



The
BUSINESS RECORDS MANAGEMENT
BULLETIN



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PICKING THE RIGHT CONTAINER

Containers aside, several records and information (RIM) managers recently picked a good-natured fight by lobbing back and forth e-mail comments on a listserv about whether it is wiser to store large quantities of paper records in boxes or to image them all down into a “Texas Toast” size container. Although there could be great savings in storage costs, one comment was that if one out of 10,000 boxes of paper records were lost, that is a small percentage of the total data. But if all the records have been digitized onto a single disk, and that gets lost or stolen, the loss is catastrophic.

Which brings us to the topic of containers. Boxes in letter or legal dimensions, tubes for rolled plans, X-ray boxes, acid-free archival boxes, plastic or steel cases to hold or transport disks, tapes, cartridges, hard drives, film, fiche or floppies. And let us not forget those later-in-the-lifecycle containers whose purpose is to securely keep disposed documents away from prying eyes until they reach the shredding facility and are cut into bits.

Discussions on cardboard record boxes include questions or opinions on whether to buy cheap ones or expensive ones... boxes made of “virgin” cardboard or recycled materials... whether boxes will get a lot of handling and moving or will be left in place for a long time... how high should they be stacked— four high or five high... what’s the maximum load, 35 pounds or 40...how long can boxes be re-used, and more.

Although someone may say “Have I got a deal for you!” on cardboard boxes, be sure to measure them to see if they have standard records box dimensions of 12”x10”x15”. This is because non-standard boxes will not fit on records center shelving that is sized for standard boxes, and that means wasted shelf space with the client paying for it. Non-standard boxes may not have the strength and durability needed if they must be pulled and transported on a frequent basis.



What does the 200-pound test for boxes mean?

As explained by The Paige Company (www.paigecompany.com), the 200-lb. test does not mean a box can be loaded with 200 pounds. It means instead the bursting strength per square inch of the liners that make up the inside of a cardboard storage box. Liner weights may be light or heavy with the heavier boxes costing more. Boxes are generally filled with 35 to 40 pounds with 40 generally accepted as the maximum.

There is a method for stacking storage boxes so that the weight comes down not on the center of each box but on the edges. When building a layer of boxes, one row is placed perpendicular to adjacent rows so that the box frames or edges are not all aligned on top of each other. See a diagram for this at www.archives.gov/frc/records-transfer.html. Maintaining this method or pattern of placing boxes can sometimes be hard to do when there is a massive amount of record boxes to be moved, especially if nonstaff, temporary labor must be brought in to get the job done. But if this stacking pattern is not followed, the result can be boxes crushed at the bottom or slipping out of place on the pallets.

Beyond ordinary record boxes, there are specialty boxes for particular needs such as archival boxes made of paper that is free of acid or lignin and are alkaline buffered to protect sensitive documents such as vital legacy records or historic documents. One company that specializes in archival boxes is found at www.hollingercorp.com which has been producing acid-free products for more than 45 years.

Although there is increasing use of computerized imaging for medical purposes, there are millions of X-rays that must be kept for specific periods of time, and their retention times can vary by state. X-ray storage boxes are generally made to have almost twice the strength of normal cardboard boxes. Incidentally, when X-rays have been cleared for destruction, there are companies such as Commodity Resource & Environmental, Inc. (www.creweb.com), a silver refiner which specializes in the recovery, recycling and destruction of X-ray film.

What about containers for electronic media?

Some are of steel, some are of high density plastic. All are designed to safeguard the integrity of electronic data which is stored in ever-increasing amounts. Meaning a new disk or cartridge can hold more data than old ones. And newer tape formats have greater density of data. Thus, damage to a newer cartridge or disk or tape wipes out more data than in the past— making protective containers even more important.

Damage to electronically store information, ESI, can result from being dropped or impacted, or contaminated by dirt or water or other foreign elements. Whether plastic or steel, these media containers have inner compartments or dividers shaped to hold specific sizes and shapes of disks or tapes to protect from them from impact and from external debris. The strength and integrity of cases used for transporting electronic data becomes increasingly important as greater amounts of data are moved away from central operations and are handled by more and more people, trained and untrained. Specifics on plastic cases can be found at www.turtlecase.com, and on steel containers for dozens of uses at www.demanddouglas.com.



Extremes of temperature or humidity can wreak havoc on electronic media which is why specially constructed data vaults are offered by storage contractors, vaults that offer fire protection while maintaining temperature and humidity control on a 24/7 basis that is constantly monitored. A vault is then a container of sorts for data, especially if data is sent electronically directly from its source, encrypted, to a disk or tape within a vault for immediate safe storage.

Discarded paper or ESI should be in security containers.

Every day brings a new horror story about confidential information being found in discarded trash in an alley or in a bale of paper meant for recycling. This brings into play another kind of records container—the security container. This may be a wastebasket size shredder, or a shredder console at a central location with an office, or a system of containers, some for documents that can safely be recycled, and others for items that must be destroyed. Some RIM programs include a step called witnessed destruction in which a staff person watches the actual destruction of a designated series of records and then signs a document attesting to which records were destroyed and the date of the destruction.

There is a large industry producing many kinds of security containers. Some shredders are built to meet specifications that have been determined by military and intelligence agencies. The German Institute of

Standardization, called DIN, has developed a six-level standard called DIN 32757-1 which has been adopted by much of the European Union. DIN security level 6, the highest, applies to shredders that meet standards mandated by the U. S. Department of Defense, the National Security Agency and the Central Security Agency. For a chart of high level shredders, go to http://www.nsa.gov/ia/government/MDG/NSA_CSS-EPL-02-01.pdf

Would you store records in a shipping container?

Another e-mail exchange among records managers centered on whether discarded shipping containers should be used to store records. Most agreed that such containers were bad choices because wind, rain, dirt, cold and hot temperatures could creep in and play havoc with records. The most telling indictment came from a records manager in Russia who explained that the Russian federal taxing agency had stored records in a shipping container parked outside its office. One night someone backed up a truck with a sky hook, lifted the container onto the truck bed, and drove off into the darkness.

You can be sure your records will not disappear into the night if you put them in the hands of a knowledgeable records center contractor.

Want to Make a Difference for Future RIM Professionals?

Be a Part of the 2008-2009 “Share Your Legacy” Planned Giving Campaign!

Did you know there is an easy and exciting way you can leave a lasting, positive impact on our RIM profession? The ARMA International Educational Foundation’s Share Your Legacy campaign, chaired by Foundation Trustee Larry Eiring, CRM, FAI, is designed so that individuals may designate a planned gift to assist the Foundation’s education and research mission. Initially launched in October, 2006 the Share Your Legacy campaign has generated a total sum of planned gifts

earmarked for the Foundation’s endowment in excess of \$200,000. all of which not only help build an endowment for the future of our profession, but can help the donor as well. Through such activities as making the Foundation a direct beneficiary of a will, insurance policy or Trust, donors can help secure the future of the efforts of the Foundation and for the next generation of records professionals. The Share Your Legacy campaign is designed so that you a planned gift can be easily designated to the Foundation’s endowment and our profession’s future. Here are just a few of the ways planned giving donors can also benefit:

- A gift can assist in total estate planning
- It may provide a lower tax for heirs
- Planned gifts often reduce an estate’s capital gains and other inheritance taxes
- And, most importantly, a planned gift gives the opportunity to make a lasting legacy for the future of the RIM profession.

The benefits of being a part of the Share Your Legacy campaign are enormous. And to make it as easy as possible to participate, several options for giving are available. These include:

- Leaving AIEF as a beneficiary in a will
- Naming AIEF as a beneficiary in a Trust that an individual can set up
- Naming AIEF as a beneficiary on an IRA or 401K account
- Noting AIEF as a beneficiary on life insurance or an annuity
- Making AIEF the beneficiary of a Charitable Gift Annuity

You can also designate direct gifts, such as stocks, bonds, real estate, business interests and art to the Foundation. In fact, almost anything of value can be designated as a planned gift to this campaign. The reality is that no matter how small or how large a planned gift is, it’s helping the our profession and the Foundation build a solid future for research, education and scholarship in records management. Each gift – a real legacy anyone can leave – will help educate and grow the next generation of records professionals.

Securing our profession's future is easy to do. All it takes is a call or email to Larry Eiring, the Share Your Legacy Chairman or to Preston Shimer, AIEF Administrator at the contact information listed. They can assist with discussing planned giving options, describe the benefits to you and your family and add you to the list of distinguished planned giving donors. Please, help meet the challenge of the future and join the Share Your Legacy campaign today.

*Larry Eiring, Chair, Share Your Legacy Campaign-
415-265-6838 / leiring@littler.com*

**We are very pleased to announce
the new SLIS Master's Degree
in Archives and Records
Administration (MARA)
for Fall 2008**

Please share this news with anyone you feel may be interested and don't hesitate to let me know if I can answer or direct questions. The School of Library and Information Science at San José State University is now offering a Master's of Archives and Records Administration (MARA). Using the convenience and flexibility of a fully online format and cohort model, students will learn sophisticated technologies for organizing, preserving, and accessing the growing volume of digital and analog assets and electronic records that must comply with government regulations.

The MARA degree prepares students for careers in records and information management and the certification exams administered by the Association of Records Managers and Administrators and the Academy of Certified Archivists. Significantly, a Master's in Archives and Records Management will increase mobility in the field. MARA graduates will work in a variety of settings worldwide, including corporations, government agencies, libraries, museums, historical societies, and non-profit organizations, as well as in the entertainment and education sectors.

Director Ken Haycock noted that the School developed the MARA program in response to a market study conducted for the School. "There is a large market for well-educated records and information managers, particularly in government and the corporate sector. San Jose is uniquely positioned to extend its archival concentration into a new degree and to offer the nation's first fully online program." SJSU MARA faculty members are award-winning scholars and leaders in their academic and professional communities.

Interested? Have questions? We invite you to visit the SJSU MARA Web site for more information and to register your interest in being considered for the Fall 2008 cohort [<http://slisweb.sjsu.edu/mara/index.htm>].

New ARMA International Paper Offers Strategies for Minimizing the Risks of E-Mail

Technological advances in electronic messaging have changed the way business is done and the way people collaborate and work together worldwide. E-mail has made communication to nearly anyone, anywhere possible in an instant and has become critical to the success of any organization. However, e-mail also brings with it potential risks that can leave companies struggling to gain control and limit exposure.

Fortunately there are answers for these electronic messaging challenges. ARMA International's Hot Topic paper, "Managing the E-Maelstrom: Strategies for Minimizing the Risks of E-Mail," provides management, compliance, security, and discovery solutions by exploring the issues facing the management of e-mail in organizations.

HotTopics was included with the March/April 2008 Information Management Journal.

Before Hitting the "Send" Button

1. Write for the front page. E-mails are professional communications. Check the tone – how would the message represent the organization if it appeared on the front page of the New York Times?
2. Double-check the recipient e-mail address. Make sure that the jdoe@somewhere.com in the "To" field is Jane Doe the project manager, not John Doe whose sloppy work is the subject of the e-mail. At best, it's embarrassing; at worst, it could disseminate sensitive information out of the organization.
3. Use a meaningful subject line. The subject line should clearly summarize the message. Subject lines that wrap are too long; subject lines that say "stuff," or "read this," or "today" aren't informative – and could get the message caught in a spam filter.
4. Change the subject – please. When a message turns into a thread of replies, it often expands or turns to other topics. Ensure the subject line reflects what is actually being discussed. The messaging system can keep track of the message thread.
5. Limit the length. Most users won't read a multipage e-mail. Write a memo or a document instead and send it (or a link to it).
6. Trim content for responses. When responding to several points in a lengthy message, excerpt just the points being responded to.
7. Simplify the signature line. Don't use a signature block that is longer than the message, that has political statements, or that includes pretty, shiny, blinking graphics. Make it professional.

Tips for Reducing the Volume of E-Mail

1. Copy only those who need to know. Don't CC or BCC unnecessarily; send messages only to those who really need the information.
2. Limit the use of "reply to all." Use only if necessary.
3. Use the right tool for the job. E-mail is a great tool, but it's not always the right tool. For highly transitory information that isn't going to be saved, use instant messaging, pick up the phone, or stop by the person's desk.
4. Use the right tool for the job – part 2. For one-way communications, such as project updates or company-wide announcements, blogs can replace e-mail blasts very effectively. They can be public or private, they are easy to update, and updates can be pushed out to users automatically using Really Simple Syndication (RSS).
5. Limit the use of attachments. Instead of sending attachments, store the document to be referenced in a repository within the organization or on a secure file sharing site and send a link to it instead.
6. Go on a "bacn" diet. "Bacn" (pronounced like the word bacon) refers to e-mail that the recipient has subscribed to or agreed to receive, so it is not as bad as spam, but it is e-mail that may not be read quickly, if ever. Bacn that could be cut from the diet might include vendor newsletters, list serve subscriptions, and informal distribution list for jokes and chain letters.
7. DO send a message when necessary. Some users will not respond to concerns sent via e-mail because they don't want their response "on the record." However, if someone sends an e-mail containing pointed concerns and it isn't answered, the only thing that will be produced in e-discovery are emails outlining the concerns, not any regarding possible solutions.

Get to know BRM



Sarah Dennis (left), Marketing Assistant, interviews Marlene Hink (center) and Michele Abaray

At Business Records Management there are many people who do very important work behind the scenes. Two employees who provide great contributions are *Michele Abaray* and *Marlene Hink* at the Pittsburgh North Side Warehouse in the Quality and Inventory Control departments, respectively. They have both been with BRM for 14 years and enjoy the fact that every day brings a new challenge and always something different.

As Quality Control Supervisor, Michele downloads and uploads daily activity information to and from the drivers' scanners at all BRM locations into the system and checks them line by line to ensure that everything is accurately entered. It then goes to Marlene in Inventory Control who double checks it for an additional level

of accuracy. They also verify boxes that are going to destruction to confirm that the correct information is inside, and print out all of the file folder archives and box barcodes.

These are positions that require great attention to detail, and BRM is committed to the safety and accuracy of our clients' information.

Michele and Marlene are most thankful for their coworkers who make them laugh and smile on a daily basis and make their work day a little brighter.

In their spare time, Michele enjoys going to Sandcastle Waterpark, shopping and spending time with her six-year-old nephew, Jameson. She also enjoys walking, exercising and going to the beach. Marlene likes to spend her time at the Meadows Racetrack or taking trips to Atlantic City. She's not a big table games player, but enjoys the slot machines and wins occasionally. She also likes to spend time with her three cats, Sadie, Sobad and Siegfried.

Congratulations eNewsletter 2nd Quarter Winners

Congratulations to *Amy Dewalt* of the University of Pittsburgh and *Andy Neski* of Security Systems of America. They both won 4 tickets to the Pittsburgh Zoo/PPG Aquarium.
On behalf of everyone at BRM, thanks again and we hope you have a great time!



BUSINESS RECORDS MANAGEMENT
BRM Disaster Recovery Services

1018 Western Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15233
Ph: 412-321-0600
Fax: 412-321-5152
www.businessrecords.com