Federal Records Management Solution

Implementing a Strategic and Scalable Records Management System

Executive Summary

Upward trends of big data, mobility, social media and cloud computing have left Federal organizations taking reactionary and band-aid approaches to records management. Due to budgetary constraints, agencies are often forced to settle with less than optimal solutions to support major decision-making efforts. Additionally, departments within each agency operate in silos when developing and governing a process for categorizing, managing, storing and retrieving records and information. As a result, each department maintains disparate data and records that cannot be readily integrated to meet the needs of the agency or provide results that will drive timely and informed decisions.

We provide a holistic approach to helping Federal agencies to proactively and effectively manage records in a cost-efficient way. This report provides insight into our unique Full-Service Delivery Model that is scalable and tailorable to meet an agency's program and funding capabilities.

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Reliance on Narrow Solutions

Many organizations manage records by utilizing readily available and affordable tools as a narrow solution to address an agency-wide challenge. For example, agencies depend on SharePoint to serve as a central repository rather than a medium to facilitate decisions or for project collaboration. As a result, SharePoint is overwhelmed with large data files that do not add any value and users encounter storage and access issues that create additional inefficiencies and costs. Another erroneously implemented solution is the use of shared network drives. In the absence of a governance policy, standard operating procedure, taxonomy, and a classification scheme, the shared drive becomes an unstructured repository. In turn, users spend copious amounts of time going through a data labyrinth in search of answers.

Consequences of Failure

Information and records should not be considered byproducts of office work. Organizations should change their paradigm and appreciate the importance of records and effective management of those records. Information and records are evidence that organizations are meeting compliance requirements and achieving their mission and ethics standards. Consequences of a failed records management system, or a lack thereof, can lead to critical issues with some being irrecoverable:

- Communication Failures
- Poor/Rash Decision Making
- Loss of reputation due to poor records
- Substantial fines and sanctions against the organization
- Litigation risk due to failure to comply with regulatory and legal mandates
- Vital Loss of data in the event of a disaster or when an employee leaves
- Increased cost due to inefficiencies

Finally, by December 31, 2020, the directive by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) (Managing Government Records Directive M-12-18) requires all agencies to manage and retain records in electronic formats "to the fullest extent possible". As the deadline quickly approaches, Federal agencies are rushing to implement a stop gap versus a sound and scalable records management system versus taking a more strategic and holistic approach. Agencies will scramble to find funds from internal departments to purchase services and applications for an interim solution or resort to settling with existing technology. However, an interim solution will only worsen the current challenges and create additional costs as departments continue to work in a vacuum, encounter accessibility and searchability issues, while risk meeting data/records management requirements and missing deadlines.
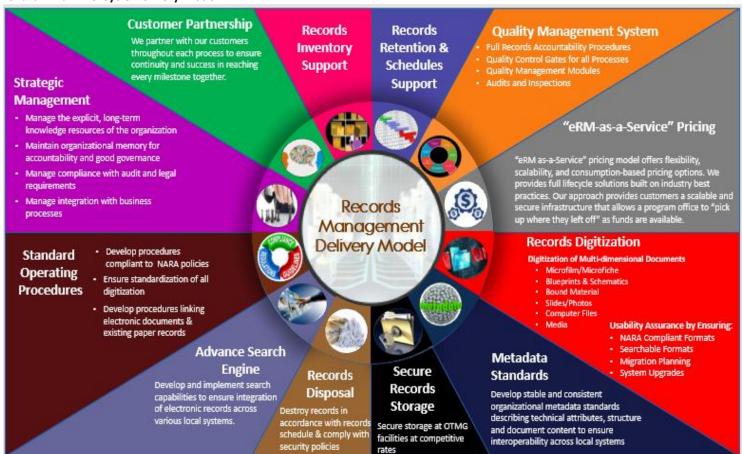
Full Lifecycle Delivery Model

As the Federal government moves closer to the 2020 deadline, it is critical for agencies to improve the performance and promotion of openness and accountability through refined records management practices and policies. Our Full Life-Cycle Delivery Model (Chart A) provides a holistic and scalable approach to developing, implementing, and sustaining an effective records management system.

Customer Partnership & Engagement

A key component of our delivery model is continuous collaboration and partnership with our client throughout the lifecycle. Our Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) will guide and engage with client stakeholders across the organization to promote transparency and user adoption of new policies and systems. This type of engagement empowers and advises the client leadership team to strategically implement and manage policies, systems, and overall cultural change.

Chart A: Full Life-Cycle Delivery Model

"eRM-as-a-Service" Pricing

From our work in various agencies, we recognize that many organizations struggle to identify and implement an effective Records Management (RM) System not due to a lack of functionality but because of funding constraints. Therefore, as part of our delivery model, we constructed "eRM-as-a-Service" pricing model which offers our Federal clients flexibility, scalability, and consumption-based pricing options. Our team believes in long-term relationships to ensure the success of our clients. Through this pricing model, we are adaptable to the funding challenges faced by Federal organizations. Based on our assessment of each environment, we provide customized modules of activities that allow the client to determine and select priority activities with the funding they have on-hand. Since modules are interrelated, program offices can "pick up where they left off" as funds become available.

S.T.E.P.™ Change

Recognizing the quality, risk and organizational change management requirements associated with a successful records management system implementation and leveraging over 20 years of project and program management experience, our team utilizes a S.T.E.P.™ (Strategies Targeting Efficiency and Performance) change delivery phased approach (Chart B) to deliver records management solutions, sustain business continuity, gain stakeholder adoption, achieve benefit realization and optimize an agency's investments. The following chart provides an overview of our delivery approach which is tailorable to an agency's business needs and rate of acceptance to change.

Chart B: S.T.E.P™ Phase Approach for Developing and Implementing a Records Management System

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 5
Assessment & Planning	**Development of Taxonomy & Libraries**	**Prepare records for cataloguing and classification**	**Upload records and execute test schedule**	**Implement quality control for maintenance and sustainment**
▪ Identify and engage with key stakeholders ▪ Locate, identify, assess all information assets ▪ Perform gap assessment of current processes	▪ Partner with stakeholders to determine taxonomy for records ▪ Partner with stakeholders to design approve controlled vocabulary	▪ Draft policies and standard operating procedures for records classification and management ▪ Prepare schedule for records cataloguing and uploading	▪ Develop User Acceptance Test (UAT) of uploaded records ▪ Upload records and test all capabilities	▪ Develop quality control plan for maintenance and sustainment ▪ Conduct user training ▪ Schedule follow-on meetings to ensure continuity of operations
MILESTONE Submit Project Management & Quality Control Plan	**MILESTONE** Confirm Taxonomies & Controlled Vocabulary Design meet ISO standards	**MILESTONE** Submit Policies & SOPs	**MILESTONE** Complete UAT of search and retrieval capabilities	**MILESTONE** Implement quality control for maintenance and sustainment

Quality and Risk Management

Two fundamental components, but often overlooked, of a successful records management system are quality and risk management. To ensure a records management system maintains records that are accurate, consistent and reliable, a systematic approach to quality and risk management is applied across the entire records management lifecycle.

A common pitfall many agencies encounter is waiting until the test phase to develop a quality and risk management plan, resulting in development gaps and rework in the overall implementation plan. Therefore, developing a plan for quality and risk management needs to occur early in the lifecycle, specifically during the design phase of a RM system, to ensure delivery requirements are met and realistic performance goals are established.

Governance policies and procedures to monitor performance must be documented to ensure quality and risks are at the forefront of the process and not as an afterthought. In partnership with the client management, the P3-OTMG Team will facilitate activities to capture performance expectations based on ground truth of the current process, environment, personnel, and technologies. This consistently applied technique will enable management to skillfully and continuously monitor process capabilities and adjust plans as needed.

Quality Standards

Depending on the client's environment and requirements, we will collaborate with the Chief Information Officer (CIO), program leaders and other stakeholders to clearly understand the agency's compliance requirements, quality standards/goals, and budget capacity to recommend a standard for developing taxonomies, controlled vocabulary design, and maintenance. For records management, one standard to consider is ISO 15489-1:2016.

ISO 15489-1:2016 defines the concepts and principles from which approaches to the creation, capture and management of records are developed. This part of ISO 15489 describes concepts and principles relating to the following:

- Records, metadata for records and records systems;
- Policies, assigned responsibilities, monitoring and training supporting the effective management of records;
- Recurrent analysis of business context and the identification of records requirements;
- Records controls;
- Processes for creating, capturing and managing records.

ISO 15489-1:2016 applies to the creation, capture and management of records regardless of structure or form, in all types of business and technological environments, over time. We have a certified ISO Auditor who can work with your team to align your agency's environment to this standard.

In terms of a records management implementation, for several years we have utilized the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK), Six Sigma DMIAC and Informational Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) methodologies as our guideline for project, program, process and technology implementations. We have a team of over 15 consultants who are certified Program Management Professionals (PgMP), Project Management Professionals (PMP), Six Sigma Black Belts and ITIL Professionals ready to share best practices and transfer knowledge related to records management and other system implementations.

Sustaining an Effective RM System

To sustain effectiveness of an RM system, organizations need to consistently measure, test, and update plans to prepare for risks related to disaster recovery, security threats, and costs related to delays in record retrieval.

Guiding principles to consider:

1. *Promote and maintain a culture of quality* to minimize the risk of non-compliant and erroneous records. Create an environment to encourage transparency through communication of record failures and successes by providing tools to easily provide feedback.

2. *Train personnel* through continuous refresher courses*.*

3. *Align with existing quality methodologies strategies* whenever possible to prevent redundancies.

4. *Understand the role records play* in the current and long-term plans of the agency or organization including the legal and regulatory compliance standards for each record.

5. *Assess probability and impact of risk.* Understand what records are vital and the impact if lost or misused.

6. *Perform regular quality audits* to monitor performance and compliance. Benchmark performance against previous records management audit results to continuously assess improvement opportunities or trends of non-conformance. Also audit to see which records are aging or expiring.

7. *Partner with Legal and IT* to ensure information is managed in a way to achieve compliance and meet system requirements.

8. *Check for data integrity* through scheduled audits of record samples and activities documented in the quality management plan.

Conclusion

This White Paper provides Federal agencies with viable options for developing and implementing an effective RM system that is scalable and holistic. More importantly, the cultural and mind shift needs to percolate throughout the ranks of the organization to sustain the effectiveness and success of a RM system.

About P³ Delivery and OTMG

 is a management consulting firm built on the principles of Strategic Program Management. Our expertise, experience, and passion are in project, process and performance management excellence. We provide consulting, business process, program management, records management, administrative support and training services. We have over 15 years of experience delivering a wide range of projects and programs for clients in the public and private sectors throughout the US and internationally. We deliver industry best practices in establishing standards, policies and processes to drive project efficiency, effectiveness and accountability. We are also a certified 8(a) and woman-owned business.

 is a strategic management consulting firm formed by seasoned business professionals with a combined experience of over 50 years of Federal Contracting experience. Our success is built on a common vision - building high performance work environments. The company's cadre of successful executives leveraged their diverse relationship management and service delivery experiences to build a company culture that thrives on fostering and sustaining high employee morale and retention rate. It is this genuine and unwavering dedication to our workforce that generates the staying power required for OTMG to provide unparalleled services and to become recognized as one of the best places to work. OTMG is also a Woman-Owned Economically-Disadvantaged Small Business.

To learn more about RM solutions relevant to your organization, feel free to contact us:

Charlette Wynn, CEO
P³ Delivery
Email: cwynn@p3delivery.com
Phone: 678.362.8633
www.p3delivery.com

Chinh Fannin, CEO
On Target Management Group
Email: C_fannin@otmgllc.com
Phone: 571.201.7958