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Records management case study: The Historical Society of Pennsylvania

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The Historical Society of Pennsylvania

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Summary

This is a hypothetical records management report for The Historical Society of Pennsylvania (HSP), a not for profit, organization. An inter-departmental working group, requested that I prepare a report with recommendations concerning: 1) the institution’s records management program, 2) the retention policy for their records, and 3) suggested procedures for managing electronic information. At issue is how the HSP can improve the authenticity, reliability, and integrity of their records. Due to past erratic records management practices, there are concerns that current record retention procedures could be resulting in the misfiling or loss of essential records. There is also the concern that inadequate record identification and poor storage procedures could be adversely affecting the authenticity, reliability, and integrity of these records.

Background overview of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania: The Historical Society of Pennsylvania (HSP), is a non-profit organization and employs roughly 250 people. It holds manuscripts, graphics, images, microfilms, maps, atlases, genealogies, and prints. The HSP also holds a number of electronic databases of scanned records. This institution engages on a daily basis with the public and supports a wide range of research and teaching activities in history, humanities, and ethnic studies.

Business environment: The HSP is located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. It primarily serves patrons from this region although it also accepts and responds to letters and emails for materials and information. In 2011, the HSP logged over 4,000 visitors to its library, and over 3,800 users of its
research and reference email services (HSP, 2011, n.p.).

Introduction:
Records management is the planning, controlling, directing, organizing, training, and other managerial duties or activities which are typically involved in the informational life cycle (NARA, 2001; EPA, 2012). This includes the creation, maintenance, use, and disposal of data (Stephens, 2010, p.1). Records management programs are tasked with managing organizational information so that it will be timely, accurate, complete, accessible, and cost-effective. Accessible records are essential for the HSP to achieve its mission of providing patrons with access to its holdings of historical records and data.

Mission:

In March 2012, the HSP invited me, as a records management contractor, to a conference meeting. This meeting included select management and board members of the HSP. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss a revised HSP records management program. The mission of this group conference is as follows:

[A] The HSP has determined a critical need to update and develop a thorough, consistent, and comprehensive records management policy. This policy is needed to support its organizational mission, programs, and dissemination of information to the public.

[B] The HSP has established a working committee to work with an outside contractor to help develop a policy and plan for record retention of HSP materials.

[C] The HSP working committee will work with the outside contractor to develop a plan and goals which
will include both long term and short term objectives. Focus will be placed on the following areas:

(1) establish where the records management program should be placed within the organization,

(2) identify three year goals for the program, (3) identify first year goals, (4) recommendations for the move to electronic record-keeping, (5) record retention policy be updated for the retention of paper and digital records. This will include issues pertaining to record identification, maintenance, storage, preservation, and archiving. (6) Assure authenticity, reliability, and integrity of the records.

Part I
Records management function:

Efficient records management is an administrative function which promotes practical applications on all aspects of staff activities within the HSP. It is understood that HSP employees will be creating, modifying, using, sharing or storing records and data. It is the over-riding goal of the HSP to ensure that its employees have access to all available software tools to help them ensure that the records they retrieve and save are available to all users on a long-term basis.

Purpose & scope: This HSP records management policy proposal is designed to provide a foundation and framework for record retention guidance. This policy proposal applies to all records held by the HSP, and applies to materials which are created, collected, processed, used, stored, or disposed of by HSP staff.

HSP organizational mission statement: This institution has two published statements. They are:

[A] Organizational mission statement: “The HSP collects and shares stories of the peoples of
Pennsylvania and their contributors to American history. Conserving and disseminating knowledge spanning the 17th century to the 21st, HSP opens minds” (HSP, 2009, p.4).

[B] HSP archival records collection goals: It is the goal of the HSP to have archival records which consist of records which have a continuing legal, administrative, donor, or historical value. For this report, the term record refers to “any recorded evidence of an activity” (Shepherd & Yeo, 2003, p.2).

Records management policy:
The HSP has the policy to manage its records efficiently and effectively throughout their life cycle. It is the goal of HSP to derive a records management policy which will ensure that its records are able to meet its administrative and programming needs, as well as ensure their proper preservation and access.

Definition of data and documents: My analysis and categorization of the organizations records and record groups will be based on their informational value. Information is definable as “data that has been refined and organized by processing and purposeful intelligence” (Bantin, 2001, p.18).

Documents are defined as “a grouping of formatted information objects regardless of medium or form that can be accessed and used by a person” (Bantin, 2001, p.18). Bantin concluded that for data to be useful, it must be contextualized so that relationships between data and other information objects are revealed (Ibid, 2008, p.6). A record is “recorded information, regardless of physical form or characteristics, created in the course of an organization’s business” (Stephens, 2010, p.12).
Part II
Records inventory and survey proposal memo to HSP: (See attachment A).

Purpose of records inventory and departmental survey: The records inventory, departmental survey, and staff interviews were taken to help analyze this organization’s business activities, identify and document each business function, and develop an understanding of how this organization manages its information flow. The survey data was utilized to identify where the departments fit in the hierarchy of the organization, ascertain their roles and purpose, and develop a list of business classification categories. Engel and Wettengel noted that “the basic objects in the business processes are documents” (2003, p. 50).

The records inventory and departmental functions survey enabled me to better understand to what level the records were being maintained within a controlled records environment, and identify which records and record groups were being actively used by the organization. The inventory and survey helped me to analyze the effectiveness of the major HSP business functions and document the flow of the society’s business transactions. Based on the inventory and survey data, I was able to identify the existing hierarchy of functions for this institution. The inventory and survey were used to collect information on existing business processes and helped me to amend, update, and develop the retention schedule and filing scheme.

Part III
Records inventory and survey methodology:

The records inventory and business functions survey were partially based on the guidelines set forth in the published ISO standard 15489 (ISO, 2001). The preliminary investigation and analysis of business activity were made by physical observation as well as by personal interviews. Personal interviews are the
most reliable method for such a survey. I chose this method as it is important to obtain detailed and
accurate information as to the business processes conducted by an organization.

Analysis of organizational structure and functions: As part of my preliminary investigation, I
identified and documented the role and purpose of the organization, its structure, its legal, regulatory,
business, and fiscal environment. I analyzed key aspects of business functions, with an emphasis on
each business activity and transaction. These business activities and functions were key in determining
the appropriate business classification system. This research helped me to identify and better

Part IV
Hypothetical case scenario: The HSP organization is creating its new organizational records in
electronic form, but many of the staff are converting the “record copy” to paper and maintaining paper
files, although not well organized ones. Based on my survey data, several departments within the HSP
appear to be using their own procedures for their data storage and data retention functions.

Per the hypothetical scenario, I found that there was an active records program in the mid 1990’s, but
the records schedules, file plans, and policies have apparently not been updated in over 15 years. In
addition, the organization is using the new technology of email which is not covered by existing record
management policies. Retention policies are not being enforced on paper records and there are
no procedures in place for either destroying or preserving the currently stored electronic data.
[1a.] Records management program placement: See Part III for analysis methodology.

Based on my findings, this organization appears to have the following departments: accounting, administration, audit, budget, IT, payroll, personnel, property, and library & collections (Georgia, 2005, n.p.). My survey also revealed that multiple levels of authority, some overlapping, exists within the HSP. These overlapping levels of authority consist of several staff members who are responsible below the senior director level.

Based on the results of the HSP hierarchy analysis and departmental survey, there appears to be strong competition for budgetary resources among the various departments. In order to avoid infighting among staff and departments, I feel it would be best for all departments to have input in the proposed record retention policies.

Therefore, I propose that a working committee made up of 1 staff member from each department, be designated as that department’s records coordinator, to jointly help coordinate the records management program details. I will encourage the organization’s archivists to join the committee. Bantin noted that archivists are typically “under-represented in the planning process” (Bantin, 2008, p. 113).

The department coordinators would include: director of accounting, director of finance, director of library and collections, director of preservation, and the director of administration. These departmental coordinators heads would report to the senior director of their respective department and will jointly coordinate in our records management committee. The records manager conducting this survey and
inventory will report to the senior head of programs. This will be necessary as it will serve as an oversight component of the program as well as alleviate or at least reduce any resistance the records manager might face from any departments. I would also recommend that a records manager position be created and a professional records manager be hired to help coordinate these activities with HSP staff.

[1b.] Record management placement reasoning: My reasoning for placing this position at the mid-level in the organization is to encourage all of the department heads to assist in the program. First, I do not have the authority to change the existing organizational structure of this organization myself. Second, there may be a degree of resistance by some employees, or department heads due to concerns over a perceived loss in authority or budget.

And third, there may also be concerns that my findings and recommendations will make staff appear to be incompetent. In order to facilitate cooperation among the staff, I would like to encourage multiple-departmental participation and explain to all of the managers how the records program will help their respective departments improve functionality and efficiency.

PART V

[2a.] Three year goals: This consists of 12 long-term record management goals or recommendations, 8 long-term record retention goals, and an overriding goal to maintain trustworthy records.

My 12 long-term record management goals are:

(1) Investigate, implement, and review the purchase of commercially available records management software and suitable computer hardware. (2) Develop and update the existing HSP records
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management policy. This policy should provide guidelines regarding the usage of records which are created, stored, migrated, or preserved within or based on, a form of digital media.

(3). Adopt and continually apply procedures to enable the migration of all electronic and email files to the HSP central server. This will enhance security as well as data retrieval. (4) Investigate purchasing or developing a system which can handle all the individual PC desktop and wireless user needs of HSP staff.

(5). Develop and continually apply a disaster recovery plan to handle data in the event of a system failure, or a power or water outage. (6) Develop a procedure to periodically verify that all data on HSP computers has had a copy backed-up to the HSP server. (7) Develop a policy to work with the IT department to ensure that the technology systems are updated and maintained. This is important as one could argue that “the electronics records lifecycle is closely tied to the technology lifecycle” (Kansas, 2012, n.p.). As the Kansas Historical Society noted: “Electronic records live and die with the systems that support them” (Kansas, 2012, n.p.). (8) Develop a plan to use software and hardware to enable the scanning and import of records which are not natively digital in nature.

(9) Develop a plan for the systematic off-site storage or destruction of obsolete files and data.

(10). Develop a plan to establish a periodic review of the records management program by the HSP records committee staff. (11) Develop a plan to establish a periodic review to verify compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.(12). Develop plan: establish a periodic review of all records management functions for budgetary issues. Seek ways to decrease costs and improve functionality of staff.
My ten long-term record retention goals (ARMA, n.d., p.8):

(1). Institute a policy to verify compliance with all applicable laws and regulations: I will survey legal functions and examine legal transactions and create procedures to handle issues relating to the legal and regulatory environment of the society’s business transactions. I will make sure that all record groups, such as accounting and other financial records, are updated to reflect the current regulatory requirements.

In regard to laws and regulations, Stephens noted, based on the Saffady benchmarking study, most organizations do not bother to cite laws and regulations in their record schedules (Stephens, 2010, p.44).

(2): Adopt a program to ensure protection of the data via a robust record-keeping system (3) Adopt a procedure to ensure integrity: The record-keeping program should be constructed so the records and data have a reasonable guarantee of authenticity and reliability. (4) Adopt a procedure for record retention: I will schedule all record groups and records based on their status. This will be based on legal, regulatory, fiscal, storage, operational, and historical needs.

(5). Adopt a policy on record continuity: Ensure that the records are properly maintained in original format to ensure timely, efficient, and accurate retrieval of the Information. (6) Adopt a policy on long-term record disposition: Ensure planned disposition for retired records per organizational policies.

(7). Adopt a policy to ensure transparency of the processes of the organization’s record-keeping program.

(8). Adopt a policy to ensure accountability, policies, and procedures are adopted to guide the program.

Inventory of all record groups: I will categorize each record group according to its attribute of value.
The primary categories would be historical, administrative, legal, and fiscal. I will seek to verify that all retained records contain sufficient informational value. (9) Review existing paper records and determine their disposition. Update record retention information and verify metadata elements.

(10) Review staff practice of converting electronic records to paper. Update policy on this practice.

Maintain trustworthy records:

It is the long-term goal of the HSP to ensure that records management practices and procedures are in place to ensure that all files and record groups have sufficient reliability, integrity, and usability.

Reliability refers to “one whose contents can be trusted as a full and accurate representation of the transactions” (Stephens, 2010, p.100; also NARA, 2000, p.6). Integrity refers to a record that is “complete and unaltered” (Stephens, 2010, p. 100; also NARA, 2000, p.6). The structure of a record…should remain “physically or logically intact” (NARA, 2000, p.6). And usability refers to a record which can be located, retrieved, represented, and interpreted (Stephens, 2010, p.100).

It is essential to maintain documentation of a record’s validity, at the time of record signing. One must “retain contextual information to adequately document the processes in place at the time the record was electronically signed” (NARA, 2010, p.8). On a test basis, I may adopt and implement a technical non-repudiation digital signature on the electronic or digital records (NARA, 2010, pp.8-9). I will also implement a policy which provides instructions to staff regarding limits to modifying original records.

Sound record keeping practices:

I will use ISO 15489 as a guideline and conduct an inventory to establish which records are being
actively created, which records are active, and which records are inactive. I will determine the correct
classification for each record series or group and verify that they contain correct sufficient metadata.

Recommended record group scheduling: Per the hypothetical records inventory, retention policies are not
being enforced on paper records. I will develop an office schedule and schedule them for 7-10 years,
depending on content. I will schedule those paper records for conversion to digital format, off-site storage,
or destruction, based on the value of the records. Per Stephens, the average required retention period is 4-7 years (2010, p. 49).

For example, Articles of Incorporation would be scheduled as permanent, but bank deposit slips would be
scheduled at 7 years. There is also an issue of time limits for the electronic information. I will discuss
the options with the department heads and use their recommendations, along with legal and donor
requirements, to determine the value and disposition of the electronic records. As management is in the
process of moving towards the use of electronic data and converting existing paper to digital, I will
schedule the vital paper records to permanent until they can be digitized.

In addition, I will take the data from the records survey and input the record groups into an updated
record retention schedule. The retention schedule might include such items as: Schedule number, date
effective, name of organization, name of department, records series title, description of the contents of the
records series, retention and disposition, legal citations regarding retention requirements, method of
records disposal or preservation (Virginia, 2010, p. 14).
Develop record retention schedules: This institution has structured as well as unstructured data. My goal is to identify the organization’s existing categories and record series, and try to consolidate them. I will do this according to the “big bucket” strategy of consolidating similar record types (Cisco, 2008, p.3).

I propose the following: Identify all electronic records, organize the records by business function or process into a preliminary classification scheme based on record series or buckets, verify legal requirements, consolidate the record series in the retention schedule by assigning a long retention time period to this group (Cisco, 2008, p.32).

Email retention:

In regard to the HSP’s volume of email files, there is no procedure in place to help employees locate and retrieve essential emails. I propose that the Records Manager develop specialized software queries to crawl through all stored electronic information, including the emails. All data should be categorized according to pre-defined buckets. Specialized queries should be created to aid in identifying specific information related to legal or audit needs. A copy of this filtered data should be automatically saved to a specific repository file. Metadata should be added to these files to aid in retrieval (Mattox, 2007, p.61).

Metadata priority: Metadata should be added to each record or record group which reflects information on retention, disposal, and preservation. A commercial or customized metadata schema could be used to help define and identify the records. This is important as the library and archives division has a large number of records which have donor restrictions or preservation issues. It will be advisable to examine each record group for authenticity and long-term value. If a customized recordkeeping metadata schema is chosen, it could be used to describe the organizational recordkeeping entities, such as records, their
properties, such as *title*, or *identifier*, and their relationships, such as *authorized by* (NSW, 2008, n.p.).

[2B.] Three year goals: Program priorities: I have 5 program priorities:

(a). Develop a plan to systematically verify that the destruction of critical records, addressed in the one-year goal, has been abated. (b) Record storage: Develop a plan to verify that the stored electronic data containing the organization’s records is not corrupt or deficient. This review will be done in conjunction with the IT department or staff person. (c) Develop a plan to systematically ensure the trustworthiness of the electronic records and record groups. I will use commercially available software and perform queries on the existing electronic record groups and flag any record groups which appear to be missing essential descriptive information. I will add metadata information where needed for these records.

(d) Records categories: I will develop a procedure to use record management software to run queries on all record groups and create a list of departmental categories. I will seek to verify that each department’s record groups are being properly encoded with the correct categories. Based on Cisco’s “Big bucket’s concept, I will try and see if any record groups are being duplicated and can be consolidated (2008, p. 31).

I will create a list of document categories and correct those record groups in the systems database which are not properly categorized. I will examine the metadata of these record groups, verify that the information is authentic and reliable, and modify or amend the entries if needed.
(e) Create a long-term preservation strategy. I will develop and apply policies and procedures for the systematic review of records and record groups in need of preservation. This will be an extremely useful scheduling list for this organization. Preservation is an ongoing issue with older records in the library and archives department. Providing a centralized listing of collections and preservation issues will help the preservation department make better use of its limited funding and staff.

PART VI

[3a.] First year goals: The majority of the planning and framework for the electronic record-keeping system and record retention procedures should be promulgated and established within the first year. Several of the below 12 items are covered in (Bantin, 2008, pp.113-115) and (ARMA, n.d., p.8):

(1). Halt the destruction of critical records: Identify those records and record groups which need to be retained. Ensure that essential records are not being accidently destroyed or deleted by users. Essential records are those which contain informational value. I would conduct employee workshops for records coordinators and other appropriate staff in the use of retention schedules for the disposition of records.

(3). Explore the adoption of an automated system to apply record retention and disposal decisions. This will probably be a challenging task for the record manager. I envision a degree of compromise between an ideal system where the process model which focuses on data outputs, versus the data model which focuses on data elements (Bantin, 2008, pp.114-115). I will investigate appropriate commercial software.

(4) Create a preliminary guideline for the usage, storage, migration, and naming of electronic records.
(5) Identify staff needs regarding software and provide uniform software to all employees. I will ask that all employees use the same programs such as Office 2007, etc. (6) Coordinate data back-up protocols and procedures with HSP managers. Ensure that all departments conduct backups based on pre-determined schedule. Schedule workshops to assist staff with backup procedures. (7) Maintain virus-free environment. Schedule a time to periodically check all staff computers for viruses and malware. Ensure that all computers are using updated antivirus programs. (8) Create an email retention policy. Establish procedures for staff to save, store, and transfer a copy of their emails to the HSP central server.

(9) Develop queries used to crawl through electronic information and categorize it according to user-defined “big buckets” (Mattox, 2007, p. 61). (10) Add metadata to all electronic files to aid in retrieval. (11) Conduct preliminary research into automated records management software. (12) Establish a policy and procedure to limit the number of paper records staff are printing from digital copies.

Peter Mojica wrote that there are four essential goals for records management programs: (1) Prevent and detect instances of accidental file destruction, (2) try to reduce risks when violations occur, (3) concentrate on addressing the record groups first and then the format, (4) work to educate all staff on compliance needs (Mojica, 2004, p. S21). I chose to use these goals as guidance in this report.

In the first year, I will first establish, or create, written policies in regard to record retention. Records, a product of the functions of each department, will be verified for content, context, and structure. Within each department, the pertinent record groups will have their identification, intellectual controls,
provision of access, and physical controls verified. Each record group’s category, status, and format will
also be checked to ensure that the records are necessary for the function of the organization.

In my opinion, it will probably take some time to do a thorough records survey, analyze the
organizational structure, do a thorough record inventory, develop a record schedule, and survey the
departmental functions. Due to the time involved, I will probably leave the record inventory for last.

Depending on the amount of record groups to identify and organize, to meet the first year’s goal, time
restrictions will limited me to identifying and establishing record retention control over mission critical
records. I would define mission critical records as fiscal records. Such records would deal with the
organization’s budget, accounting, and taxes.

As the existing record retention policy is obsolete, I will rewrite it and periodically update or modify it. It
will be helpful to institute a permanent records retention program, run by the HSP records management
officer, and in consultation with the records management committee. This will help to ensure that
important records are schedules as permanent.

[3b.] First year versus three year goals: A number of the first year goals set the framework and
foundation for creating the structure and mechanisms for the organization’s record keeping management.

It is my observation that the three year goals tend to focus more on micro or file/folder group specifics.
The majority of the first year goals are procedural, policy, standards, and programming. For example,
(a). developing retention guidelines for all record groups and records. This may need to be periodically
modified as more information is analyzed regarding administrative or preservation needs.

(b). Designing and implementing a manual and automated method for retrieval and dissemination of recorded information. This will need to be periodically modified by the records manager based on the changing parameters of the project. (c) Establishing preliminary policies and procedures to identify and protect records which are deemed to be of a mission-critical nature. Policies and procedures may change due to updates or changes in software programs or computers. (d) Initiate and develop training and programs to provide record retrieval orientation for employees. This will change as the software programs are updated.

[4] Staff considerations: Per the case scenario, my staff consists of a certified records manager and an untrained trainee. The planning, policy directives, strategy and survey work need to be coordinated and developed by the records manager. The records manager is in charge of verifying that the strategy meets the organization’s legal requirements, public accountability, records retention needs, and trustworthiness. The records inventory and survey's usefulness depends on complete and accurate information as well as systematic implementation. The records manager will decide whom and how to perform the inventory and survey. This advanced planning is essential for the success of the records management review. The trainee will be taught how to input the data from the record or record group data. The records manager will assign and supervise the trainee’s work and monitor the trainee for any questions or support issues.
[5a.] Pros or cons of the HSP moving to electronic recordkeeping: In analyzing the business functions and activities of each administrative department, it is apparent that while a mixture of paper and electronic exist, the majority of new files that are being created are electronic. My proposal: I recommend that the organization move to a centralized electronic recordkeeping system.

[5b] Why move towards electronic record-keeping: To improve the access, retrieval, and use of the records (ISO, 2001, p.10). This in turn will increase the efficiency and decrease the time needed to locate and retrieve the desired records. The HSP survey data found an inconsistent approach to paper as well as electronic data storage and retention, due to the lack of written guidelines and procedures for the storage and disposition of such records.

The survey data found that some employees were leaving departmental data in their local hard-drives as opposed to saving the data to the organization’s central server. Some employees were having trouble locating files due to inconsistent file titles, and others were printing out large quantities of digital records. This disorganization extended to file disposition. Employees were confused regarding which paper or electronic records should be deleted or destroyed. Due to this confusion, most employees were simply retaining all of their records.

I am recommending that the HSP move to a centralized electronic recordkeeping system for 5 key reasons: (a) Improved accessibility, (b) file format longevity, (c) format completeness, (d) flexibility, and (e) accuracy (Minnesota, 2012).
(a) Improved accessibility: The digital file format will enable staff members and the public to more easily find and view the electronic records. The cessation of printing out digital records will result in improved file retention and file organization. The digital format will also be more easily accessed by staff. (b) File format longevity: Software should be used which supports existing file formats. Records can be migrated if new file formats are developed. Open source formats are preferable to proprietary ones as open source software will avoid any “Legacy issues,” or problems with obsolete proprietary software (Kansas, 2012, n.p.).

(c) Completeness: If the records are converted, the destination file format should meet the operational and legal objectives for acceptable degree of data, appearance, and format.

(d) Flexibility: The file format should meet the organization’s objectives for sharing and using records. For example, staff may need to frequently share copies of the records with another department, use the records in their work duties, or convert and/or migrate the records later. If the file format can only be read by specialized hardware and/or software, the ability to share, use, and manipulate the records is limited. (e) Accuracy: If the files are migrated or converted, the resulting files should have an acceptable level of data, appearance, and relationship loss.

Another reason for the move to centralized electronic record-keeping is the need to improve expediency and efficiency in responding to requests for information. Traditional paper files are “notoriously inefficient” (Stephens, 2010, p. 10). This move would help to (a) reduce costs of storing paper records, (b) reduce the possibility of lost paper records due to misfiling, (c) improve departmental efficiency by
reducing the time needed to locate paper files, and d) improve processing time as paper records are labor intensive to process.

[5c] Timeframe for move to electronic record-keeping: The recently completed records inventory has resulted in a large list of file groups and record groups which exist in the electronic format. There is another list of electronic files which will need to have their metadata revised or added (Bantin, 2008, p.113). Based on my survey results, some departments are already utilizing elements of electronic recordkeeping. I would give the project 4-6 months for the final move to the electronic record-keeping system. This will allow the record manager to meet with all users, conduct informational seminars, and clarify record retention and record migration procedures and policies.

[5d] What circumstances for move to electronic record-keeping: Unless there are legal, budgetary, or staffing issues preventing the move towards electronic-recordkeeping, I would proceed immediately. Changing to an electronic record-keeping system will ensure that information is timely, accurate, complete, cost-effective, accessible, and intact. It will also promote the exchange of files between HSP staff, improve the efficiency of administrative activities, and facilitate expedient responses to patrons. I would first verify that rules, procedures, and record retention timelines are established, check for any legal restrictions or limitations, and then implement the new record retention database.

The first priority for the database implementation will be to ensure that a back-up exists for the data in case the migration, or part of it, fails. The second priority will be to ensure that even after the migration
occurs, all original records, or master copies, are retained. This will be necessary during the later phase of quality control in case any data was lost during the transfer. The record manager should coordinate with the IT department and department supervisors to ensure that all procedures for record group access, retrieval, naming, migration, or preservation, are followed. All paper records and record groups should be retained and scheduled for review at a later date for selective archiving or disposition.

[5e] Steps to prepare for the transition: (a) Draft the recordkeeping functional requirements. Verify that there are written record retention guidelines in place (b) ascertain the organizations main usage of the electronic component. This will hopefully increase the record managers understanding of how the organization will seek to use the record keeping function. (c) ascertain how the software to be used by the organization will fit in with the functional requirements (Cox, 1998, p. 40). (d) Review existing retention schedule and develop or update it. (e) verify with IT department that all necessary hardware and software is in place. (f) verify that all regulatory and legal requirements are adhered to.

Back-up date: (1) Prior to implementing the transition, ensure that the data has been backed up. (2) data backup essential to avoid the loss of data or files (3) ensure that the saved files are complete, trustworthy, and exact duplicates of the migrated copies.

I would use the recently completed records inventory and compile a list of all electronic record groups. The list of electronic record groups should be checked against the existing record schedule. All record groups should be checked to verify that they are correctly classified for category, title and author, and retention period. Those records which are deemed to be of long-term importance will be scheduled as
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permanent. Others will be scheduled for archiving or off-site storage.

[Question 5f] Dealing with existing electronic documentation: If staff, budgetary, or legal issues limit the organization’s ability to approve migrating to a new record-keeping system, I would still follow most of the steps laid out in this paper. I would: (1) seek out low-cost, commercially available record management software to assist in organizing the record retention schedule. (2) filter the existing records to determine which ones need to be archived. (3) verify that all record groups have sufficient metadata. (4) verify that a backup copy of the electronic data exists.

In closing, this report has sought to address record management problems partially attributed to the lack of an updated record retention policy. This report has itemized policies and procedures to improve the creation, retention, and disposition of its paper and electronic records. It has also addressed methods by which the HSP can resolve problems related to the authenticity, reliability, and integrity of its records.

This report has enumerated the reasons for updating the record retention policy and schedule, suggested long-term and short-term procedures for managing paper and electronic information, and suggested migration to a centralized electronic record-keeping system. Implementation of these proposals will result in improved retention and disposition of all records, improved access by all authorized users, and the knowledge that there are defined policies and procedures in place to control and manage the authenticity, integrity and reliability of the records held by this organization.
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[http://www.csi1000.com/docs/04-kmworld2.pdf](http://www.csi1000.com/docs/04-kmworld2.pdf)


Attachment A

Records inventory and survey proposal memo:

This document is to verify my agreement, as an independent records management contractor, with the HSP. I have met with the HSP working committee and have agreed to review and submit my recommendations for updates and improvements to the existing HSP records management program.

To facilitate this review, it is understood that I have a written agreement with the HSP for permission to conduct a records inventory and departmental functions survey. Per our agreement, I have been given the necessary authority and resources to conduct my review and submit my records management proposal. I have been permitted to actively work with inside staff, as well as outside agencies and experts.

Signed-
J. Gross, Records management contractor
Date: March 15, 2012
Beginning in Fall Quarter 2010, faculty members must require that students append a statement to deliverables (for example: papers, projects, exams) indicating that the work submitted is their own. In compliance with this directive, I require the following statement to be included with your three written assignments:

I certify that:

- This paper/project/exam is entirely my own work.
- I have not quoted the words of any other person from a printed source or a website without indicating what has been quoted and providing an appropriate citation.
- I have not submitted this paper / project to satisfy the requirements of any other course.

Signature  

Date  3/21/2012