
THE INFORMATION MANAGEMENT DIGEST

A Service of Data Storage, Inc.

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IMAGING: IN-HOUSE VERSUS OUTSOURCING

Are you ready to scan it all and throw out the boxes of paper records? Well...not so fast. Are you going to electronically scan a document so that it is easy to access and use in your day-to-day business process, such as an invoice? Or are you going to scan certain documents onto microfilm to protect them as vital information that can be stored long term? Are you going to do the scanning yourself in house, or outsource the process to an imaging facility?

There is an excellent free source on line that clearly lays out the pros and cons of each approach in great detail. It is called the Digital Imaging Tutorial from the Cornell University Library (www.library.cornell.edu/preservation/tutorial/management/management-03.html) and here are some of the points it makes.

If you do it yourself, consider these necessities.

Some of the tasks that will have to be staffed include: identification, selection, preparation, digitization, metadata creation, quality control, cataloging, data control, systems support, and management. Plus maintenance of the database and web delivery system. Also, there will be start-up training as well as ongoing training as new systems or new staff members are added later.

There will be a need for office space that is dedicated to the scanning function, with 75 to 150 square feet per person, adequate workspace, tables and shelves. The facility must also have phone and data lines, LAN connection, and protection for uninterrupted power supply. Because scanning equipment and lights can raise temperatures, proper HVAC, lighting and air filtration are important. Hardware will include scanners, monitors, workstations, peripherals, servers and printers, plus the software to make all this work, and other supplies as well.



The advantages to having your own operation are that you have control over all the imaging functions; there is security for and proper handling of all materials; you maintain quality control; and you learn by doing. The disadvantages are that a large amount of money must be spent on getting the operation up and going instead of spending it on products (scanned documents); the facility may necessarily be limited as to production capabilities; and the equipment will likely work its way into obsolescence.

Would it be better to outsource the scanning function?

Quite possibly, yes. However, there will still be certain parts of the digitization chain that will need to be supported by your organization such as in-house inspection. There are some advantages to outsourcing such as the following.

Your organization pays for delivered product at a cost-per-image which makes it easier to plan and budget for a project or ongoing need. Costs usually are lower than in-house costs but can vary based on kind of project and geographic area. A contractor can handle larger volume, and can offer other services such as encoding, metadata creation, derivative creation, storing and backup, and database creation. Plus the vendor has the costs for staff, training and equipment.

The picture is not totally rosy, however. Your organization is put at arm's length by the fact that the imaging is done offsite or even off shore. There may be problems with security and transportation of your materials. If communication breaks down concerning production or quality control issues, there are few if any best practices to help define or negotiate good service.

To begin to get some specifics on scanning, consider reading these documents which are available on line from the Library of Congress (<http://memory.loc.gov/ammen/about/techIn.html>). One is titled "Technical Standards for Digital Conversion of Text and Graphic Materials" and another is "Conversion Specifications for Contracted Scanning Services."

That said, there are still good reasons to consider outsourcing your scanning.

Some of them are set forth by the Document Scanning Companies of America (DSCA), a consortium with member companies in each state (www.docuscanamerica.com). The main premise of this group is that there are many laws on the books now that mandate protection for and limited access to certain confidential records.

HIPAA, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, includes privacy rules governing patient health records saying that "a covered entity must maintain reasonable and appropriate administrative, technical, and physical safeguards to prevent intentional or unintentional use or disclosure of protected health information."

Gramm Leach Bliley (GLB) is a federal law with broad standards designed to compel financial institutions to "respect the privacy of its customers and to protect the security and confidentiality of those customers' non-public personal information," and to provide protection against "unauthorized access to or use of such records...resulting in substantial harm or inconvenience to any customer."

FACTA, the Fair and Accurate Credit Transaction Act of 2003, has provisions to combat consumer fraud and identity theft involving personal information of employees and customers including rules for eventual destruction of such documents.

According to DSCA, the answer is to scan personal records onto disks and restrict access to these electronic files instead of having paper records which can be viewed by many people.

Putting aside the privacy issue, there are other kinds of documents that could be indexed and scanned and made available on line for quick access. First to mind is the area of customer service where accessible records enable employees to give quick and correct answers to questions instead of having to go through paper files and get back to a customer later.

Scanning documents makes it possible for them to be available to more than one person at a time. It should also reduce the loss of time and money that comes when files are lost or misfiled or checked out and thus not available to others.

If records are scanned, is it safe to get rid of the paper originals?

This topic always draws a lot of interest on the part of records and information managers who share comments and questions by e-mail. There are some who feel that attorneys in particular are loathe to give up the real McCoy, the actual signed document, for a duplication of it as a scanned image.

One RIM professional has devised a schedule for dealing with original paper documents that have been scanned. After scanning, these documents are kept for 30 to 90 days to make sure they have been included in backup, and that there had not been any problems during that time with quality of the scanned images. Within these 90 days, the scanned images have been viewed by those who use them, and if a poorly-scanned page is found, its paper original is retrieved and re-scanned to get a clear image.

Another consideration are the new statutes for electronic discovery added December 1, 2006 to the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. This means a company involved in federal civil litigation must recognize, declare and produce electronic documents for the trial. Although the new rules provide a standardized framework for e-discovery, they do not address the question of which electronic records must be kept and for how long.

Your storage contractor can be a good source of information on companies that provide scanning, and on the storage needs that may be part of adding scanning to your operation.



Storing Records: How to Decide if an Off-Site Storage Solution is For You

Guideline for evaluating records storage facilities released

Daily, millions of records are being created and stored each day in every organization worldwide. It is crucial to an organization's success that they properly manage all of their records. To help individuals and organizations decide on the best storage alternatives ARMA International, the authority on managing records and information, announces the *Guideline for Evaluating Records Storage Facilities*.

This guideline helps explain the essential elements to consider when making the decision to store records in-house or to move your inactive records to an off-site storage facility.

Increasingly, organizations are required to account for their records through the demands of regulations and the threat of litigation. Using the recommended guidelines, organizations can make the correct decision with respect to records storage in order to remain compliant.

ARMA International also provides other standards and guidelines to create professional environment "best practice" procedures. Created and vetted by pro-

fessionals, these standards and guidelines help enable organizations to create systems, policies, and procedures that lead to exceptional records and information management.

To obtain your copy of the *Guideline for Evaluating Records Storage Facilities* and view the other standards and guidelines provided by ARMA International please visit www.arma.org/bookstore or www.arma.org/standards.

About ARMA International

ARMA International (www.arma.org) is a not-for-profit professional association and the authority on managing records and information. Formed in 1955, ARMA International is the oldest and largest association for the records and information management profession with a current international membership of more than 10,000. It provides education, publications, and information on the efficient maintenance, retrieval, and preservation of vital information created in public and private organizations in all sectors of the economy. It also publishes the award-winning *Information Management Journal*.

National Archives Honors Pennsylvania Brothers for Helping to Recover Stolen Documents

Help Us Recover Lost and Stolen Documents

Washington, DC...Archivist of the United States Allen Weinstein honored two Pennsylvania brothers, Dean Thomas and Jim Thomas, in a ceremony today for assisting the National Archives in recovering stolen Civil War documents.

In presenting the brothers with certificates of appreciation and facsimiles of some of the stolen documents, Professor Weinstein said, "The National Archives has a great responsibility to keep the nation's documents safe and secure, but we can't do this without the public's help. When private citizens such as the Thomas brothers join us in this effort—it's extraordinary. If you help the government recover stolen documents, others will follow. You set a good example."

The brothers, book publishers in Gettysburg, PA, saw documents up for sale on eBay in September 2006. Dean Thomas recognized them as ones he had seen and photocopied while researching at the National Archives Philadelphia Regional Archives 20 years ago. Mr. Thomas immediately contacted the National Archives, which began an investigation of the thefts. The investigation led to the arrest

of former National Archives intern Denning McTague. 164 documents were stolen by Mr. McTague. The investigation is ongoing with 161 recovered to date. Mr. McTague will be sentenced on July 12, 2007.

At the ceremony, National Archives Inspector General Paul Brachfeld presented the Thomas brothers with special paper weights encapsulating original pieces of Civil War era red tape. "It just doesn't get any better for us. You are models for other citizens to follow and we hope it will encourage others to help the government recover alienated documents," Mr. Brachfeld said.

While accepting the gifts of appreciation, Dean Thomas said "All I can tell you is, 'if it's not yours don't take it.'"

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Commission Recommends \$3.5 Million in Grants for Documentary Editing and Archival Projects

Washington, DC...At its Spring meeting, the National Historical Publications and Records Commission recommended to the Archivist of the United States 50 grants of \$3.5 million for projects in 25 states and the District of Columbia. These recommendations include \$1.5 million for 18 archives and records projects, including grants for the Lowell Thomas Collection at Marist College, an online access program for the Johnson County Kansas archives, the television preservation and access project at Appalshop in Whitesburg, Kentucky, and the establishment of a records management program at Naropa University in Bolder, Colorado. Seven grants were awarded to state agencies to further archives and records programs in their individual states.

Grants totaling \$1.85 million were recommended for 21 documentary editing projects—from the Thomas A. Edison Papers to the Papers of Charles Carroll of Carrollton. Two new projects were also included: The Ah Quin Diaries, detailing the life of this 19th century Chinese-American entrepreneur, and the Papers of Abraham Lincoln. Five subventions were awarded to university presses to defray the cost of publishing new volumes, including selected correspondence between Salmon P. Chase and his daughters and the correspondence of Frederick Douglass.

The NHPRC also approved new funding opportunities for FY 2008. In addition to continued support for Publishing Historical Documents and Historical Editing Fellowships, the Commission announced new grants opportunities for:

- Professional Development—programs to improve the training and education of archivists and documentary editors
- Strategies and Tools—programs to develop new strategies and tools to improve the preservation, public discovery, or use of historical records
- Research in Historical Records Issues—a project to investigate how the public gains access to and uses historical records.

Applicants for each of these opportunities are encouraged to visit the NHPRC web site and to apply via Grants.gov.

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