
## About this eBook

My thanks to all the guest bloggers who contributed their work to this e-book.

The intention of this e-book and the other e-books in the series is NOT to provide a set of detailed technical requirements for how to create a strategy for managing information. There are other places for that — the AIIM web site and AIIM training and AIIM webinars and seminars are good places to start.

Rather, the purpose is to increase awareness across a broad cross-section of organizations and industries about the kinds of issues you need to think about when you begin to adopt a more strategic approach to managing information.

So the purpose of this series is educational and evangelical rather than technical.

You are free to share the link to anyone to download the book — and we encourage you to do so.

Links to this free e-book (http://www.aiim.org/8things) may be copied, distributed, reposted, reprinted and shared.



aiim® by AIIM President - John Mancini

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# 8 Secrets of an Effective Content or Records Management Implementation

Before getting started with an implementation — before even moving into the 8 secrets — it is useful to begin by recalling why you are even considering this in the first place and by confirming there is a commitment to proceed.

This kind of "strategic mobilization" should kick off any ECM or ERM project. To do this effectively, organizations should gather sponsors and stakeholders, identify the team that will lead the project, understand what the vision of the sponsor of the project is, and understand where significant gaps are likely to arise.

At its core, this is about defining 1) who needs to be involved, and 2) the scope of the project. Framing the initiative and confirming commitment needs a variety of key stakeholders: business, legal, executive, records, and IT. And don't forget some representation from the people who will actually have to use all this technology! In terms of scope, this will need to be done across a number of dimensions, including some or all of the following factors: 1) geography, 2) organizational, 3) legacy content, 4) information types, 5) information classes and 6) timing.

All of this should lead to a charter for the initiative. I will confess my bias in this area, which will carry over into some of the documentation described in the 8 secrets — this document is better off being short and strategic and actually read than long and detailed and gathering dust on a shelf (or

whatever the equivalent is in digital form). My friend Martin White from InranetFocus.com has some good advice — think Magna Carta, not a 100 page document.

Everyone still on board? Have a charter and sponsorship and commitment? OK, then, let's get going.

Here are the 8 secrets.

### 1 — Build a Business Strategy and Blueprint.

A successful blueprint begins with identifying the critical success factors for the initiative, how they will be measured, and what the drivers will be (i.e., how will life be different after all this work).

A good business blueprint includes the following:

An Executive Summary that summarizes the key information contained in the business blueprint, and highlights the recommendations and decision required.

A High-Level Program Plan that provides a very high level plan showing a sequence of projects and approximate delivery schedule. This will likely include a series of tactical and strategic projects.

A series of Business Case justifications covering the multiple dimensions of any ECM or ERM project:

The strategic case shows why the ECM-related project is required, and what business needs the project satisfies.

The economic case contains the summary of costs and benefits. The economic case focuses on comparing alternative ways of implementing the ECM-related project.

The funding case confirms that the available sources of funding are sufficient to implement the ECM environment and operate the ECM service.

The commercial case describes plans for the procurement of any ECM services or technology from suppliers.

The project management case describes the governance arrangement for the project and details of the project team.

A Future-State Conceptual Architecture illustrates the gap between the initial Current-State Conceptual Architecture, and what is proposed as the conceptual components of the solution to solve the concerns of the business.

### 2 — Conduct a Technology Assessment and Create a Blueprint.

As its name implies, the technology assessment concentrates on the technical aspects of your strategy. The goal of the assessment is to develop a technology blueprint similar in scope to the business blueprint defined in Secret #1, but focused on technology.

There are 5 main stages in producing an effective set of technical requirements for an ECM or ERM related initiative:

The first stage is to plan the work effort that is required to develop the technical requirements and blueprint. Sufficient time should be allowed to obtain consensus and agreement; this can often be considerable and often takes longer than those closest to the project anticipate.

The second stage is to gather requirements. This will involve obtaining needs from the key stakeholders and users.

The third step, after having gathered an initial set of requirements, is to analyze and understand the requirements.

The fourth stage is the documentation of the requirements. Documentation of the requirements is a powerful tool to achieving consensus on the end-state solution.

The fifth and final stage is to obtain agreement to the documented set of requirements. This will involve obtaining some kind of sign-off authority from each of the key stakeholders. [Again, recall the earlier advice — volume doesn't score extra points!]

### 3 — Think Through a Governance Structure and Approach.

Information governance is a set of formal and documented policies, procedures and rules that control how enterprise content will be managed potentially across its entire lifecycle, from the point of creation to ultimate destruction. Defining expectations, building a system that supports and enforces these expectations, and defining the role that end users have relative to those expectations is critical to an effective governance structure.

A sound Information Governance Framework will include the following:

- Laying down policies that will govern behaviors.
- Defining processes for all stages of the Information Lifecycle.
- Setting standards that must be followed when carrying out a defined process.
- Appointing specific people to be responsible for the information assets.
- Providing tools and technology to enable staff to carry out the defined processes to the required standards.
- Auditing the elements of the Framework regularly to ensure that the guidelines are being followed.

Again, it is important that all of this be incorporated into a governance document that is understood, endorsed, and supported by the key stakeholders in the organization.

AIIM research indicates that many of the core problems encountered during an implementation have poor or ill-defined governance at their core.

### 4 — Create a Roadmap and Project Plan.

A project plan typically how the following activities will be addressed: 1) Project management, 2) Testing and deployment, and 3 Issue resolution.

We define project management as a structure, process and procedure based on the organization's preferred Project Management methodology. The role and responsibility of the Project Manager is to make decisions and balance resources across the entire program, and to make sure that all projects are working to a set of shared requirements. The project manager monitors plans and progress across all projects in the ECM project, to ensure coherence and integration across the whole program.

### 5 — Build a Sound Foundation.

Organizations need to make sure that the appropriate software development environment exists for the project. Some of the questions to ask: 1) Is the configuration management environment set up, so that code and other artifacts can be checked in when they are completed? 2) Do the developers have a workable development environment? 3) Are the developers trained in the tools that will be used to build the system?

Another core foundational requirement is defining the enterprise information architecture. Some of the necessary tasks at this stage are: 1) Defining the enterprise master data model; 2) Defining the master data management architecture; 3) Defining when synchronization of content, data and information are required by different systems to meet their business-based information needs; and 4) Defining the master data definitions and business rules.

Taxonomy design and metadata development are also core elements in building a sound foundation. [One sentence for these two — obviously easier said than done!]

### 6 — Design the Plan.

The design phase of a project typically includes the following activities:

Design of user support and operational procedures. The user support and operational procedures are intended to create the documentation and training program for all users and technical support staff as they relate to the project.

Security. Security design builds in the appropriate content security model, supporting security at each level of the system – whether at the repository, folder/collection, document, element or physical levels.

Design of infrastructure management processes. Infrastructure management process design provides a

set of requirements for the physical implementation of the information platform and its associated management functions. The target audience for the design documents produced by this activity is operations staff such as Systems Administrators and Systems Operators.

User collaboration. User content generated through increasingly powerful collaborative tools is a growing challenge in many ECM and ERM environments. A key element in designing the plan is to define how these tools will work in relation to the rest of the ECM environment.

User interfaces. User interface is specifically focused on the layout, information access and information presentation of the ECM environment.

### 7 — Deploy the Plan and Cycle Through Phases of Assessment and Improvement.

Once you get to the point of deploying your solution, there are 4 main phases to consider: development, testing, actual deployment, and improvement. These phases typically recur as different versions and levels of functionality are introduced and improved.

Development — transforms the design into working modules that can be tested. Includes development of operational documentation and training materials.

Testing — focuses testing of the environment at many levels, from technical functioning (at all) through to testing of end-to-end processes.

Deployment — delivers the new system into production. Includes setting up production environment, installing the new system applications, interfaces and repositories, publishing the system documentation, training users and initiating production operations.

Operation and continuous improvement — focused on delivering incremental improvements to existing functionality.

### 8 — And Don't Forget Change Management!

AIIM research suggests that the main pitfalls for an ECM project stem not from technology but from a failure to anticipate change management issues.

Regardless of the kind of change — whether technological, cultural, procedural, role-based, or any other — organization must determine whether they are ready to face the change and adjust to it. Determining readiness is a big factor in the potential success of your ECM project.

Organizational change is always going to appear threatening to people as it is often linked to job security. Some enterprises freely disseminate information regarding strategy changes. Other firms are very secretive and feel that this is for senior management only. Practitioners should be as

open and honest with staff about change as they possibly can. Typically, people will more readily embrace the change process if clear information is available.

The readiness of both management and affected workers to accept and adapt to change are the most crucial factors in the success, or failure, of your project. Management may be far more ready to change than the potentially effected workers, particularly if the idea for the proposed change is coming from management – as it typically is. However, just because you have meetings with middle or senior management who are very enthusiastic about this new project, doesn't mean that the organization as a whole is ready to change.

Well, that about does it.

It can feel daunting, I know, and at this point you may be thinking, do I really want to do this?

Obviously, we feel the answer is yes. It wasn't easy for organizations to set up strategies and structures to manage money, people, and resources. But we all did it because these areas were deemed strategically important to organizational success.

Developing — and implementing — an information management strategy is hard work. But it's not impossible work.

# 8 Things You Need to Know About the CMIS Standard

CMIS made a big splash at AIIM On Demand. My personal opinion is that CMIS (or the SQL-ization of content repositiories) will have an enormous impact on the consumerization of ECM, one of the points I focused on in my keynote. The CMIS demo at AIIM is located HERE.

I asked **Laurence Hart**, one of the real smart guys in the ECM space and CMIS-guru, to put together an 8 things post on CMIS. Laurence is Director of Technology Solutions for Washington Consulting, Inc. and the author of the blog "Word of Pie". Over his 13 years in the ECM industry, he has led a wide-range of efforts including content digitization, Records Management, BPM, and Collaboration for both the commercial and public sectors. Laurence has worked with a wide variety of vendors over the years and is sure that the list will continue to change. He is a member of the AIIM iECM committee and an outspoken advocate for the CMIS standard.

### 1 — CMIS is A Content Management Domain Model with Protocol Bindings.

CMIS is not a new interface into your content repository. At its core, it is a Content Domain Model. It defines a way to abstract the structure of any content repository into a common framework. On top of that, two different protocol bindings have been defined to allow applications to interact with the underlying domain model. The two initial bindings are the Web Services and Restful AtomPub bindings. As new technologies are developed, new binding can be developed, extending the power of CMIS in the years to come.

### 2 — CMIS Simplifies Repository to Repository Communication.

This is one of the first ways to use CMIS that people think of when they hear "Interoperability". In this scenario, two or more repositories talk directly to each other. This is an extremely powerful use case as it permits the easy publication of content from one repository to another or the move from an active repository to an archived or records repository.

### 3 — CMIS Enables Application to Repository Communication.

The second fundamental user case is Application to Repository. This scenario is a boon to application developers. Content Applications can now be written in a

content repository independent manner, allowing developers to focus on the user experience and business problems and not with learning the API for every vendor. Imagine being able to use your favorite collaboration or web management tool and having your content managed in your content repository, without having to write an integration. We are already seeing some traction out there as multiple vendors have developed CMIS-based user interfaces for the browser and the iPhone/iPad.

### 4 — CMIS Enables Federation.

The third use case is Federation. This is a powerful capability that will allow users to work with multiple repositories from a single interface. This can provide an inexpensive way to implement a federated search solution, or to deploy an interface allowing users to interact with content from both a live repository and a legacy repository.

### 5 — CMIS is Technology Neutral.

There are no restrictions on the technology platform. The bindings can be accessed from .Net, Java, PHP, Flex, or any other number of technology platforms. Application developers no longer have to base architectural decisions on the APIs of their given content management platform.

### 6 — CMIS is Vendor Supported.

This had been the most important aspect in the development of the CMIS standard. The vendors are behind it, and they are showing their support through actions. Microsoft has announced support for CMIS for SharePoint 2010 in June, one month after the release of both the standard and SharePoint 2010. Alfresco, EMC, eXo, IBM, and Nuxeo have all made repositories available to the AIIM iECM Committee to build a reference application for CMIS that is open to the public. To top it off, there are many more vendors that have already made early implementations of their CMIS interfaces available for people to test and try out.

### 7 — CMIS is Supported by the Open Source Community.

The open source vendors have been working together on an implementation, Apache Chemistry, which will enable all JCR-compliant vendors to support CMIS. This will allow users of the repositories to leverage CMIS without the need to develop the interfaces directly.

### 8 — CMIS is Just Getting Started.

The final release of CMIS 1.0 is imminent. For CMIS to succeed from here, it is important to not rest on our laurels. While CMIS provides core functionality, there is more needed. Records Management, improved custom metadata model support, semantic capabilities, and new bindings (WebDAV and/or JSON?) are among the capabilities that need to be added to strengthen the CMIS standard. Our

ability as a community to work together and evolve CMIS to keep up with the ever-changing environment is what will make the difference between CMIS being an universally useful standard and just another footnote in the ECM world.

**AIIM's Official Guide to CMIS**

Content Management Interoperability Services.

http://www.aiim.org/article.aspx?ID=36904

# 8 Signs of a Lackluster ECM Implementation

**Jim Thumma** is VP of Sales and Marketing at Optical Image Technology. Jim has over 20 years of experience working with industries that use document management software. He has leveraged that professional experience to help businesses and organizations advance not only their technology, but their processes and ultimately, their success.

It's time to take a good hard look at your ECM implementation. Are you getting the returns that you expected when you invested in it? Frankly, a lot of organizations are not. In most cases, it's not the technology that is at fault: it's the vision. Many of the organizations that use ECM today are under the impression that getting rid of paper and getting control over their documents is an end point. It's not. The reality is that if you're only using the technology for storage, search, and retrieval, your implementation is still only in its infancy stages.

So how do you get from a lackluster implementation to one that provides superior returns? Sometimes you need to take a step back in order to move forward. Superior returns start with a fundamental understanding of your business process and ECM's enhancement capabilities.

One of the main objectives of any ECM solution is to get more meaningful use of the information that is contained within your business documents. Organizations should be able to:

Distribute information efficiently—pushing or pulling data whenever and wherever it is needed.

Present pertinent data along with supporting documentation—when necessary—in a context that is both valuable and meaningful to an end user. This allows end users to make informed decisions to execute their workload successfully.

With that in mind, ask yourself: could you be doing more with your software investment? Perhaps the time has come to reevaluate your process improvement strategy.

### 1 — You've Gone Paperless, but You Haven't Implemented Automation.

A lot of organizations mistakenly think that ECM is synonymous with document imaging. Although scanning, storage, and retrieval can definitely improve your efficiency, these abilities alone do not reflect the dynamic nature of ECM. If you hope to take your implementation to the next level, you need to automate your repetitive business processes. Automation allows you to improve turnaround and significantly reduce processing errors. At the same time, it gives you the consistency and the accountability that are required by compliance directives.

### 2 — Data is Not Captured at the Point of Entry.

Your objective is to accelerate data capture and distribution. How can you get data into the system faster, so it can be more useful, quickly? This starts with an imaging solution that has some form of data capture (OCR, ICR, barcodes, etc.). Be advised, however, that before implementing a capture solution, it is imperative that you have an in-depth understanding of your business processes. Know what information is relevant to specific processes, and know where it has to be delivered for optimal process efficiency.

### 3 — Knowledge Workers are Performing Manual Tasks.

One goal of automation is to allow your staff to use the skill set for which they were hired. Don't force them to perform tedious, repetitive tasks. A well-executed automation strategy frees your staff and enables them to perform exception handling, customer service, and other responsibilities that require analysis and critical thinking.

### 4 — You Have No Self-Service Options in Place for Customers or Staff.

Your customers, partners, and staff expect the availability and convenience of self-service. If you don't offer it, it is likely that they will take their business elsewhere. Electronic forms address self-service needs and enhance the satisfaction of your stakeholders. E-forms are easily integrated with existing portals and Web sites. By enabling you to expedite data capture, they let you improve turnaround while diminishing manual keying and ensuring consistent collection of information. E-forms allow you to capture, analyze, and flow data as soon as it is submitted. Can you set parameters that would enable you to process certain forms with little or no manual intervention?

### 5 — Lack of an Enterprise View.

Have your total ECM solution in mind from start to finish. If you're only implementing ECM in one department, how can you get more use out of it? How many other

departments need to access information associated with this department's documents? Which processes cross multiple departments? Are you using your ECM system to improve your administrative and back-office processes?

### 6 — Lack of Systems Integration.

Integration ensures that once information is captured, it can be distributed across different departments and accessed by any business application that is used to process work. LOB and legacy systems should be connected so that information housed within legacy systems can be a dynamic component of efficient business processing. Applications should be image-enabled so that your documents are accessible from within your line of business software.

### 7 — Failure to Align IT with Business Objectives.

Your business needs should drive your workflow/automation initiatives. Analyze, streamline, and perfect your business processes before you automate them. Solicit input from the different departments that are associated with a specific business process—from end-users to management. How can you reuse information to obtain the best return?

IT, end-users, and management should work together to develop business requirements for each workflow. Set business rules that will drive your business applications. It is imperative that your IT department understands your business objectives.

### 8 — You Don't Have a Strategy to Process Exceptions Efficiently.

Your ECM system might have superior functionality with respect to integration, distribution, and workflow, but there are still going to be times when you will need to manually process documents. Business processes often have periodic exceptions, which can be hidden and hard to find. Uncover your exceptions, and develop a strategy to address them.

If you're planning to implement ECM to address a specific business challenge, don't short-change yourself. Explore the capabilities of the technology, and don't be short-sighted with your implementation. Talk with your vendor and grasp the potential that is available when you take an enterprise view. Look beyond imaging and discover the returns that you could achieve with the ability to share information meaningfully throughout your organization.

**AIIM State of the ECM Industry Research Report**

User strategies and experiences.
http://www.aiim.org/Research/Industry-Watch/ECM-State-of-Industry-2010

# 8 Ways to Kill Your ECM Project

This post is from an end user organization and would prefer to remain anonymous. Which is cool. It's also a good and honest article — would love more like this from end users!

### 1 — Make Sure to Include Only High-Level Managers in the Planning Stages.

Don't let anyone who actually does the work anywhere near the process. They are "too busy" to be bothered. Senior managers know all of the step-by-step processes, of course, and they have lots of opinions on how these can be made more efficient. (Plus, one of them probably has a brother-in-law who sells ECM software.)

### 2 — Do Not Appoint a Project Leader.

Or, appoint several and let them fight it out. You can also appoint one, and make sure they don't have any actual authority. These are all good. The point is to avoid leadership and accountability at any level.

### 3 — Write Up Detailed Project Plans and Timelines, and Then Ignore Them.

Make sure there are no consequences for missed deadlines, lack of input, or refusing to engage with the project. Failure to complete critical tasks, which stall the other phases of the project, can produce blame, frustration and resentment that will keep your project team entertained for months.

### 4 — Fight About Who is Going to Pay for What.

Stall the process indefinitely while refusing to pay for necessities like scanner maintenance. It's best if there is no clear budget to start with, so everyone can dodge

responsibility. Remember, no expense is too small to become an issue!

### 5 — Let the Users Who Whine the Most Have the Most Influence.

After all, your employees are busier than anyone else, anywhere in the world. It is an enormous imposition to expect them to learn anything new, or to endure the smallest bit of discomfort while adapting to a new system. Constantly change the project requirements to cater to their complaints.

### 6 — Get Lots of Advice About Best Practices for Implementation, and Then Do the Opposite.

Don't listen to anyone who has ever implemented a project of this type before – after all, your organization is "special." Processes that work for other people obviously won't work for you, so feel free to just make it up as you go along.

### 7 — Refuse to Change Anything About Your Current Business Process.

Don't even think about analyzing your procedures and seeing if they still make sense. Instead, insist that the software be endlessly customized to fit your quirky, inefficient "business process." Bonus points for how many times you can insist "We've always done it this way!"

### 8 — Complain to Anyone Who Will Listen How Awful the New Software is, and How Your Paper-Based Processes Were so Much Better.

Don't encourage your staff to work with the new system and give it a fair chance. There should be no learning curve – if they don't see instant results, obviously the system is a complete failure. Take every opportunity to criticize the project, and say "I told you it would never work here." Be amazed that these ECM vendors can stay in business, when they can't even make this stuff work when they have such reasonable and brilliant customers like you!

**AIIM ECM Specialist Training**

Learn how to plan, design and implement Enterprise Content Management.

http://www.aiim.org/ecmtraining

# 8 Things You Need to Know About Cloud Content Management

**Aaron Levie** is the CEO and co-founder of Box.net, which he launched in 2005 with the goal of helping people to access, collaborate, and share all their content online. Based in Palo Alto, Box.net has since grown into a leading Cloud Content Management solution for almost 4 million users and companies ranging from small businesses to Fortune 100 companies. At Box, Aaron focuses on product and platform strategy, incorporating the best of traditional content management with the most effective elements of social business software.

One of the more interesting developments in the content management space in the past few years as the industry "mainstreams" is the development of a wide variety of models for delivery of content management functionality. In addition to the traditional in-house software solutions, the market now includes a host of SaaS, open source, and cloud solutions.

### 1 — Your Business is Already Using It.

Today's workers need a way to share and collaborate beyond the firewall, a function not easily facilitated by sophisticated ECM solutions. The workplace has exploded beyond the traditional boundaries of the office walls; individuals and departments that work with partners, vendors and even customers have had to find alternate ways to share, implementing wikis, extranets, and in many cases, cloud content management platforms. Divisions like marketing, which typically work with a number of agencies and consultants, are likely to deploy CCM at the departmental level, oftentimes without the endorsement of an IT administrator. And given the inherently viral nature with any product that's used to share beyond a closed group, CCM often spreads organically throughout an organization.

### 2 — It Will Blow Open the Content Management Market.

While ECM solutions fulfill the complex needs of larger organizations, such as records management, e-discovery and

archiving, their many functionalities are often unnecessary - and unaffordable - for many small to medium businesses. But this does not mean that SMBs - which represent over 99.7% of all US employer firms and over 50% of the workforce - are not in need of a content management solution. Being web-based, CCM platforms are scalable up and down, and come with a much lower price tag. They can provide a holistic content management solution for previously under-served smaller companies that don't have the highly structured needs of large enterprises, and are often already running much of their business with lower cost, cloud-based applications.

### 3 — It Will Make Your Data Accessible Across Devices and Applications.

Today's workforce is more mobile than ever before, and companies are reevaluating the office cubicle and 9-to-5 workday model in favor of a more cost effective virtual workforce. Consequently, workers need to be able to access and engage with their crucial business content across devices and applications. With web-based content management, files are accessible on multiple devices, and open APIs make it easy to integrate CCM solutions with other web-based business applications - such as salesforce.com or Google Apps - as well as services hosted on-site, giving users the ability to access relevant content within any application.

### 4 — It Addresses the Realities of Security.

Firewalls can be cumbersome, but there's a reason for their existence. The security of business content is immensely important to any organization, and locking content down within a system is meant to keep it from getting into the wrong hands. But if workers need to share externally and their given software is too restrictive, web-based tools are only a few clicks away. Ironically, the restrictions that IT put into place to create a more secure environment are actually pushing frustrated employees to use external platforms beyond IT's visibility. With CCM, it's generally true that employees have more freedom, but they're also far more likely to use a platform that's flexible, intuitive, and integrated with other business applications, meaning they'll stay within IT's oversight.

### 5 — You Can Afford it. Today.

Like many cloud-based services, CCM costs less. The recession was a huge driver of companies moving to the cloud, and although the economy is showing signs of improvement, the past few years have fundamentally changed the way we think about technology purchases. Cloud solutions are more cost effective on a per-user basis, go live faster, update seamlessly and frequently, and carry far less risk with implementation and execution. We've all heard stories about six-or-seven-figure technology purchases that never got off the ground or were only implemented

narrowly. The on-demand nature of cloud and SaaS systems make such events nearly risk-free in terms of time and money. And cloud platforms like CCM will only get more affordable as vendors benefit from immense economies of scale as their business grows, and pass along these cost savings to the customer.

### 6 — It Adds Value to Your Current ECM Solution and Opens Opportunities for the ECM Ecosystem.

While CCM can fulfill the content management and collaboration needs of small to medium-sized businesses, functions like e-discovery, records management, archiving are outside of CCM's domain. Many large companies have spent significant resources deploying ECM solutions to handle highly structured processes, and when integrated with these systems, CCM provides a highly usable and flexible platform for users, with robust analytics for IT administrators, and easy connection to other web-based and on-site platforms through an open API. This new category of content management opens up immense possibilities for the content management ecosystem, and we're already seeing the emergence of consultants who specialize in bringing cloud technologies to their clients.

### 7 — You'll Never Have to Deal with a Software Upgrade.

Today's IT departments have to juggle the demands of workers and the realities of the expanded workplace, pushing them to rethink the amount of infrastructure they want to support versus what could be outsourced. When IT departments are no longer bogged down by maintaining servers, installing upgrades, and training users, they can focus on driving a company's ability to innovate and execute, thereby becoming more strategic and business-critical. IT innovators also recognize that if they don't provide software with the usability of consumer tools - software that empowers sharing across devices and beyond the firewall - web-savvy workers will use ad hoc applications over which IT has no control.

### 8 — Your Users Will be Happy.

Across all generations, today's knowledge workers are significantly more web savvy than ever before, but this evolution has largely been driven by consumer - not enterprise - technologies. Consumer applications like YouTube, Flickr, and Facebook are fast, intuitive, and don't require anything extra to get started. What happens when people bring these expectations into their workplace? Today's workers - and especially millennials who grew up using these consumer tools - require software that helps them get their job done with the simplicity and usability of the internet. There's a fundamental difference between giving your employees software that they want to use rather than software that they have to use.

# 8 Reasons to Consider a Center of Excellence

**Joe Shepley** is a consultant with Doculabs, an independent consulting firm that specializes in helping organizations with their ECM strategies. 312-433-7793, www.doculabs.com. Also check out Joe's blog, "Agile Ramblings," at http://joeshepley.wordpress.com/, where he regularly publishes his thoughts on organizational design, strategy, process, and technology.

In my practice over the last year, I've been doing a lot of work helping clients create and manage centers of excellence (COEs), that is, a cross-functional body that brings together a group of people to focus on a single process area, business activity, or capability. Although there are lots of reasons why you might want to consider a COE, these eight are the ones I see most frequently in my day-to-day work.

### 1 — To Reduce Knowledge Management Risk.

The main knowledge management (KM) risk organizations face boils down to this: At any organization, a large percentage of critical business information lives either exclusively in employees' heads or in locations only they know about (or can access easily).

COEs help organizations address this challenge and reduce their KM risk by fostering knowledge-sharing through the division of a responsibility for a particular process area, business activity, or capability among more than one person; they also encourage employees to document their knowledge and publish it to a wider audience in policies and procedures, process diagrams, best practices, etc.

### 2 — To Improve the Quality of Service Delivery.

Lots of factors can have a negative impact on the quality of service delivery to internal or external customers. Some key ones are the lack of a consistent process, unpredictable timeframes or costs, poor communication with customers,

and lack of transparency.

COEs help to improve service delivery quality by encouraging and providing the mechanism for sharing knowledge, documentation, processes and procedures, data, resources, experience, and best practices across an organization.

### 3 — To Develop a Core Competency Around a Strategic Capability for the Enterprise.

For all sorts of reasons, organizations find it necessary to develop or improve core competencies. New technologies; fresh competition; mergers and acquisitions; the opening, closing, or shifting of markets – all require that an organization identify gaps in its enterprise capabilities and do what it takes to close them.

COEs can help an organization develop strategic capabilities by fostering the intake of new knowledge and the sharing of that knowledge enterprise-wide, by bringing together a diverse collection of subject matter experts from different functional areas to work together, and by elevating the capability they are organized around from a collection of local, siloed, ad hoc efforts, to a coordinated, enterprise-level, strategic one.

### 4 — To Foster Professional Growth and Development Among Employees.

Organizations in every industry face the challenge of hiring and retaining top talent. Providing opportunities for growth is part and parcel of a successful strategy for employee retention.

COEs can contribute significantly to an employee retention strategy. They bring together employees from around the organization across functional, reporting, and geographic lines, providing the opportunity for employees from different levels to work together closely on a range of initiatives. They also provide the organization a way to discover and nurture talented employees.

### 5 — To Overcome an Overly Vertical or Siloed Organizational Structure.

As organizations become increasingly complex, both in terms of sheer size and global reach, the ability to create linkages between and across functions, geographical areas, and reporting hierarchies is critical to success – and this is precisely what a well-designed COE does for an organization.

### 6 — To Improve the Relationship Between IT and the Business.

There are a number of reasons why IT may have a poor relationship with its business stakeholders, but a frequent

culprit is a poor engagement model.

COEs can help improve the IT engagement model and the problems related to it first by shifting the ownership of the IT engagement model onto the wider organization. A COE provides a framework of policies, procedures, and processes that supports improved interactions between all stakeholders precisely because it's coming from a cross-functional, enterprise perspective, rather than just the IT perspective.

Second, starting a COE gives an organization the chance to "get it right" in terms of the IT engagement model – at least for the process area, business activity, or capability defined as in scope for that COE. From the first point of contact with a business customer to the release of an application to production, every step of the engagement model can be retooled to improve service delivery and customer satisfaction.

### 7 — To Rationalize Delivery Timelines for IT Solutions.

The challenge of rationalizing delivery timelines is closely related to Reason #6, because it reduces unpredictability – and unpredictability has an extremely negative impact on the relationship between IT and the business.

A COE can help IT rationalize delivery timelines in a number of ways. First, as we've seen, a COE helps to improve the IT engagement model, which plays a big part in delivery timelines.

Second, COEs are in a distinctive organizational position to gather and analyze data about service delivery. They can collect metrics from the supply-and-demand side of the equation and from stakeholders across the organization, and then bring it all together as an independent body, representing a larger perspective than simply IT or an individual business. This cross-functional perspective, combined with its focus on a narrow set of products and services, allows a COE to better predict how long it will take to deliver its products and services than would otherwise be possible.

### 8 — Because They Work.

A COE can be used to address a wide range of organizational challenges, from department-specific to enterprise-wide. But in the end, perhaps the most compelling reason to consider a COE is that it gets the job done: bringing together a cross-functional group of stakeholders from all levels of an organization, giving them the space to focus their talents and expertise on a single process area, business activity, or capability. Allowing them to do so for an extended period of time is a pretty simple formula for success, no matter the organizational context. There are pitfalls, of course, but when given the right level of executive support, when its members are allowed time to work on its projects and initiatives, and when it's been undertaken to address a valuable organizational goal, a COE can be a powerful force for organizational change.

# 8 Practical Steps to ECM Adoption

**Patrick Donohue** is General Manager, Enterprise Content Management, at Scott Technology Group in Rohnert Park. His desk is ruthlessly paper free and he is rarely spotted in his native habitat without his Blackberry.

Blog: http://whereismydocument.com (here's a link to some context for the article that follows — http://whereismydocument.com/2010/03/11/8things/)

Twitter: @PatrickDonohue

Whether you are implementing a paperless office system, sustainable/green technologies, or other productivity changes, there are at least eight steps to successful adoption of new technology.

### 1 — Decide to Make the Change.

A critical component of any decision is to articulate how the end result maps to personal goals and motivations (in my case…efficiency worship). If you can't answer the "so what" question, then you're doomed to failure.

### 2 — Involve Stakeholders at All Levels.

Present the business problem and ask for feedback. You can use slide presentation with lot of images that illustrate the difficulties of the paper world. You might be surprised how much your staff wants change.

### 3 — Do a "Brain Scan."

Ask whether you could make the change on your own or if you need outside assistance. The likelihood is that you'll need outside assistance to make the transition from both the technological and human perspectives.

### 4 — Consult Outside Help.

Consider working with a reputable document imaging, records management or BPM specialist in your area.

### 5 — Decide When to Start.

Consider whether your company infrastructure and employee culture is ready for the change and define the incremental steps required to get ready. Once your ducks are lined up, get started!

### 6 — Once Underway, Plan to Make Personal "U-turns."

It is so easy to rationalize that you're already half-way done with your work using the old way, but it's the price we must pay to establish new neuro-pathways to counteract the old.

### 7 — Dedicate Yourself to Continual Improvement of the Process.

It won't be perfect out of the box. You'll need to make minor modifications in order to dial it in.

### 8 — Talk With Others Going Through the Change.

Communication helps let off steam and creates opportunities to gain insight and best practices from those around you.

**AIIM ECM Practitioner Training**

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http://www.aiim.org/ecmtraining

# 8 Things You Need to Know About Integrating Content Management With Enterprise Processes

**Brian Dirking** is Principal Product Director for Oracle Content Management. He is a former AIIM Board member and very active in AIIM's Golden Gate Chapter. He tweets at bdirking and blogs on the Content@Work blog. He can be found on LinkedIn HERE.

### 1 — Not All Content is Equal.

Some is important, some not so much so. There's more content that's not important than there is important stuff. The difficulty is in sifting through all the content to find the important stuff. In many cases you can base that upon metadata – the document type, the author – these can be key indicators of important content. But often you have to have other methods. A content use tracking system can be a good way to determine important content – less used content is less important. Some content is important to the enterprise, some is important to the individual. Some content is important only in the short term. A sales proposal might be important for 30 days. A marketing plan might be important for a year. Then there is some content that is not important on a day to day basis, but is important in the long term. You might not refer to your insurance policy for 35 years, but when you need it, it might be the most important document in the company.

### 2 — If You Need it in One System, You Might Also Need it in Another.

The important stuff tends to get reused. And mostly the important stuff of short term value. Business transaction information such as a shipment notice might appear in your ERP system and also in your CRM system, tied to a customer record. But reuse doesn't mean copying – it's good to have a system that allows one source of truth to be referenced from both systems.

### 3 — When Content is Siloed, People Bridge the Gap.

In most companies, the siloed content (as well as siloed business processes) means that people fill in the gaps. Usually one person understands the process, and makes it happen. This is a sneakernet phenomenon. If that person goes on vacation or falls ill, the process stops. Make sure to at least document your processes if your organization can't justify a full-blown BPM system. But if you can you will also gain flexibility – you can build in workarounds for when people are on vacation and the other types of things that pop up in everyday life.

### 4 — Content Doesn't Exist if it is Not Accessible.

If a tree falls in the woods, does anyone hear it? If a document is locked away on a hard drive, does it really exist? Documents that live on overused file shares, on local hard drives, on CDs, on thumb drives pose a problem. How do you get access to it when you need it? Like when the person who knows the process is out on vacation, when you can't open their hard drive without a password, the content is inaccessible. Almost as if it didn't exist.

### 5 — Content That is Too Accessible Causes Risk.

How do you secure a document when it is sitting on a share drive? Or how do you secure it when it gets out of your organization? Lost laptops are one example. A malicious employee is another example. But everyday documents leave our organizations with our blessing. Documents being worked on at home, documents shared with partners or board members – lots of documents leave our premises every day. DLP (Data Loss Prevention) vendors provide systems that patrol the perimeter of your organization, but that doesn't address documents that willingly leave. How does an organization disable content after it has left?

### 6 — Understand Your Green Benefits.

Moving business processes to be keyed from electronic documents certainly can save your organization a lot of paper. But the other benefits are where you will really see the dollars add up. Eliminating shipping costs can have an impact. Saving storage space can be a huge benefit. But the real green benefits come in dollars saved by improving your business processes. Some organizations have saved as much as 90% by replacing paper systems with integrated electronic systems. Providing faster access to information for a more and more decentralized set of workers will keep your organization competitive.

### 7 — Content in Context Raises Value.

By integrating content directly into your enterprise applications, users can look up and refer to content from right in their enterprise application interface. No need to go down the hall and find invoices or employee documents in a file cabinet. No questions about is this the right documents,

is it the latest one, etc. Content in context means faster resolution to questions, and more accurate answers.

### 8 — Understand Tech Trends and Know When They Will Collide.

There is a coming collision between Enterprise 2.0 and e-Discovery. Many organizations are beginning to experiment with Enterprise 2.0 (social media) functionality to improve collaboration and productivity (see the AIIM research). But how do you manage that content and where will it go? How do you make sure the content is kept for the appropriate amount of time? Is this information discoverable? Where will you go to perform e-Discovery? And most important, does your organization have a written policy about Facebook, Twitter, and other social media usage?

**AIIM ECM Training: Process & Automation**

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http://www.aiim.org/training/courses/270

# 8 Ways to Ensure Return on the Investment with Enterprise Content Management Initiatives

**Pamela Doyle** is responsible for forming and driving key imaging industry relationships as the worldwide spokesperson for Fujitsu. She frequently shares her imaging experience at numerous events, including global conferences such as AIIM, JIIMA, and ARMA. In dedicating a major portion of her career to the enterprise content management (ECM) industry, Pam has distinguished herself with a forthright style, a compelling market vision and a solid technical background.

### 1 — Business Assessment.

Enterprise Content Management (ECM) should be implemented to help an organization achieve its business objectives and strategies. Recent industry studies indicate four primary drivers for ECM adoption: cost reduction, enhancing customer service, ensuring business continuity and regulatory compliance. Organizations should do a thorough assessment of their needs in these key areas and identify the strategic imperatives that should be targeted by ECM. Return on the investment (ROI) provides proof of how ECM supports the organization's business strategies. Success is identified by measuring business benefits.

### 2 — Technology Assessment.

Organizations should also do a technology assessment to understand what they currently have and to identify what they ultimately need to meet their business strategies. The goal is to identify the gaps between the current and future states of the technology infrastructure. Careful consideration should be given to leverage existing technology investments.

### 3 — Seek Expert Assistance.

It is recommended you seek the assistance of knowledgeable system integrators who can assist in assessing, designing, implementing, training and supporting your ECM initiatives. The information technology professional you select should

have vast experience in content management integration and be committed to being your partner for the lifecycle of the ECM project.

### 4 — Careful Vendor Analysis.

In conjunction with your selected information technology professional, you should carefully analyze a number of potential options for your ECM project. The options should be compared across a number of different criteria such as fit with strategic objectives, cost-benefit result, non-financial benefits, scalability, ease of use, and implementation risks.

### 5 — Demand Proof of Handling.

Have your system integrator demonstrate your content being handled by the recommended hardware and software solutions. Many vendors will offer a try and buy type program to allow you to try out product features and functionality before you make a purchasing decision.

### 6 — Phased Approach.

A phased approach is recommended when implementing ECM. This will enable your organization to find quick wins, which can help prove the concept of ECM and are essential to justifying the continued investment and support for the project. Start by identifying a single information–intensive business problem, apply the appropriate technology to address that problem, measure the ROI, and, if successful, allow this to be the champion to further the adoption of ECM throughout the enterprise.

### 7 — Benefit Realization.

At the end of each phase of ECM deployment, it is important to thoroughly measure the benefits realized to prove that all expectations from the ECM project have been met. Measure both return on the investment and value add on the investment. ROI are tangible benefits that can be translated into quantifiable financial savings. Some examples would include reducing staff positions, reducing storage requirements, and reducing reliance on courier services. Value add on the investment are intangible benefits that are not quite as easy to convert to actual dollars but are certainly desirable results of implementing ECM. Some examples would be enhanced customer service, faster information retrieval to demonstrate compliance and more reliable content that leads to better decision-making.

### 8 — Leverage the Investment.

Organizations should always look for ways to leverage their IT investments. For most organizations when deploying ECM, there will be a beginning, a middle, but no end. Organizations should constantly be evaluating the next content-centric project to embrace and identify the expected benefits from that project. This will enable ECM to evolve throughout the enterprise. Think big. Start small. Grow big steadily.

# 8 Reasons Why a "Big" ECM Solution Isn't Always Better

**Dave Berent** is Director of Business Development for Point Dynamics LLC (www.pointdynamics.com), a provider of Content Management solutions. He has worked in both small and large companies. Dave has helped acquire companies and led the integration of IT Services for a large public company as it merged with its largest competitor. He has been on both sides of the purchasing table and understands the seller's and the buyer's perspective.

OK, you've found what appears to be a great software product that solves a critical business issue (and at a great price), so you talk to a "decision-maker" – this might be your boss, the CIO or maybe a regional controller. You present some of your findings (based on a "live" demonstration) and before you can finish, they want to know everything about the software vendor…not a bad thing, it's part of the due diligence process.

Unfortunately, because the software vendor does not appear in Gartner's "Magic Quadrant" or is not considered a "Top 5" player, your idea is quickly dismissed because "…they're too small and therefore too big a risk for our company." You feel a little intimidated; maybe even embarrassed that you suggested the idea and are thinking this might be the last time you stick your neck out. Obviously, you don't want to play high-stakes poker with your employer's money – so is your idea that crazy (simply because it's a small software vendor)?

If the software can truly address your core business requirements, ask your decision-makers to consider the following 8 reasons when evaluating software vendors:

### 1 — Personalized Service, Care, and Support (For the Life of Your Software).

When you purchase software from a smaller organization, you are buying a long-term relationship that is nurtured after

the sale. You may not receive that "whiz-bang" PowerPoint and handsome binder containing all those marketing glossies but you will receive attention to detail and a solution tailored to your business needs…and those needs will change over time, so it's critical that your vendor stay closely aligned and connected to your business.

### 2 — Better Value.

Small companies have less overhead and do things more cost-effectively. This reduction in cost translates to a better price for the buyer without sacrificing the quality of the product or the quality of service. The Internet has leveled the playing field and allows small companies to provide low-cost innovative products, services, and support. Research and development is laser-focused on adding business value using the most current technologies.

### 3 — Faster Response.

When you need it quickly, there isn't a complex maze of procedures and employees to make it happen. The decision-makers in a small business are just a call/email/text away!

### 4 — LESS Risk.

Your due diligence will determine whether software can meet your needs. Concerned about whether the company will be around next year? Consider what's happening at the high-end of the software industry – consolidation (mergers and acquisitions) resulting in the unknown future or direction of software products. Ask for references; many small businesses have Fortune 500 clients! Choose a small company with a well-architected product that uses current technology/standards and ask to escrow source code – in the worst case scenario, you end up with an "open-source" solution!

### 5 — More Influence (Think "Enhancements").

Your changing business requirements have a greater probability of being serviced by a smaller company and more quickly. Think about that large vendor built through mergers/acquisitions. Think there's any chance your idea will be implemented? How long will it take that large vendor to change a product(s) that has multiple versions being supported (and in different technologies)? Your business will change…can your software keep pace? A small software vendor can enhance its product quickly and economically to satisfy your real-world business needs.

### 6 — Better Technology Faster.

A smaller company can react much more quickly to changes because modifications to their product are less complex. Change is not a four-letter word. When driven by business needs, change improves the product and benefits the client. Change is fast in a small company; a well-architected product and one version of software is an environment that large companies only dream about.

### 7 — Transparency.

A small business can't hide under a corporate umbrella. When there are issues, there are no excuses, and you have immediate access to the decision-makers in a small business. Losing a client is not considered an option in a small business.

### 8 — Flexibility.

A small business is not constrained by corporate rules and policies; a small business fosters an environment of creativity/innovation. The basic premise is not to satisfy the demands of shareholders but to find a long-term business solution that benefits both the provider of software/services and the client.

The above list is provided to stimulate discussion. Depending upon the size of your organization, you may have a formal process for selecting/purchasing software products and you may end up choosing a product from a large software vendor…my goal is simply to ensure your selection is made for the all the right reasons!

Dismissing a potential solution based on the size of a company is shortsighted…focus everyone's attention on the big picture – can the vendor provide a cost-effective, sustainable solution that can change and grow with your business?

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# 8 Things You Need to Know About Developing an ECM Information Architecture

**Michael Elkins** is an independent consultant with over 17 years of experience helping global clients with the design and deployment of enterprise wide content management systems. His clients benefit from his ECM experience including strategic guidance, information architecture and ECM/data governance programs. His company, Kestral Group LLC is based in Denver, Colorado.

Information is our most important corporate asset, but the value of that information can only be realized if users can quickly find and use it. All too often, companies are handcuffed by numerous departmental or standalone content management systems, each with unique or incomplete information architectures. Getting to enterprise information architecture requires careful consideration during the design process including:

### 1 — Requirements and Not Just Technology Should Dictate the Architecture.

Solutions developed in a vacuum are far more likely to fail. Users must be involved in the definition process as much as possible. At the end of the effort, the desired result is that users can intuitively find what they need quickly and easily. The best solution is not always out of the box from the ECM vendor.

### 2 — Start With What You Know.

Nearly a third of all companies have implemented Master Data Management (MDM) technology in order to gain control of their structured data sources. Unfortunately, few companies are utilizing that data to assist with the development of their ECM information architectures. In most cases, the ECM system will be integrated with other systems such as ERP, Customer Relationship Management (CRM), and other core business systems. Take advantage of

existing folder structures to understand how users currently categorize content and look for any industry standards that may exist. In most cases, one will find existing industry standards for elements such as metadata, thesauri and taxonomies. Taking the time to map out data sources will provide a considerable cost savings both during development and ongoing support of the information architecture.

### 3 — Don't Create Something Unwieldy.

It's important to have a comprehensive information architecture that provides benefit to the company, but there can be a fine line between adding value and creating overhead. Users will gladly tag content if they know it will benefit them, but when tagging becomes a chore, the value is gone. The same can be said from a retrieval perspective. Even though an advanced search may help users narrow down their search results more quickly and effectively, many users still prefer the simplicity of a basic keyword search. Sometimes, less is indeed more.

### 4 — Inheritance is a Good Thing.

So, how much is too much? The more that can be done for the user, the happier they will be and the better the data quality. There are a number of ways to default metadata values including information based upon user profiles or folder locations. All efforts should be made to limit the impact of tagging on the user.

### 5 — Consider Implementing a Thesaurus to Improve Search Results.

Every industry, company and even discipline has its own language including acronyms and core terminology. Authors often revert to common acronyms without spelling them out. This simple act can affect a user's ability to find the documents they are looking for based on the terms they search by. With mergers or acquisitions, the acquiring company's terminology will tend to become dominant, and the acquired company's legacy terminology will slowly fade away, often causing the documents from the acquired company to become "invisible" via the search process. Using a thesaurus can greatly improve the user's ability to find the information they need.

### 6 — Leave All Options on the Table.

Typing a term into a search box is not always the best path for a user to get what they need. I don't know how many times I've heard that folders are not recommended or that they are outdated. In reality, there are situations where folders provide a very valid way for users to access information. Folders may offer an opportunity to default information which improves information quality and end user satisfaction. Multi-faceted taxonomies are not "out of the box" for most ECM vendors, but they do provide tremendous value for specific business applications. A strong information architecture should provide flexibility in how information is accessed.

## 7 — Data Governance is Critical.

Developing the information architecture is not the end of the process, but rather just the beginning. The information architecture will surely change over time. Understanding what will change and controlling the impact of those changes is critical to the architecture's long term viability. Data governance should be a core component of any ECM governance plan. From an information architect perspective, it is important to identify who is responsible for the various components of the architecture including core data sources, metadata standards, and taxonomies.

## 8 — Think Big and Think Portable.

All too often, ECM deployments are departmental in nature. As a result, only the implementing department's needs are taking into consideration at the time of the design. Other departments may rely on the information and should be a part of the information architecture design process. For example, the Finance department may be implementing a solution, but Internal Audit department may benefit simply by being a part of the discussion to ensure that their needs are met as well. Beyond the multiple departments, companies need to think multiple systems. Many companies have more than one ECM system and, without consolidation, those systems should be aligned. Developing information architecture standards will drive improved access to information across all platforms by providing a more consistent user experience.

**AIIM ECM Training: Information Architecture**

This eLearning module is available alone or as part of AIIM's ECM Practitioner eLearning Bundle or Classroom Course.
http://www.aiim.org/training/courses/265

# 8 Things You Need to Know about Content Classification and ECM

**Josh Payne** is responsible for product marketing and strategy for the IBM Classification Module, a part of the IBM Enterprise Content Management product portfolio. IBM ECM helps companies make better decisions faster by managing content, optimizing associated business processes and enabling compliance through an integrated information infrastructure.

Josh has over a decade of experience in enterprise software, most of it focused on information retrieval, enterprise search and content classification products and solutions. You can read more of Josh's thoughts on classification, ECM and the current state of the Boston Red Sox at twitter.com/joshpayne or his blog on ibm.com, The Classification World. Learn more about the IBM Classification Module at IBM's Compliant Information Management Resource Center.

### 1 — Classification is Key to Realizing Value From Your Content.

Why is classification important? Anytime you want to do something more than blindly storing your unstructured content, you need to classify and organize it to help those tasks along. Better organized, classified information is more effectively searched, archived, managed as records or incorporated into business processes. There's a reason libraries classify and organize all those books.

### 2 — Timing is Everything.

We've been talking about it in the ECM community for some time, but automating the classification of information is now a necessary element of your ECM architecture. Why do I think automated classification's time has come? Well, that takes us to #3.

### 3 — Volume and Variety of Information is Driving Adoption of Automated Classification.

John's blog is called "Digital Landfill" for a reason. There are ever increasing volumes of unstructured information created every day in our organizations. Email growth continues worldwide. And the variety of communication and collaboration methods continues to expand. SMS and instant messaging are in the mainstream. Blogs and wikis are entering it. Twitter is the hot communication tool du jour. And the innovations continue, case in point, Google's recent announcement of its Wave product.

### 4 — Our Employees Simply Can't Keep Up.

With more and more information being generated, the number of employees is certainly not growing at the same rate. The human being as a source of all classification decisions simply can't scale. We need to automate the process of organizing this information if we're going to maximize the value we get from it, and manage its lifecycle cost-effectively.

### 5 — Our Employees Are Inconsistent.

Relying on our employees for these content-centric decisions is fraught with problems: they are inconsistent in their participation in these tasks; each employee uses different logic to make a decision; their logic is difficult to audit.

### 6 — You Can Trust the Folks with Ph.D.'s.

There are a variety of options for automating your content classification, ranging from simple rules to highly sophisticated, training based approaches. It's easy for the layperson to understand the simpler rule-based methods. It's not easy to understand the more advanced methods. But you should trust them because, guess what, those smarty-pants Ph.D.'s have automated classification methods that are proven to be more accurate and effective.

### 7 — Automated Classification Will Save You Money.

Organizations typically take two approaches to classification. Let's take the email archiving problem as an example. One typical approach acknowledges that users shouldn't be trusted to determine what emails should be saved — so they save everything. Rather than solve the problem, they avoid the classification problem altogether. Now they're simply saving everything, regardless of its value. Though disk is cheap, it's not free. Classification, for these organizations, will help you select only that information that merits being saved and save storage costs.

### 8 — Automated Classification Will Save You Time.

The flip side to the email archiving argument above is that some organizations do trust their employees and ask them to select emails for archival and management. As we've established above, these organizations are likely to get inconsistent participation and as such low quality results. Why won't your employees participate? Because they understand the value of their own time. And dreary (though well intentioned) manual classification tasks are not well aligned to why they are being handsomely compensated. It's a poor use of their time, they know it, and are acting on that implicit ROI analysis.

# 8 Ways to Increase User Adoption of ECM and ERM Systems

**Lynn Fraas** is a Director at Crown Partners, an international hybrid Software and Professional Services firm specializing in information management. Lynn is also active in the industry and is currently the Vice Chair/Chair Elect of the AIIM Board of Directors.

A consistent topic in ECM circles is low user adoption. We think of ECM as "mature" technology, however, most companies still struggle with broad user adoption. In implementing ECM technology we fundamentally change the way an individual or group does their job. Consequently, the business process and culture change associated with the technology is much more significant that the implementation of the technology itself. Below are 8 things you can do to increase user adoption of ECM Applications:

### 1 — Get Top-Level Support.

This seems to be a "no brainer" but one that is consistently overlooked. ECM implementations often require significant changes to the underlying business process. A strong sponsor at the executive level can work to remove any organizational roadblocks the team may (or should I say will) encounter as you roll-out applications across the organization.

### 2 — Start Small.

We have all heard the phrase "take one bite of the elephant at a time". Trust me; it is harder to do than it sounds. To start on the ECM journey, take a relatively straightforward business process and work with that first. Select a group that has at least one or two individuals who are champions for the new system. Get the first project over the finish line and in the winner's circle before you embark on project #2. Measure the results, celebrate the success and make sure the

rest of the organization hears about the success. This will create a level of excitement that will drive other groups to "want" the new technology.

### 3 — Be Fanatical about Internal PR and Communication.

User adoption is driven by system acceptance. Become a PR and communication expert as they form the cornerstone of gaining organizational acceptance of the system. You must evangelize and spread your messages to executives, managers, information workers and outside vendors and suppliers. Build a PR/communication plan early in the project and incorporate different mediums to get the word out. A simple grid with audience (executives, managers, workers etc) on one axis and form of communication on the other axis will suffice. The key is identifying major stakeholders and messages then planning the communication campaign to ensure all messages are delivered multiple times.

### 4 — Use "Personas" to Understand How the New System Will Impact Users.

Create a persona for your key stakeholder roles and ensure your system addresses their needs. The typical organization has multiple roles that will interact with any given business process and therefore the system. Each role has its own unique requirements (at least from their perspective). Understand who will interact with the system and what they need to be successful. Make sure you have them covered with the solution – ultimately it is all about making their life easier. Understand the WIFFIM (What's In It For ME) for each persona.

### 5 — Focus on the Business Process.

The business process that ECM technology will support should be the focus – not the underlying technology. The business user wants to get their job done in the most straightforward manner. To the extent technology provides tangible benefits to the user – adoption will follow. If you implement technology for technology sake – you will probably struggle to get users to actually use the system.

### 6 — Get Users and Business Owners Involved.

People love to be heard. Leverage that core human trait and get the users/business owners involved at the very beginning of the project.

Other than the typical steering committee try these avenues for involvement:

Have a representative from each group on the implementation committee and make sure they communicate regularly with the group they represent.

Organize an occasional brown-bag discussion or whiteboard session to make sure you understand the process and how ECM will improve the process and the lives of the users (well at least their working lives!).

Drive hands-on involvement by establishing a "model office". Use the model office to engage with users, conduct process "what If's" and to develop and test applications prior to their general release. The model office is also useful for ongoing training as you add to or change staff.

### 7 — Leverage Collaboration Tools.

In the world of Web 2.0 it is very easy to create a dialogue with the broad user community. Check into leveraging an existing corporate intranet or wiki to engage the organization in the discussion around the new system. If you don't have a corporate standard there are many ways to generate conversation with free web based tools such as Twitter, Yammer, Facebook and MySpace

### 8 — Training is More Than Just a Class.

If I had a dime for every time I heard the words "companies did not plan for training" I would be on a sunny beach. You hear that training is often overlooked and that is a key piece of the user adoption puzzle. I also believe that in many cases training is conducted but it is ineffective. To be effective, training must be more than one how-to class. Here are some additional ways to ensure people make the jump to using the new system:

Provide online or hardcopy step-by-step user guides with screen shots to help users the first few times they use the new system.

Conduct a training session prior to use and then one week after implementation.

Leverage the wiki or whatever collaboration tool you use to enable users to ask questions and get quick answers – that can be review and used by others as you add to staff or bring different groups onto the system.

Review the question and answer site to see if there are any trends indicating issues you need to resolve with the new system.

The broad adoption of technology is difficult but not unattainable. I leave you with a great clip that my colleague Atle Skjekkeland posted on the Information Zen site – a great clip to show users: http://www.informationzen.org/video/2043787:Video:160

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# 8 Things to Consider When Looking at ECM Consultants

**John Klein** is co-owner of Redstone Content Solutions LLC; an advanced training and strategic consulting firm that focuses on providing organizations with the tools necessary to securely accumulate and disseminate knowledge. John serves on the AIIM Midwest Chapter and IOUG Stellent SIG Board of Directors. He is a frequent speaker at industry events, user groups and forums. Topics typically include client Case Studies, Round Table discussions and demonstrating real world Return On Investment.

Content Management outsourcing is gaining popularity, particularly due to the various options that are available to those who are seeking assistance - such as project-based consulting or staff augmentation.

The outsourcing model offers access to skills, experience and resources that many organizations would not otherwise be able to obtain due to the financial commitment required to recruit, hire and train these specific proficiencies in-house. However, selecting the partner who can best meet your needs is not always as easy as you might think. The following considerations should be taken into account when assessing the outsourcing talent pool:

### 1 — Experience.

You certainly don't want your chosen provider to "cut their teeth" on your application. Thoroughly researching the four points below will provide you "peace of mind" as you embark on your project.

Experience in your industry or vertical market?

Experience with your specific issue(s) or pain point(s)?

Experience with your specific IT technology/product set(s) such as database and operating system

Multiple references – successful with implementations of similar size and scope?

## 2 — Proven Methodologies.

It is not uncommon to ask to see representative examples of previous project or communication plans. Additionally, your company has standards and methodologies that have been critical to your success. Will your outsource partner incorporate the good things that you typically like to include that have made previous endeavors successful in the past? Be sure to ask about:

- Project charter – initiation and/or creation of project
- Project plan – Scheduling, resources and commitments
- Project status update – recurring, dependable communication plan
- Change order – predefined process to manage scope creep
- Mutual Sign-off upon successful project completion

## 3 — Ability to Deliver the Proposed Scope on Time/On Budget.

Unfortunately too many consultants come in and identify the problem, present a solution, but don't stay until completion or finish the job. As best as possible, clearly identify costs up front – both initial and on-going.

## 4 — Stability and Financial Strength.

Stability and financial strength are even more crucial with a specialized solution. Also consider whether your chosen provider would be willing and able to help you become self sufficient once the project has been completed? Please explore the following:

Will the chosen provider be around for the long term to support your solution or application?

Will they offer a Service Level Agreement with Multiple support options (standard support? after hours support?)

Will they provide end user and administrator training?

Will they extend the current application (additional features/functionality) or create an entirely new application if/when requirements change?

Has their staff been employed by the company for some time?

Do they cross train so that more than one employee is familiar with your solution?

## 5 — Industry Reputation.

A good reputation within your industry or vertical market gives you confidence that your chosen provider better understands the issues you are facing.

- Have they won industry awards?
- Do they participate at industry conferences?
- Are they active in the online community?

### 6 — Reputation and Relationship with Software Manufacturer.

Assuming that your chosen provider is not the software manufacturer, are they "in the trenches" with the manufacturer? Do they participate in alpha or beta testing of new product releases? Do they know the short and long term product roadmap? Find out the following:

- Is the staff certified?
- Are the certifications current?
- Do they have relationships at various levels with the manufacturer (executive? product management? product development?)
- Are they a member of a Partner Advisory Council?

### 7 — Comprehensive Documentation.

Ask for representative examples to make sure the documentation will suffice and truly be a valuable resource when issues arise. Will the documentation that is provided at the end of the project detail your specific solution? When shown previous examples ask to be pointed to solution specific portions of the documentation. Watch out for "boiler-plate" style examples.

### 8 — Good "Fit" for Your Organization?

This is often unnecessarily overlooked. Are the people that you are talking to in a "pre-sales" capacity the same staff that will be assigned to your project? If not, ask to meet the project team. An area that is often overlooked is the culture compatibility with your own organization. This is very important if you desire to develop a long term, lasting partnership.

Outsourcing can be a wonderful alternative during times when maintaining budgets are more important than ever. If you select a competent partner, you will gain invaluable access to a wealth of skills, knowledge and experience on demand at a lower cost than it would typically cost for you to recruit, hire and train your own staff. Remember to seek a partner for the long term and good luck!

# 8 Steps to Avoid Process and Organizational Problems When Implementing an ECM System

Jim Wade is a consultant with Performance Improvement. He has been in the document management and business process management field for over 25 years. Jim utilizes a holistic, process centric approach to assist companies in understanding the strategic values that can be achieved from implementing an ECM system. Jim can be reached at jimwade@performanceimprovementcorp.com.

In a recent study conducted by AIIM the participants were asked "Which 3 of these typical problems have affected your organization's document or records management implementation? "

The top response was "Underestimated process and organizational issues" (40+%). This indicates that these users did not follow a "process centric" approach in order to understand how end-users utilized the documents in the process. Following is an eight step methodology to minimize this problem.

### 1 — Identify the Business Problem.

This is a key component that is often overlooked. The business problem not only must be identified, the project sponsor must agree that this is the problem that he/she wants to be rectified.

### 2 — Select and Train Your Team.

It is extremely important to have key members of the process to participate in the rectifying the business problem. The most important member of the team is the end-user, without their participation in the analysis and design the possibility of failure is greatly increased. This does not minimize the need for technical advisors to be on the team as well (e.g., analyst, development, project manager, infrastructure, etc.). Once the team is selected they must be trained and educated

on the project approach, the methodology that will be used and the capabilities of ECM technology so they can participate in the analysis.

### 3 — Document the Current Process.

Each task of the current process must be documented in detail from the moment the process is initiated until it is completed. Gathering this much detail is often played down by some groups; they will argue that detailed information is not necessary and documenting the process at a high level will suffice. They seem to overlook the fact that each step in the process is important or they would not be being performed by the end-use – if the documentation of the process seems to contain a large amount of detail it is probably because the process is detailed. Capturing what may seem like a trivial step in the process when it is being documented by an analyst can avoid hours/days of rework if it is identified in the initial documentation.

The initial documentation can be accomplished in multiple ways (e.g., narrative, graphical process maps, post-it notes, etc., or a combination of several of these methods can be used, depending on the complexity of the process).

The key items are the documentation must detail every step in the process and it must be simple enough that everyone on the team understands it.

It should also be noted that end-users, as well intended as they are, have difficulty detailing each task they perform in a conference room. In order to attain accurate information each task in the entire process must be observed as they are being performed at the workstation.

### 4 — Verify the Process.

The process must be reviewed by the end-users to verify each task and exception is documented. This accomplishes two things: 1) it assures that the process is documented accurately and 2) it involves the end-users in the analysis.

### 5 — Conduct a Process Analysis.

Once the current process is accurately documented a process analysis should be performed. Each tasked is valuated in order to identify the non-value added task. This step can either be performed by the system analyst(s) or in a session with the end-users. If the analyst(s) identify the non-valued added task there should be a session with the end-users to explain reasoning behind their logic and to obtain end-user feedback.

### 6 — Define the New Process Utilizing the ECM System.

The new process can now be defined. This is a group session that is normally conducted by the system analyst. The key participants will be the end-users of ALL of the departments that participate in the process. It was noted in step #4 that it

is difficult for the end-user to describe everything they do to complete a task, it is also unusual for end-user to understand that how they perform their task affects the person(s) that are performing subsequent tasks. The project manager and technical personnel should also attend to assure they understand the new process and can meet the requirements. This session requires that the leader of the session to understand the capabilities of an ECM system and assist the end-users with the design of the new process.

Having the end-users participate in the design of the new process helps insure the success of the ECM system installation.

### 7 — Define the Taxonomy.

By detailing each task of the process the process documentation should contain an accurate description of which role performs each task and what information they require to perform each task (i.e., data and documents). The process documentation should have also detailed the origin of each document. This information should provide a basis for determining a list of the document types, how they should be captured – scanned or electronically, and who requires access to them (i.e., security). It is also recommended that the existing document repositories be inventoried to confirm/deny that all of the forms and documents were identified.

Once this information is identified a session can be conducted with the end-users to determine what indices will be required to retrieve these documents in a timely manner.

The final step is for the Records Manager to assign the record retention rules.

### 8 — Create the Final Design Document.

The system analyst now has all of the information that he/she requires to create the final design document. The entire new process has been documented which details each task in the process, which role performs each task and what information they require to complete each task.

A document taxonomy has been developed that defined the metadata, security and record retention policies for each document.

This information can be used to select an ECM system or implement an existing ECM solution in a new application. At the conclusion of these eight steps all of the "process and organizational issues" and ECM software requirements will have been defined.

# 8 Things to Remember When Managing Enterprise Content Management Applications

**Brian DeWyer** is co-founder of Reveille Software. He has both large enterprise line and staff management experience, with a balanced exposure to vendor, consultant, and operational roles through participation in numerous ECM project implementations for Fortune 500 commercial and government clients. He is a past speaker at local AIIM chapter and AIIM conference events. Brian is burdened with eternal suffrage from supporting Wake Forest sports in the land of ACC giants. Contact him at bdewyer@reveillesoftware.com.

Too often an ECM delivery organization is driven to focus on ECM application features and delivery dates. This unbalanced behavior results from the all powerful project schedule, senior management edicts, and business community pressures. To keep a balance of tactical and strategic objectives, common sense operating management principles tuned for ECM shared service organizations should be part of a manager's monthly 'accomplishments' list. My top 8 gleaned from conversations, observations, and backside arrow removals:

### 1 — Know if You're Running a Business-Critical Application.

It can sometimes be difficult to decide if an application is truly business critical. An easy way to look at it is this…if your ECM business process or application is customer facing, drives revenue, satisfies major regulatory hurdles, or reduces major operational cost – it's business critical. To determine just how critical it is, take a look at how business applications are rated for disaster recovery criteria – i.e. Tier 1, II or III. If your application is Tier 1, treat the ECM portion in the same manner and then demonstrate/communicate the importance when budget season arrives.

### 2 — Know Who Owns the Blueprint.

Start by architecting an ECM plan. You can't just let the ECM strategy happen because of the selected ECM

components or platforms. And you can't abdicate the technical competence to solely outside experts. Instead, spend consulting dollars on an experienced, business-aware technical traffic cop employee(s) to keep everyone whole.

### 3 — Know You Don't Operate in a Silo.

ECM depends on many subsystems – network, database, security, etc. Acknowledge these peer groups when communicating successes and, in return, they will help during fire drill events. Also, be sure to assess your IT culture to determine if it is protective ('we' vs. 'they') or transparent ('us') – and communicate appropriately with the peer groups.

### 4 — Know Your Users' True Service Levels.

Users value consistent service levels and reliability – not new, six-month in the making enhancements that are really just designed for one very vocal user. Plumbing (traditional on premise, cloud or hybrid designs) is important and demands continuous oversight. Otherwise your ECM pilots/early adopters will always be your success stories.

### 5 — Know How You're Doing.

IT management loves numbers — especially when the numbers are accurate, directly measure ECM service levels and are communicated on a continual basis. So be sure to make your manager's conversations with his senior business peers easier, relevant and creditable. Rather than having the business community measure ECM service levels by emotional phone calls, urgent emails and surprise meetings at your office (as this is not effective) — create a straightforward ECM scorecard (dashboard) that represents ongoing operational objectives (providing true valuable data).

### 6 — Know Your Partners.

Partner with your main suppliers, and do not always select them by the cheapest 'best and final' priced sku. While this is easy to say, and difficult to do in these times, having a sound ROI case (which a partner should assist with) will contribute to your long term success – don't forgot the numerator part of the ROI business case.. This will prevent a vendor transaction driven 'end around' play to your superiors when the partner hears 'no'.

### 7 — Know What is Next.

Maintain an ECM skunk works or lab to try stuff out, allow partners to show and tell, and keep relevance. Involve your champions from the business community. Great for staff development - this small investment can be a shared area with a peer from point number 3 and help ECM visibility during an IT open house or tours.

### 8 — Know Your Timeline and ROI.

As with any IT laden project, dates are circumspectly viewed by the business community. Surprise all (especially your

project manager) and deliver on-time. Reduce application function to give credence to point number 4. If you can look in the mirror when setting a delivery date, you can be firm against the "it will not work without" uprisings. Holding fast to a delivery date is key to meet today's front end loaded ROI justifications.

**AIIM State of the ECM Industry Research Report**

User strategies and experiences.
http://www.aiim.org/Research/Industry-Watch/ECM-State-of-Industry-2010

# 8 Things that Always Worried You About Legacy Content, but You Were Afraid to Ask About

Since joining Vamosa in 2001, **Nic Archer** has helped transform the company into a sector-defining software and solutions company specializing in the emerging area of Enterprise Content Governance (ECoG). Nic has led the expansion of Vamosa in the US, while continuing to work closely with the UK team on Vamosa's strategy and vision for the recently launched suite of products.

### 1 — Your Content is Probably Not in the Best Shape.

One of the reasons why you are implementing your new ECM system is that you want your content to be better managed than it has been up until now! You will need some "tough love!" – you have to lay down the law. "Governance" is the watchword and it calls for the 4 Cs of content governance –content needs to be clean, it needs to be classified, it needs to be correct and it needs to be credible.

### 2 — You Probably Have A Lot More Content Than You Need.

Most legacy content stores are littered with duplicate content; with content that is no longer relevant to your business or contributing to the cause. But how do you work out what's "correct" and what isn't? You need to do content discovery to identify duplicates (and near duplicates, or versions) of web pages, Office documents, PDFs and images. You then need to establish what stays and what goes. This act alone can reduce your content volumes by 40%-60%. The benefits are significant costs savings and collapsed project timescales.

### 3 — No Matter How Shiny Your New CMS is, Your Content Can Trash It.

Your favorite systems integrator — or maybe your best project team — have been tasked with building this crystal cathedral to corporate content. Look at the project plans:

where is the work plan to find out where the legacy content is hiding, what it consists of and who is using it? More often than not it is pretty far down the priority list — many times it is an afterthought. Some pretty huge ECM implementations have looked great on paper, but have failed to deliver because they have overlooked the content they have to manage.

### 4 — Your Content Authors are Human – and It Shows!

The actual content may range in quality from A+ to an F. Plotted on a graph showing the content's quality score against corporate, technical and compliance criteria your legacy content might be lucky to get a C+. But that is worrying: if your content gets a pass, but only just, how prepared would you be for a real "content crisis?" If you were hit by litigation, a product recall, or a corporate scandal, would your content hold up to scrutiny?

At times like these you will wish you had implemented the content governance model you just didn't have time for in the project plan. Failing to cover content compliance (an establishing policy if you don't have one) when looking at your legacy content is simply replicating your existing problems in your new system.

### 5 — We Can Do This the Hard Way or the Easy Way.

Do you really know what you actually have out there? What is published, what is stored, and what is "invisible" because it can't be found using the search engine? Similarly, how can you find out what is published and what is also being used, as opposed to just sitting there burning fossil fuels? Do you know what your existing metadata implementation covers (and more importantly what it doesn't)?

Short answer: you really need to carry out a thorough and in-depth analysis of it all - content, storage, logs, metadata, information architecture, links – the whole nine yards. You can't measure what you don't know.

### 6 — Where Are the Tactics and What is the Strategy?

This is where it can get really interesting. If your IT or project guy comes to you and says "I know how to get this content into the new system – I want to build/buy a content migration tool," then you should start to prepare for that sinking feeling. Migration should be seen as being part of the governance thought process, not an excuse to acquire a "tool" to take content from one place and put it somewhere else. "Lift and shift" is the fastest route to replicating your current bad habits in your new system. Legacy content has to have new life breathed into it, and it has to be crafted to maximize the benefits afforded by the new system. Otherwise it's back to business as usual, and in another two years time you will be looking to move your content again.

### 7 — Don't Let the Tail Wag the Dog - Your Legacy Content Can Give You a Great Deal of Insight into Best Practice.

In many instances, the old system can expose what you did right, and what you did wrong. Don't rely on default values for your system configuration. Default values may be the easiest choice, but they can be storing up a whole heap of pain for the future. For example, it may seem very reasonable that your new ECM has a default value of 60 characters for the content description metatag. But will that suit you? What if half of your existing content has a description field greater than that? Do you truncate? Do you break the description at the complete whole word before you hit the maiximum? Do you ask your content owners what they want to do?

The answer is a quite simple "No" to the above – you need to use ALL of these values at a level that suits your needs. Sounds obvious? You would be amazed at the number of international companies that get caught out by simple concepts such as this.

### 8 — You May Have Got Away With it Up Until Now, but That Was Probably Just Dumb Luck!

Your public-facing content is your shop window to the world – the WHOLE world. You control it (you hope) and you have total responsibility for what it says – in good times and in bad. Your web sites and all of your documents are indexed and maintained for internal use – but when the lawyers call, you want to be prepared. Under the federal rules of civil procedure (FRCP), the discovery process is there to ensure that the parties are not subject to surprises. What is actually sitting inside your legacy content could be a ticking time bomb. So try to eliminate the surprises by ensuring that this legacy content gets transformed in such a way as to make you litigation-ready, and (hopefully) there won't be any surprises!

# 8 Things to Consider When Developing an Information Retention Policy

**Brett Tarr**, General Counsel with eMag Solutions, is an attorney with broad experience in litigation and electronic discovery, having spent several years at a prestigious national law firm. Additionally, he has served as Head of Marketing and Operations for several mid-sized corporations, building both traditional and Internet-based marketing campaigns. Brett holds a Law Degree in litigation and intellectual property as well as an MBA in Marketing and Management.

All too often, businesses discover the need for a document retention policy either when it is least convenient to implement or too late in the game. Particularly in today's litigious environment where virtually any form of information (paper, electronic, or audio) can be used in litigation, being proactive in this regard can save an organization from headaches and excessive costs. An organizational retention policy provides for the systematic review, retention and destruction of information and records received or created in the course of business. Below are 8 items to consider when developing your company's retention policy.

### 1 — Understand the Need for a Formalized Retention Policy.

Having a retention policy in place is about more than just making space and keeping clutter-free; it can be a great asset should litigation arise. The Federal Rules of Civil Procedure (FRCP) state that parties are to discuss preservation at the "meet and confer," but in practice, preservation decisions should be made long before. Proactive policies establish that good faith efforts have been made by your business and help facilitate the entire litigation process.

### 2 — Do You Know What is "Reasonably Accessible" Under the Updated Federal Rules?

FRCP 26(b)(2) delineates the standard for discovery of

electronically stored information based on the concept of "Reasonably Accessible," with a two-pronged test for "Undue burden" or "Undue cost." Developing a good retention policy puts your company in control of which elements of information are available and discoverable under the new Federal Rules.

### 3 — Identify Which Types of Records Should be Reflected in Your Retention Policy.

Just saying "save it all" won't work; you need to specify. Successful retention policies will target the following types of information and records: Employment, Account and Corporate Tax Records, Legal Records, Electronically stored information (computer disks, hard drives, emails, web content, audio files/voicemail, information on thumb-drives/PDA's/digital devices). You will also need to take into account if your organization's line of business and any specialty information that may be unique to this sector.

### 4 — Make Sure to Ask Yourself All the Key Questions.

Does your retention policy reflect obligations imposed by all local, state and federal regulations?

Has your company previously had to produce information for litigation discovery?

Does your company have adequate means for ensuring that information is not improperly destroyed?

Is there adequate guidance for what information must be preserved?

Have you accounted for replication and storage of paper documents?

Have you properly addressed email policies?

### 5 — A Company's Retention Policy is Only as Effective as its Implementation.

It must receive buy-in starting at the top level of management and then be filtered down throughout the organization. Policies should be easy to follow and should include periodic audits. Your organization should renew these policies every few years, to allow for adjustments in company operations and changes in technology. It is also important that your policy is flexible, including allowances for suspension of the policy when a litigation hold is in place.

### 6 — Regular Enforcement is Key.

Retention policies must be regularly enforced even when no litigation or investigation is looming. Sporadic enforcement may be viewed as strategic bad faith destruction, rather than information management occurring in the ordinary course of business. This may result in organizational liability. You should perform regular, scheduled checks to ensure that employee practices of destruction and retention consistently conform to the plan. One employee's carelessness can open

up the entire organization's information for discovery.

### 7 — A Properly Executed Retention Policy Can Serve as a Roadmap.

It will be a helpful tool to prepare for litigation, providing both in-house and outside counsel with a roadmap for finding information in case of internal investigations, disaster recovery, regulatory requests, or litigation. If your company is to develop a functional retention policy, then it must know where all of its information is kept and how that information is stored, including names of custodians and types of servers and backup tapes used.

### 8 — Take Stock of Your Backup Tapes, i.e. Practice Intelligent Asset Management (IAM).

You need to determine what tapes are necessary for continued archiving. If your company has created a compliant records retention policy, then generally there would be no need to keep tapes that fall outside of the retention requirements. In some cases, you may have to adjust retention policies to avoid archiving tapes that are not needed and serve no useful purpose. Identify and preserve backup tapes that are consistent with current preservation requirements and litigation holds. Your retention policies should explicitly spell out how backup tapes are handled. Interrogate and adopt the management of your tape media catalogs – manage your tapes and know where they all reside.

The policy your company creates should identify those records that need to be maintained and contain guidelines for how long certain information should be kept and how they should be destroyed. By following these 8 steps, one can work to ensure that nothing gets left in the cold.

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# 8 Steps to an Effective ECM Archive Migration

**Al Tufts** is the Practice Manager for Enterprise Content Management (ECM) Migration and a 20 year veteran at Xenos Group Inc.

He is responsible for the overall direction and leadership of ECM migration opportunities and is often involved in discovery sessions, planning outlines, content analysis and staff management.

With the vast number of disparate systems in an organization, along with their relative complexity and enormous amounts of data, ECM migrations can be daunting, to say the least. This brief list of eight considerations in undertaking an ECM Migration is meant to provide a common-sense approach to addressing the process.

### 1 — Business Justification and ROI.

A critical consideration in any ECM migration project is a clearly established ROI and approach to measurement. Without these elements, getting funding will be a challenge. The first step is to build out a simple executive summary focusing on what's in it for the various groups involved along with reasons for initiating the project in the first place, and the anticipated outcome. Focus on a specific dollar figure for those concentrating on the bottom line – whether it's savings in storage or bandwidth, maintenance costs for ECM, or staffing costs. Consider making an initial decision on whether to federate, migrate, or do nothing.

### 2 — Take Time to Improve Your Business.

Take just one moment to understand what additional capabilities may be realized by the migration. New solutions will often include new capabilities, and while they may not be on your list of requirements, they could be capabilities worth implementing. However, any project should be focused

on improving ease of use and increasing productivity. By switching to a new and improved ECM system we can realize additional benefits in these areas. Reducing document storage costs, re-indexing for additional organization or enhancing ePresentment are all good examples. And since we don't need to turn everything on from day one, keep an eye on the ball and what the business really needs.

### 3 — Expertise Counts.

No matter what a particular vendor says, ECM migrations can be complicated, but they are also well worth the investment when done right. One of the keys to success is expertise. Having individuals on the project team with the proper background and a solid understanding of both traditional and new approaches can significantly increase your chances of success. Since it's a skill set that may not exist internally, you need to weigh the pro's and con's of allocating funds for training staff. More often than not however, working with a 3rd party vendor or hiring to get the expertise required will do the trick.

### 4 — It's About Experience.

Training and skills can only take you so far. When it comes to ECM migration, you need individuals with experience. Having project members who have been through past migrations can prove invaluable to the overall project and its success. Again, if the experience does not exist in-house, it's worth investigating a new hire or working with a vendor well versed in such projects.

### 5 — It's About Methodology.

The actual migration – moving of the data – is the easy part. In most cases, a migration can take a number of days. To get the organization to this stage, you need to have a good plan and more importantly, a methodology. Teams require a vision as to how this project can be accomplished. So don't just "wing it" – adopt a formal methodology around the practice and follow through. Don't have time to investigate? Use this simple acronym as a starting point: DETAIL (Discovery, Extract, Transform, Audit, Index and Load).

### 6 — It's ALL About the Technology.

Map out all the moving pieces. If you are looking to automate, how many files will be moved and over how long? What formats are you moving from and going to? What about platforms? Mainframe to distributed, Unix, Linux, Windows? Are you running each step manually, or building/buying various toolkits and components to get the job done? Don't overcomplicate things, just build the lists and organize them appropriately. When you need an answer it will be readily available. Understanding the technology taxonomy will prove to be a critical exercise, and should not be overlooked.

### 7 — Define Your Approach.

ECM migrations don't happen in minutes, but they don't take years either. If you're dealing with terabytes upon terabytes of data, it will take time to move over this content. So ask the question: how is it best delivered in a timely and cost effective manner? Onsite, offsite, remotely or SaaS? Choose the best option for the business but keep in mind the potential timeline for the actual transferring of the content itself.

### 8 — Keep it Simple.

This old adage is still very valid. Just because a project can be huge, it doesn't have to be difficult. Break down actionable items into simple project plans with dates and ownership. Outsourcing to an experienced vendor can often alleviate much of the day-to-day tasks and make things simpler, at least for you!

# 8 Things to Remember When Implementing an E-Mail Policy

Thomas Bahr and Karsten Seifert work on projects for Enterprise Content Management within the Information Management Competence Group of BearingPoint. They have more than 10 years experience in ECM software.

BearingPoint is an independent management and technology consultancy. Owned and operated by its Partners throughout Europe, BearingPoint is offering its clients the best possible value in terms of tangible, measurable results by leveraging business and technology expertise. The company currently employs 3.250 people in 14 European countries and is serving commercial, financial and public services clients.

## 1 — Have a Policy in Place.

A necessary step in professionalizing your email management is to develop and to publish an email policy.

But what is a policy? A policy is a written proclamation from the top management or authorized board like the Corporate Compliance Office. It is an outline of general requirements, principles or rules for the use of the medium email.

Why is it necessary to have an email policy? Because email is not an option in today´s business! In 2008 BearingPoint conducted a survey about email management. More than 90% of all participants claimed email as important or very important for internal and external communication. About two thirds of the respondents indicate that more than 25% of their emails contain business-critical information and one third indicates that emails contain more than 50% business critical information.

But in more than 50% of companies the user is the one who decides about deleting or archiving an email. Less than 50% of companies have a policy in place. To ensure legal compliance and to protect both the company and the users from misuse of the email system, you need to establish a policy framework for developing, enforcing and monitoring an email policy.

## 2 — Define Ownership and Involve the Stakeholders.

Remember that an email policy affects your organization and all of your employees. Make sure that at least the Legal/Compliance department, IT department, HR and the Board of Directors are involved in developing the policy in order to reflect all viewpoints in the organization. And if you are located in Europe, don't forget to involve your workers' council. To ensure a mature and effective policy, it's absolutely necessary to define who is responsible for developing, monitoring and updating the policy. Typically the Corporate Compliance Office is the owner of this policy.

## 3 — Define the Objectives and Usage.

First of all your policy should use clear and simple wording to be effective. Use bullet points to define the objectives of the policy and the proper use of email so that employees can easily find rules in case they are unsure.

Define the purpose of the policy. Some typical purposes...

To ensure the proper use of the company's email system.

To guide all users that create, use, and manage email as part of the daily business.

To make users aware of what your company deems acceptable and unacceptable use of its email system.

The policy additionally defines the usage of your email system:

- Who is allowed to use the system (allowable users)? Is it only internal staff or external partners working for the company, too?
- Permitted uses - is the use of email allowed for business purposes only? If private use of email is occasionally allowed, remember to do some investigation into already existing company policies and ensure that your email policy is compatible with these existing policies.
- Restrictions for using the email system.

## 4 — Do Not Forget Retention and Disposition.

Your policy should cover the aspects of retention and disposition. Emails and attachments should be classified and archived according to a retention schedule. A retention schedule describes all document types that need to be archived and is ordered by the defined retention periods per document type and for a global acting company at least by country. Keep this schedule clear and easy to use. Retention is one side of the medal; the other is disposition. This section of the policy should state that emails need to be disposed at the end of the lifecycle.

## 5 — Remember eDiscovery Issues.

Of course disposition is not allowed when your company is under legal hold during a litigation. When developing a

policy for email archiving make sure to include a section dealing with eDiscovery issues! The section should describe what happens when your company is hit by litigation or by subpoena. It should state the mandatory process of litigation hold and all responsible contacts.

### 6 — Train your Employees.

Parallel to publishing your email policy via internal communication mechanisms like newsletters or intranet sites, you should train and verify the awareness of the policy with your employees. Training and verification are important success factors for your policy. The objective is to get users aware on how to work and how to comply with the new policy and procedures. According to BearingPoint's survey, over 50% of the respondents use newsletters to verify that their employees are aware of a policy. 25% use learning mechanisms. Make sure to monitor for compliance with the policy.

### 7 — Monitor Enforcement.

Be sure that the policy is used and accepted. Collect feedback about it. If required, refresh the training.

### 8 — Develop a Policy Management Framework.

Put things together: stakeholder, usage, legal issues, retention, archiving, security, enforcement, training and monitor. Follow the lifecycle of information for your policy management: policy development, training and auditing.

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# 8 Things We Learned on the Way to ECM

I have been describing our journey to an ECM solution for years. The description usually goes something like this: "we have made good progress in several small areas but we have yet to attack the really large targets." Recently, we engaged what I feel is our first truly difficult ECM task. Below is a quick summary of the lessons learned leading up to this point.

### 1 — Teach People About ECM.

People can be passionate about the documents they prepare, receive and control; make sure they understand that you share their passion. Training for ECM often focuses on "How" when it really needs to start with "Why." Once people understand the reasons the company is implementing ECM, the reasons the company selected this particular ECM solution, and the benefits that will result, they are more likely to add their support to the project.

### 2 — Don't Rush the Launch Date.

I was in Florida once when the Space Shuttle was scheduled to launch and I was hoping to get to see the event in person. However, NASA delayed the launch due to "unacceptable weather over one of the backup landing locations." Frustrated, I had to remind myself of the danger involved in the operation. Nobody is likely to be injured in the event of a bad ECM implementation, but starting according to the "Scheduled Start Date" as opposed to "When We are Ready" is a huge mistake.

### 3 — Understand Why They Like What They Have.

I have always looked at the existing "solutions" with great disdain. Based on shared folders, they have so many problems that I stopped counting. When I found people reluctant to abandon their K: drive, I naturally assumed that they simply didn't want to change. Sometimes, it turns out; there are characteristics of shared folders that make their job easier. These are complicating factors because they usually fall into the category of "it makes your job easier but it makes other peoples' jobs harder."

This is where I drew the inspiration for my definition of ECM – "The stuff I have to do so everyone else's job is easier." Modern ECM solutions can certainly provide all the benefits of a file share, but they don't always do it by default. If you understand "Why" they like their shared folders, you can tune the ECM solution to satisfy their needs.

### 4 — Make the ECM Solution Better.

Once you understand their requirements, don't stop at meeting them; exceed their expectations. This requires even more analysis because you have to determine needs most users don't associate with document management. For example, as we were reviewing the final design of some document workflows, I described to the department head the reporting that was available from our ECM platform (we are using SharePoint). I knew from earlier discussions that he likes to know how long it takes to prepare documents, how often certain documents go out the door and where the pinch point are in the process. I showed him how all of this can be a byproduct of the workflows we are using and the metadata we are collecting.

### 5 — R.O.I. is for Your Boss.

Don't talk to your ECM team or users about cheaper servers, lower storage costs, shorter backup times, or any other bullet point from your annual goals. If you are going to talk about the benefits of ECM, talk about faster and more reliable search results, automating tasks like putting a copy of a report on the website for the customer and being able to quickly filter library contents based on metadata. Talk about the things people have to do today that the ECM system will do for them via workflows, automated email alerts and process life-cycle tasks. Talk about access from any location, at any time, on any device and how all they need to look at a document is a web browser.

### 6 — Pick the Right Team.

Most people realize that ECM is not an individual pursuit, but assembling the right team is not always an easy task. Subject Matter Experts (SMEs), yeah, yeah, we need them. Specifically, you need people familiar with compliance issues, legal issues, company governance, policies and procedures and the existing business processes you are planning to

support. You also need the people who do this work now. Maybe they aren't "experts" in any of the above fields, but they know things about document workflow that you do not know. They are familiar with the ways your workflow will be derailed, the people who won't follow instructions, the companies that complain about changes and the times the existing rules are broken. More important, they are the people who are going to actually use the new system. These are the people who will decide whether or not your solution is "better."

### 7 — Honest, Transparent Goals and Status.

Do not hide, sugar coat or gloss over any aspect of your project, especially status. I am not recommending a "taking names and kicking ___" attitude, but explaining that target dates were missed, features are not yet working as planned and some goals are being dropped or tabled to a future version, are all good things to share. People understand that complicated projects suffer delays and setbacks, but they will never understand being left in the dark or being lied to (not that I ever tried lying to them).

### 8 — P.I.R.

If you look at the roadmap for ECM projects offered by AIIM, they include a Post-Implementation Review (PIR) task. Systems development methodologies have advocated post-implementation reviews since I first worked with one in the late 70's. Also, since that time, I can report that this is the project phase most likely to be skipped. Post-implementation is the point where people are tired of ECM and looking forward to catching up on the tasks they have been ignoring while working to implement ECM. Still, it is a critically important part of the process. Until people start using the system, the benefits and costs are all estimates. Six months down the road, someone needs to take a hard look at the results. More than likely, you will have already reported whether or not the project came in on or over budget. Equally important though, you need to figure out if the system works. Are users happy? Do people understand how to use the system properly? Do procedures and workflows actually work and, could they work better?

# 8 Reasons Why ECM Implementations Experience High Failure Rates, and What to Do About It

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For better or worse, I have been in the ECM industry for over a decade and a half. During this time, I have consistently seen opportunities for organizations to use ECM to bring about transformative value. But more often than not, ECM implementations fall short of the initial promise.

These so called failures are of three specific types:

Failure to Garner Adoption: ECM implementations tend to have lower adoption rates compared to what was initially anticipated more than 50 percent of the time.

Failure to Achieve Timeline Goals: ECM implementations tend to take much longer than originally planned.

Failure to Stay within Budget: ECM implementations tend to miss the mark on staying within the initially agreed-upon budgets.

So the obvious question is: What are the key causes of such high failure rates? The other side of that question, of course, is: What can be done by organizations to avoid them? A more fundamental question is whether ECM is even worth pursuing, given the odds of success – which, for purposes of this discussion, I am going to assume is not worth debating, since many organizations have in fact been successful at it; it's just that certain proactive measures that are critical to ensuring success need to be addressed.

But before we do any of it, I think we need to understand the key reasons ECM implementations fail.

### 1 — Disregard for Adoption.

Most organizations are so focused on trying to get something in production, that they tend to disregard the simplicity and fluidity of user experience that is required to garner the appropriate adoption rates. Adoption is a two-dimensional problem. The first dimension is making sure that a critical mass of users is enabled to access and use the ECM system. The second dimension is that a critical mass of content be available through the system. If either of these conditions doesn't hold true, overall system adoption suffers. However, for both the number of users and amount of content, simplicity of user experience is the most critical dimension. If a user has to perform additional work to use the ECM system, that he/she didn't have to do in their old world, more than likely than not, they will bypass the ECM system. Not placing sufficient emphasis on both of these dimensions of user adoption is one of the biggest reasons ECM implementations fail.

Recommendation: Focus on scaling the number of users and the amount of content with an acute emphasis on simplicity of user experience. Integrate ECM's back end with social computing front ends.

### 2 — Picking the Wrong Business Scenarios.

Most organizations don't pick the right business scenarios to start with to demonstrate the true potential of ECM. Those organizations that choose the first few scenarios for roll-out based on a combination of strong ROI potential and strong strategic enablement of long-term business directives can drive high (and positive) visibility for their ECM initiatives. It is the demonstration of the transformative potential of ECM to a business that tends to get the right level of enthusiasm from the other business areas.

For example, if your company is looking to move non-core business processes to a cheaper geography via business process outsourcing (BPO) activity, digitization of content is a necessary pre-requisite and enabling condition. Enabling digitization for BPO will have a higher likelihood of obtaining executive attention than digitization to save file-room real estate.

Recommendation: Pick business scenarios to start with that: (i) have high visibility at senior levels of management; (ii) offer strong potential for cost reduction or for increasing the top line; (iii) need ECM as a strategic driver to their business rather than a toolset from IT.

### 3 — Over-Customization.

Doculabs consulted for more than 500 companies across

a multitude of highly regulated and complex industries, including life sciences, financial services, consumer packaged goods, utilities, state and local government, etc. Very seldom have these companies recognized the similarity of their operations to those of their peers. Instead, what we hear more often than not is how unique each company is, despite the fact that very few are that different from each other, especially regarding the reasons they could potentially fail with ECM.

One result of this conviction of uniqueness is that as businesses implement ECM, they tend to over-customize their implementations, believing they are different from the rest of the world in the ways they use information. The net result: long, arduous, risky, and expensive roll-outs, with even more expensive upgrade cycles. If most organizations focused not on meeting 100 percent of their needs with ECM, instead aiming to get 70 percent of their most important needs fulfilled by ECM, the cumulative benefit over a period of time would be far greater than trying to boil the ocean all at once. This seems like common sense, but is very rarely practiced.

Recommendation: Focus on less custom development; place greater emphasis on configuration.

### 4 — One-Off Provisioning of Business Requests.

The period from the time a business request comes in to IT to the time users have a functional system is, on average, 12 to 15 months of elapsed time. This extremely slow turnaround time is characteristic of many companies and is primarily the result of the lack of a repeatable implementation process.

Recommendation: Implement ECM as a shared service so that repeatable, configuration-based roll-outs become the norm.

### 5 — Lack of Focus on Proving Business Justification.

A big reason why ECM implementations fail is a lack of focus around quantifying the ROI for ECM. Defining concrete and credible benefit streams and tracking against the model to ensure that the implementations produce those results is the only way to obtain sustained executive support and funding. Most business justifications tend to be either too optimistic to be taken seriously, or too generic to be applicable to an organization.

Recommendation: Develop specific business justifications with organization-specific data and a defensible heuristic model, showing peer group benchmark data that can be demonstrated to an executive in 10 minutes or less, but with rigor in the back end to be able to support the conclusions. (See Doculabs' white paper for more details.)

## 6 — Ignoring the Impact of User Experience.

Eventually a system either succeeds or fails based on how it appeals to the user emotionally and whether the user is able to imagine the possibilities of a better world as a result of sustained use of a system. Since ECM has such a huge platform component to it, many organizations fail to get clarity in how "a day in the life of" a user will be impacted a result of ECM.

Recommendation: Build out storyboards or prototypes depicting how a user's life would be materially impacted for the better as a result of using ECM capabilities.

## 7 — Lack of an Overall Vision for ECM.

Most organizations don't tend to have a sufficiently comprehensive vision of ECM to be able to determine whether their efforts are a success or a failure. A strategy for information management within an organization is largely absent in most places.

Recommendation: Either develop an ECM strategy, or dust off and refine your existing ECM strategy, especially in light of the rapidly changing landscape of social computing, information governance, and cloud-based computing models.

## 8 — Underestimation of Cultural and Change Management Implications.

Last but not least, most failures aren't the result of technology issues. ECM is a mature technology; most ECM suppliers are in their tenth and eleventh major versions of their products. The primary reason for failure is that organizations grossly underestimate the cultural and change management implications related to automating certain business tasks. People have become accustomed to doing things a certain way, and this sort of change can sometimes have a jarring effect. If not properly positioned, the ECM initiative starts off on the wrong foot and never gets back on track.

Recommendation: Whatever you're budgeting for change management during a roll-out of an ECM project, simply double it. No matter how much you think you've overestimated the effort, trust me when I say you've probably underestimated it by a long shot!

# 8 Tips for Efficient Application Development Projects

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### 1 — Hear the Customer's Voice.

Identify the internal and external customers that will give thumbs up or down on your deliverables. Prove that you've heard what they've said. In meetings, write down important, direct quotes. Subsequently, prove to them that you were listening by demonstrating how you addressed that specific concern. When everyone on the team is noting these types of issues, gather them in a list, prioritize them, and keep it in view of every team member. During technical discussions, particularly those involving user experience issues, refer to items in this list to advance or reduce points of view. Identify when the customer is asking for mutually exclusive solutions and clearly explain why one or the other option can be delivered but not both. No voice should be louder than the customer's; the project team must hear it clearly and accurately.

### 2 — Microsoft Office Skills.

Learn to use Words' templates, review\comments, table of contents, index, and multi-level list tools. Use templates that limit all format and styling to named styles. By using named templates with specified styles, documents from various authors can be concatenated, cut and pasted without creating formatting headaches. Numbering will be consistent and graphics, tables and captions retain common presentation. If authors cannot write without consistent formatting, accurate styles, proper spelling, grammar and

punctuation, get someone else to write the document.

Learn how to display complicated data in a meaningful way. Learn to build visibly appealing tables with proper heading, shading and calculations using Excel. Use Excel charts to design simple but meaningful displays of meaningful data. For example, use a two dimensional chart for two dimensional data. Learn to embed these charts in Word and include the raw data in appendices. PowerPoint is easy but the ability to present meaningful data requires far greater resolution that your average slide. Learn to use the advanced Visio templates for business processes, use cases, UML, Class Diagrams and Object Models. Keep your visuals consistent and minimize everything that is format and not data. Avoid flashy, canned, cliché but otherwise meaningless "noise" in slides, handouts and reports. Include tables of meaningful data as appendices and refer to them in the body of text and in your presentations.

### 3 — Document Requirements as They are Discovered.

Requirements exist regardless of whether or not they are written in some document that nobody will read. If the customer thinks they're buying a roller coaster and you deliver a tire swing, everybody loses. The requirements author faces the challenges of translating the customer's expectations to verbiage. This is not the time for scope management; it's the time for clarity and accuracy. The optimum requirements document eliminates all uncertainty from the reader's mind about what will be delivered. On the other hand, a document written to that standard can be difficult to write and therefore, very expensive. Learn when requirement documents can rule out options in the customer's mind as well as when simple proof of concepts, use cases and wireframes will suffice.

Requirements mature as they are sized and solutions are estimated; this is the time for scope management. On the other hand, when business analysts and developers interact to optimize the solution be sure that scope remains static, neither creeping nor retreating. Note when technical constraints impose business rules on use cases. Document those rules and gain customer's approval resetting their expectations. Manage the requirement life-cycle by logging changes in requirements as the need arises. After initial reviews, changes to requirements should require input and approval from project leadership. Avoid reopening requirements and technical designs after the initial review stages have created an expectation of how things will work among a group of stakeholders when that group may be difficult to reassemble later. Avoid spending time writing better requirements when you could spend time writing better code.

### 4 — Commit it to (Virtual) Paper.

If a project can't run on the exchange of electronic

documents after the first few discussions, somebody needs help with documentation. If you talk about it once, write it down. If you talk about it a second time, edit the original to account for any new knowledge. When someone is smart enough to run a whiteboard marker, they should be smart enough to distribute the final outcome of the session in Visio before the whiteboard is erased. If they are not, then figure out who is best at Visio and let them do the diagrams using a consistent format and shape set. Discussions should be about what is in which document not about what is in the document. If you're going to discuss what's in the document, do it in the document by inserting comments and tracking changes.

If meetings consume most of the team leadership's day, they are not leading, they are being led. Documents written in 30 minutes can be read in 10 but can take two hours to discuss and more if they are poorly written and do not present a clear narrative meeting a defined objective. If people are not reading documents, they need to be written more effectively. The document's objective should be covered on the title page with its title and sub-title, perhaps adding a blurb of 20 words or less. If documents are unreadable, if diagrams are confusing, if things don't make immediate sense, either the reader needs training or the author needs to be replaced. If a document or diagram evokes more than a polite discussion or nod of approval, if it elicits more than one or two comments or corrections per page, it is poorly authored.

Project leadership should track the document storage facility as it matures, continuously weeding out the garbage and tracking the owner and maturity of each document.

### 5 — Make and Share an Index of Topics.

These topics are the components of the final solution. Articulate them from the user's point of view. Make the business analysts and development managers refer to these specific topics when they discuss the solution. Consider adding a new topic only when a discussion doesn't fit into one of the components. If a discussion isn't relevant to a specific user's activities maybe you've missed a user segment or you're talking about solutions that are not required.

Establish and maintain naming conventions from the list of topics all the way down to the namespaces, the classes and the dll's that you'll deliver listing with their contents where everyone can see them. Don't add a new one until everyone on the team understands its objective. Review the list regularly to be sure similar functions are not duplicated in code. Names should be informative and not cryptic. If you're going to name it once and a number of people are going to use it a number of times, go ahead and give it a verbose name that allows people to know what you're talking about avoiding all but the most obvious abbreviations and acronyms.

## 6 — Mind the Vocabulary and Share the Narrative.

Keep a single, running list of vocabulary words and their definitions. Words should connote their dictionary meaning as much as possible; Avoid using arcane jargon and shop talk to name objects. Avoid using two words to describe the same thing. Share a single list of definitions, abbreviations and acronyms. Add new items as they are discovered and finalized. Never duplicate these lists. Append this list to each document as it is finalized. Do not allow discussions to proceed when participants are using the wrong vocabulary; explain the correct phraseology and expect it to be used going forward.

Likewise, the application narrative from the user's point of view should be leakproof; every question that starts "What happens when the user…" should be answered. Index use cases based on the user's objective. Use cases should exhaust this list of objectives and detail the objective and identify the possible points of failure that will prohibit the user from meeting that objective.

When participants argue a point, the result should be unconditional surrender; make sure it ends with a winner and a loser. Often people hear what others are saying only when it supports their argument; these discussions are inherently political. When two participants disagree, they argue and try to persuade and eventually quit both leaving convinced that they won the argument. Immediately they will begin lobbying the chain of command offline in an attempt to establish their point of view as accepted policy. To avoid this, when discussions include opposing points of view make clear who wins and who loses. Assuming you won when I didn't admit defeat is a breach of protocol.

As the use cases mature, an application narrative will evolve allowing everyone on the team to recognize the purpose and the importance of the pieces they are working on. Build this model office in the mind of each team member and make sure they are building items to make that office work.

## 7 — Separate Technical Activities from Creative Activities.

Ignore style sheets and graphics during technical development cycles. Ignore technical constraints during creative development cycles. When creative resources provide interface specifications, follow them in exacting detail and don't change them without your gaining your creative resource's input.

Allow information architects to provide initial taxonomies and allow that taxonomy to mature with the project. Don't build reference tables, parent/child relationships, many-to-many relationships without the information architect's input. The application should work in plain black text on a white screen. Likewise the application should look like the bomb without doing anything. To technical people, the objective

should be efficiency, to creative people, user experience.

### 8 — Ban Content From Email.

Use Email to arrange for meetings and share agendas, Use emails to seek out help. Use emails to share links to documents and lists of links to documents. Use emails to communicate project metadata like pending dates, action reviews and people news. Use smart subjects for emails. Do not use email for lists of issues, tasks, or discussions. Instead, point your audience to the documents that manage these items whether it's a spreadsheet, a file share or a real issue tracker/discussion board. When documents are ready for review, send links to the documents not attached documents. Also, minimize your audience for both messages and meetings. Assume that meeting requests will be accepted without in depth analysis of your invitation; if attendees need to be prepared, send a separate email ahead of time with a suitable subject line and links to the necessary documents.

Any team member that creates a list of comments of more than three items and emails it to more than three people should be reprimanded. Any team member that responds to such an email by interlacing their comments into the previous comments and emailing it to a larger audience should have their email account deleted. Any issue that might evoke a response should be written to a discussion document, discussion board or other moderated, trackable resource. Use this resource to generate your FAQs as documents are finalized.