Records Management for Electronic Records

BECKY LINGLE
ITD – RECORDS MANAGEMENT

Overview

- Definitions
- Issues
- Solutions
- E-mail Records

Electronic Record

- Structured information, maintained in a digital format using computer-based technology.

Key Components of Electronic Records

- Content:
  - What information is being communicated?
- Context:
  - What are the circumstances surrounding the creation of the document?
- Structure:
  - How was the information originally formatted and presented?

Electronic Records Issues

- Easily created and copied (multiple "originals")
  - Multiple storage devices
- Easily manipulated
- Lack of filing standards
  - Lack of filing methodology
  - "Personal" naming conventions
- Information technology rapidly changing

Electronic Records Issues

- Storage is invisible
- Space is not a personal issue
- Electronic storage media have a relatively short life span
- Disposal is complex
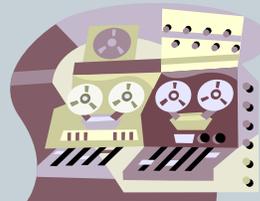
How much is a lot of information?

1 Kilobyte (KB) = 1/2 of a typewritten page

1 Megabyte (MB) = a small novel

1 Gigabyte (GB) = a pickup truck filled with books

1 Terabyte (TB) = just over 50,000 trees made into paper and printed

1 Petabyte (PB) = 1/2 of the information in all the US academic research libraries

1 Exabyte (EB) = 20% of all the words ever spoken by human beings

Solutions

- Implement Filing Standards
  - Classification methodology
  - Use industry standard formats
  - Common storage systems
  - Use descriptive file names
- System goal – Centralize
  - One original
  - One location
  - Accessible by appropriate personnel
- Complete Annual Records Disposal Process

Statewide Classification System

- Based on 31 standard subjects
- Examples:
  - 01 (ACT) Accounting
  - 30 (C/L/A) Contracts/Leases/Agreements
  - 60 (PER) Personnel
  - 80 (SPS) Programs, Projects, and Services

> The ND Subject Classification System can be found at
> http://www.nd.gov/itd/records/docs/classification.pdf

Organizing Electronic Records

- Implement standard directories on personal and shared network drives.
- Create sub-directories based on the State Subject Classification System.
- Break down each sub-directory by year (2008, 2009, etc.)
- File documents under these sub-directories.

Sample Network Drive

RECMGMT
- 10(AS)
- 14(AOC)
  - ARMA
  - BFMA
- 26(COM)
- 35(ED)
- 43(EQ)
- 44(FM)
- 50(LG)
- 55(LEG)
- 60(PER)
- 65(PP)
- 72(REF)
- 80(PPS) EDMS
- 80(PPS) RM Program
- 81(SPR)
- 85(SD)
- 90(SSR)

Abbreviations can be used, or some agencies choose to spell out the classification category name [i.e. 35 (Education)]

Electronic Records Retention

- Apply retention equally to paper and electronic records.
- Dispose of electronic records during annual records disposal process.
  - Virtual Desktop:
    - Delete cookies, temp files, cache, & history files
    - Empty Recycle Bin and Deleted Items (Outlook)
- Backups may contain records that should be disposed.

Storage Considerations

- Match storage with access requirements.
- Consider media life carefully.
- Follow instructions for media storage.
- Always have dependable backups available.
- Have a disaster recovery plan in place.
- Expect to migrate information every $3 - 5$ years.

Life Expectancy

- Estimates:
  - Video tape = 1 -2 years
  - Magnetic media = 5 - 10 years
  - Write-once CDs = 30 years (some sources say 100 years)
  - Optical Disks = 30 years
- **Media will likely outlive the technology environment**

Control the Environment

- Operation and Storage Environments:
  - Temperature = 62 – 68 degrees
  - Humidity = 40%
  - Minimal fluctuations
  - Clean of contaminants/dust
  - Secure area

E-Mail Records

- Determine "official record" status for retention purposes.
- Official Record:
  - Made or received pursuant to law or in connection with the transaction of official business.
  - Preserves evidence of the organization, functions, and activities.
  - Documents programs, policies, and decisions.
- Not every e-mail message is an "official record".

Managing E-mail

- Treat like correspondence and file by subject
- Storage options:
  - Print and file
  - Archive in e-mail folders, or
  - Move to separate file location

E-Mail Retention

- Assign retention based on the content of the message, i.e. personnel, financial, etc.
- Refer to specific records retention schedule for the office.
- Refer to ND General Records Retention Schedule.

Questions

Becky Lingle
State Records Management Administrator
(701) 328-3585
blingle@nd.gov