
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Records Management / Archiving

Iron Mountain Inc., announced that it has joined the Cloud Security Alliance to help promote and establish security best practices for enterprise-level cloud solutions and services.

As a corporate member, Iron Mountain will offer its technology in enterprise Storage-as-a-Service (SaaS) and other cloud solutions spanning information protection and recovery, and electronic discovery to help the Cloud Security Alliance promote best practices for all types of data stored in the cloud. Additionally, Iron Mountain will help develop and implement security standards for a range of cloud services.

According to new research by content management association AIIM, an average of 51% of the paper documents scanned by user organizations are born digital, having been output directly from a computer application with no further additions. The survey also found that 25% of scanned documents are photocopied before being sent for scanning, and that only 31% are destroyed after scanning, indicating a reluctance by users and organizations to lose sight of mission critical documents.

The AIIM report compares strategies for outsourced, centralized and distributed scanning, and concludes that there is a move back to centralized scanning operations, along with a greater investment in capture and recognition software to automate data capture and document indexing processes. Although outsourcing delivers cost and management benefits, users are concerned with the quality of indexing and the difficulty of integration back into their electronic archives.

ELN / LIMS

Symyx Technologies signed a partnership with Thermo Fisher Scientific, Inc. Symyx and Thermo Fisher Scientific will work closely to integrate applications, and Thermo Fisher will market and sell Symyx Notebook and Symyx Isentris decision support software with Thermo Scientific industry-leading LIMS across the world.

Abbott Laboratories announced this week that it will acquire StarLIMS Technologies for \$123 million in a move designed to solidify its current presence in the diagnostic market while helping it expand into new sectors, such as forensics, microbiology, and public health.

StarLIMS specializes in web-based LIMS and other laboratory informatics systems, and has a presence in a number of markets, including life-science research, clinical, environmental, food and beverage, forensics, manufacturing, and public health.

RURO Inc. announced the release of Sciency®, new generation ELN (Electronic Lab Notebook). Beyond just “going paperless”, Sciency creates scalable, integrated research environment, enabling secure data sharing, project management, and interaction with existing systems and databases

OS-ELN is an Electronic Lab Notebook which you can freely download and use.

OS-ELN is deliberately simple; fully-fledged commercial ELNs are necessarily much more complex. As such, OS-ELN is a good teaching tool and a place for experimentation with ELN technology and concepts.

Users can sign up for an ELN, within which they can record their experiments, and you can attach files as part of an experiment. With knowledge of Zope, you can expand the system as you wish, for example to change the look & feel, to access relational databases, add other content to experiments, etc.

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