

Wiley CIO Series



MANAGING ELECTRONIC RECORDS

**METHODS, BEST PRACTICES,
AND TECHNOLOGIES**

Robert F. Smallwood

Foreword by Robert F. Williams

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AND TECHNOLOGIES

Robert F. Smallwood

WILEY

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For my dearly departed brothers:

William Scott Smallwood

David Bruce Smallwood

FOREWORD

This book is timely: There continues to be a strong need for comprehensive resources addressing the diverse issues and challenges of managing electronic records.

This need has grown over the twenty-plus years I have co-chaired the only national conference focusing exclusively on electronic records management (ERM). I am pleased to welcome and applaud Robert Smallwood's comprehensive book on managing electronic records as an excellent, profound information resource.

The need for this book is founded in the “sea change” that the management of electronic records has undergone—and continues to undergo—as society and business have moved full on into the digital age.

Consider just five of the component changes:

- 1.** The historic function has evolved from materials management to risk mitigation.
- 2.** An increasing focus on the broader tenets of information governance (IG).
- 3.** The very nature of what constitutes records has expanded greatly to include metadata, e-mail, messaging, social media, cloud use—and it continues to evolve.
- 4.** The volume of records being created and needing to be managed has grown exponentially.
- 5.** The use of records to resolve legal disputes has expanded from primarily “proving the positive” to “proving the negative.”

Bottom line: The sea change resulting in the digitization of business records has created a whole new world regarding what is managed, why it is managed, how it is managed, and who is responsible for the management process. And

increasingly, as the goal of managing records has become more focused on risk mitigation, the sphere of solution buyers has expanded to include project managers and professionals in risk management, compliance, IG, and law.

From all these manifestations of change, Robert Smallwood, in collaboration and consultation with a number of leading practitioners, has come forward with a comprehensive and authoritative resource on the management of electronic records never before available. Robert's book is a pioneering resource with focus and quality. It presents not only a "big picture" perspective of the issues and problems but also quite specific recommendations from an operational perspective—providing insights and assistance not only for students, young professionals, and newly assigned project leaders, but also for seasoned records management, risk, legal, and compliance professionals.

This book is a huge undertaking that few have both the vision to take on and the perseverance to make a reality. It is a much-needed resource that will facilitate education on electronic records management issues and help in achieving the implementation of successful solutions. Bravo!

Robert F. Williams
Cohasset Associates

PREFACE

After more than five years of e-records research, and an intensive year of detailed research, consultation, collaboration, writing, and editing, this book has come to fruition. It represents a truly collaborative effort by a number of experts and highly skilled practitioners in electronic records management (ERM) and the broader information governance (IG) field. I am fortunate to know them: Some of the contributors I have known for decades; and this is a lesson for students and young professionals—that lasting business relationships are a vital resource that can yield career rewards over the long term, but also offer lasting friendships that are a reward in themselves. This is only possible if you immerse yourself in your chosen field and strive for excellence day after day, year after year, and hold respect for your work and the work of your colleagues. No one can know everything, but if you know key people who have specific expertise, you can always find the answers you need. Of course, you will also need to be able to return the favor.

We strove to extensively document our work so that researchers, analysts, practitioners, teachers, and students wishing to delve further into particular topics will have a head start in knowing where to find additional information. This was a difficult and tedious process, which yielded over 600 citations. We tried to distill the massive amount of information into clear, understandable, actionable terms. We also to confirm and document methods, best practices, standards, and technical information from a variety of sources, both public and private, from books, blogs, magazines, interviews, government portals, and consulting

work product; and also, to include expertise from around the world to make this book truly a global resource.

Writing it was a challenging series of research and analysis tasks undertaken and represents a collective mountain of effort—and many, many mornings of waking before dawn to study, consult, collaborate, and write. It would have been easier and less stressful to give up, but we pressed on.

The result is the most comprehensive and current resource on the topic of ERM ever produced, which will hopefully afford those relying on this information an easier road as they implement ERM and IG programs.

This book will assist records managers, CIOs, IT managers, compliance and risk managers, and others involved in records management and information governance to make intelligent, informed decisions. For those seeking to implement an information governance program that includes electronic records management, bulk pricing for the book and e-book are available. Please visit: www.electronic-records-management.com.

— Robert F. Smallwood

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I am truly honored to include their work and owe them a great debt of gratitude.

PART ONE

E-Records Concepts

CHAPTER 1

E-Records Definitions, Business Drivers, and Benefits

First, some basic definitions of core terms used in this text: The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) defines (business) **records** as “information created, received, and maintained as evidence and information by an organization or person, in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business.”¹ It further defines **records management** as “[the] field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use, and disposition of records, including the processes for capturing and maintaining evidence of and information about business activities and transactions in the form of records.”²

The U.S.-based Association of Records Managers and Administrators (ARMA), defines a record as “evidence of what an organization does. They capture its business activities and transactions, such as contract negotiations, business correspondence, personnel files, and financial statements. . . .”³

Electronic records management (ERM) has moved to the forefront of business issues with the increasing automation of business processes, and the vast growth in the volume of electronic documents and records that organizations create. These factors, coupled with expanded and tightened reporting laws and compliance regulations, have made ERM increasingly essential for most enterprises

—especially highly regulated and public ones—over the past decade.

ERM follows generally the same principles as traditional paper-based records management, that is, there are **classification** and **taxonomy** needs to group and organize the records; and there are **retention** and **disposition** schedules to govern the length of time a record is kept, and its ultimate disposition, whether it is destruction, transfer, or long-term archiving. Yet e-records must be handled differently and they contain more detailed data about their contents and characteristics, known as **metadata**. (This book discusses these detailed topics in more depth in later chapters.)

E-records are also subject to changes in **information technology** (IT) that may make them difficult to retrieve and view and therefore render them obsolete. These issues can be addressed through a sound ERM program that includes **long-term digital preservation (LTDP)** methods and technologies.

ERM is primarily the organization, management, control, monitoring, and auditing of formal business records that exist in electronic form. But automated ERM systems also track paper-based and other physical records. So ERM goes beyond simply managing electronic records; it is *the management of electronic records and the electronic management of nonelectronic records (e.g., paper, CD/DVDs, magnetic tape, audio-visual, and other physical records)*.

E-records management has become much more critical to enterprises with increased compliance legislation and massively increasing volumes of electronic information.

Most electronic records, or “e-records,” originally had an equivalent in paper form, such as memos (now e-mail), accounting documents (e.g., purchase orders, invoices), personnel documents (e.g., job applications, resumes, tax