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BUILDING A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO PHYSICAL AND DIGITAL RECORDS MANAGEMENT



A TRANSFORMING RECORDS LANDSCAPE

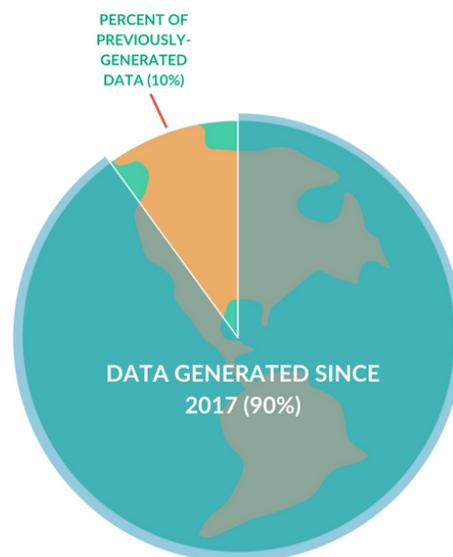
The concepts that govern records management are nearly as old as civilisation itself. For thousands of years, the preservation and curation of physical records – whether in papyrus, clay tablets, paper, or other forms – has been a mature, important discipline. Even technology paradigm shifts like the typewriter, the photocopier, or the computer printer did little to alter the fundamentals in terms of the tools and processes used to archive, retain, and (eventually) destroy physical records based on their document type requirements.

The growth of digital data, particularly in the last 10 years or so, represents in many ways the first time that the science of records management, a nearly \$25B per year industry, ¹ has faced a truly transformative challenge. While prior advancements brought incremental change, the degree to which so-called “unstructured” digital information is altering the records management landscape is hard to overstate.

Most importantly, the volume of newly created digital media is staggering, with most estimates indicating that as much as 90% of all of the world’s data was generated in the last two years alone. ²

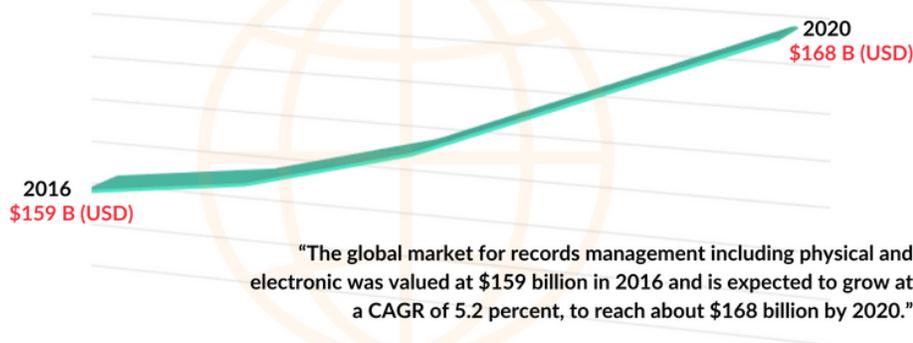
The term “data” can be misleading in this context; while all digital information is technically data, the most rapidly growing type is by and large not housed in databases. Instead, the bulk of this information is comprised of documents, spreadsheets, presentations, text files, multimedia (photos, video, audio) and other file types that are often poorly understood, sparsely managed, and “off the radar” for most records management teams.

90% of the world's data has been generated in the last two years*



*Forbes: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/bernardmarr/2018/05/21/how-much-data-do-we-create-every-day-the-mind-blowing-stats-everyone-should-read/#2a5f2d5260ba>

RECORDS MANAGEMENT GLOBAL MARKET GROWTH RATE



“The global market for records management including physical and electronic was valued at \$159 billion in 2016 and is expected to grow at a CAGR of 5.2 percent, to reach about \$168 billion by 2020.”

<https://www.beroeinc.com/category-intelligence/records-management-market>

[1] “Trends in Records Management.” GEP, 18 Mar. 2016, <https://www.gep.com/mind/blog/trends-records-management>.

[2] Marr, Bernard. “How Much Data Do We Create Every Day? The Mind-Blowing Stats Everyone Should Read.” Forbes, Forbes Magazine, 5 Sept. 2019, www.forbes.com/sites/bernardmarr/2018/05/21/how-much-data-do-we-create-every-day-the-mind-blowing-stats-everyone-should-read/#d07338760ba9.

What has this explosion in rates of information production meant for the field of records management and information governance?



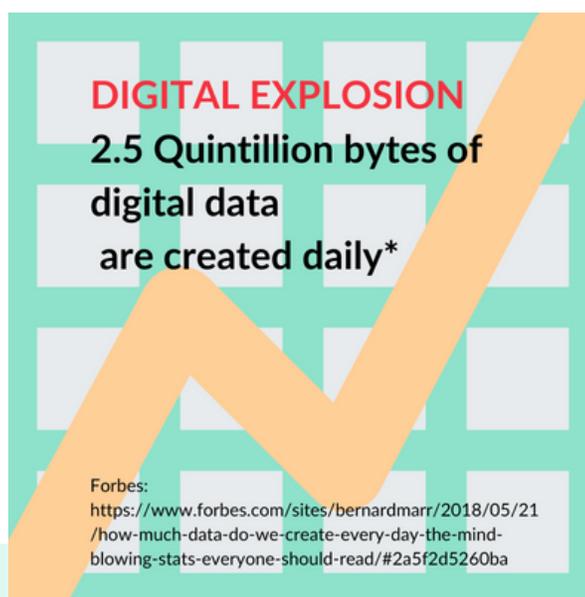
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Consistent toolsets for both physical and digital records and retention policy management from a single user interface. If the organisation determines a set retention period for an executed contract, for instance, it shouldn't matter whether that contract is managed as a paper asset or digital file – the process for categorizing and governing it should be the same. Providing records managers, legal staff, and compliance team members with consistent tools and processes regardless of the record medium is a major step forward in closing the gap in digital records management, and in unstructured file growth.

Simply, it has meant that for most organisations there are two processes and toolsets in place – one for managing the world of physical records (which continues to be relevant despite the best efforts to curtail the production of paper documents in the last 20-30 years), and another for managing digital records.

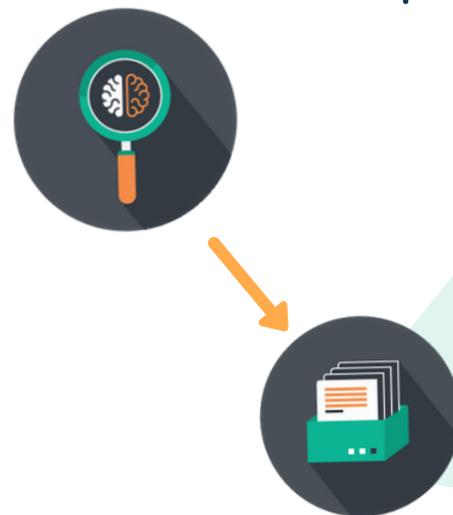
WHAT'S NEEDED TO ADDRESS THIS GAP?

Discovery tools that probe the places where unstructured digital information lives – namely file servers, file share services (like Google Drive, Box, or OneDrive), groupware platforms (like Microsoft SharePoint), and email systems. By performing regular analyses of unstructured content housed in these and other enterprise systems, records managers can identify documents that require oversight, including sensitive information, contracts, invoices, claims, and a host of other types that need to be treated as electronic records.



Forbes:
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/bernardmarr/2018/05/21/how-much-data-do-we-create-every-day-the-mind-blowing-stats-everyone-should-read/#2a5f2d5260ba>

Automation capabilities to allow resource-strapped records management teams to categorize the newly uncovered records in ways that are driven by powerful machine learning. Absent powerful automation features, the job of applying record categorize to the ever-growing number of unstructured files that inhabit the typical IT environment is simply too big a job to manage. To be effective, this automation should leverage artificial intelligence features to make confident assertions about what types of records the system encounters, and to act accordingly. Good automation will also trigger human review tasks in cases where the level of categorisation confidence is below defined thresholds.



Flexible business process and workflow tools that can model important steps in both digital and physical records management processes and provide visibility on task assignments and progress of both human and automated process.

Accessibility – information must be accessed readily for business support, litigation response, compliance and audit and eventual destruction.



Ensure oversight and chain of custody for all actors (such as physical record storage providers). This includes establishing trusted supplier relationships and support who provide physical records storage and destruction services that meet the high standard of service accountability.. This is especially important in the archive process, where immutable audit trails are essential for both digital and physical records.

Rigorous archive standards and tools that compliment and ensure the integrity of archive processes. The most recent standard for ensuring archive and record integrity in this type of environment are the SEDA (Data Exchange Standard for Archiving) 2.1, NF Z44-022 and ISO 20614 standards, both of which are supported by software offers like Everteam’s everteam.archive product.

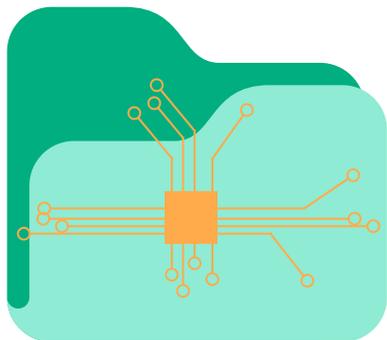


Attention to organisational culture, since according to ARMA this is often one of the most daunting yet intangible barriers to the adoption of a comprehensive IG program. Indeed, ARMA recommends a full program of internal marketing and public relations efforts to grow awareness and build a culture conducive to good records management since “it’s important to market RIM across the organization. There are many marketing techniques, both traditional and innovative, for driving awareness and achieving the culture change needed to sustain your RIM program.”³



[3] Altepeter, A. (2016). Information Management. [online] Magazine.arma.org. Available at: https://magazine.arma.org/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/2016_01_Going_Viral_Marketing_Your_RIM_Program_to_Drive_Culture_Change_Altepeter.pdf

A UNIFIED WORLD



While there are many steps involved, the message is simple, and is underscored by ARMA -

“An effective IG program applies a consistent lifecycle for all information in your organisation, no matter its form or system.” ⁴

The benefits of addressing both physical and digital records requirements in a unified manner are substantial, and include:

Improved discovery features and responsiveness, particularly for digital records (unstructured files) that are growing daily. For many organisations, the lack of visibility into file stores, email, groupware, and other unstructured data repositories creates a “dark data” challenge that makes discovery a time-consuming, manually driven and inefficient process. Tools that provide federated views into the systems housing these unstructured data files, as well as physical records data, provide game-changing levels of responsiveness and thoroughness.



Improved record integrity and audit trails, thanks to systems that leverage provide a more reliable integration of internal processes and of those performed by external service providers across records mediums. This is especially relevant for organisations whose records management policies span long timeframes, since even small-scale issues with tracking and provenance may accumulate during retention periods measured in decades.

Reduced training costs and improved productivity for records management, legal, and compliance teams who help capture new records, or who rely on timely access to them to do their job functions. By providing a single toolset for managing both physical and digital records (including workflow automations and AI-driven record categorisation), organisations can reduce the scope and complexity of training, and gain human resource efficiencies and flexibility.



Reduced IT and software costs through the use of a single tool for physical and digital records search, categorisation, policy assignment, and curation. Whether premise-based or hosted, records management products often carry a significant IT costs, including hosting and ongoing maintenance and administration. By providing a single toolset for physical and digital records, organisations enjoy a substantially lower IT cost.

{4} ARMA International. “Managing Legacy Paper Files in the Digital Era.” Information Management Magazine, 8 Aug. 2019, magazine.arma.org/2019/08/managing-legacy-paper-files-in-the-digital-era.

As we've seen, in more cases than records managers may care to admit, the process for managing digital records is often woefully inadequate to the task, focusing on a small percentage of the information requiring governance. This narrow focus isn't intentional, it's driven by a lack of visibility. By applying innovative tools and expertise that enable oversight for both paper and digital files, records managers can close this coverage gap and enhance their value to the organisation.

EMPOWERING TRANSFORMATION

Developments like those described, including federated discovery, single system physical and digital record dispositioning, intelligent automation, and AI promise to extend the reach and productivity of records managers dramatically. As a software company helping private and public organisations manage both digital and paper-based records throughout their entire lifecycle, Nyxeia is committed to empowering transformation in this critical field for organisations worldwide.



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