



Information Management Journal

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J. Michael Pemberton, Ph.D., CRM, FAI, and Julie Gable, CRM, CDIA, FAI, teamed up for the last issue of *RMQ*, initiating its name change to *Information Management Journal* in January 1999. They served through 2008, after which ARMA staff assumed their duties.

Pemberton and Gable explained that the magazine's name and its scope were changing to reflect the evolution of ARMA and the profession, noting that "successful information professionals must now understand, apply, and lead in areas beyond, or in addition to records management," such as the "allied disciplines of archives management, electronic information systems, knowledge management, and corporate librarianship."

Pemberton, after a decade away from RIM and ARMA, said he felt too far away from the profession to contribute to this issue, but Gable recounts the events that led to a decade of unprecedented change for RIM professionals in the second article in this section.

managers who forgot what their problems were, but they figured that a newer, faster machine would make them go away. (This wrong thinking was greatly encouraged by the equipment vendors who were making money like crazy!)

IT Takes Ownership

Since the problems did not go away, managers started to panic. They resorted to the last refuge of the terminally inept: buzzwords! They coined the term "information resources management," which later was simply shortened to "information management."

The name change wouldn't have been bad had it not been for the fact that the actual function was usually transferred to the folks in newly created "information" departments, who knew nothing about managing records, and so "information" became synonymous with "computer data." Despite the fact that it is records (regardless of medium) that contain the information, records managers were left with the paper in the filing cabinets. They firmly held on to their quills and slowly became all but obsolete.

It's All About Efficiency

Inevitably there are instances when people ask me, "What did you do before you retired?" My answer is simple. I say, "I was an efficiency expert specializing in office systems." Never – not once – has anyone asked what that meant. Because I don't use the word "records," nobody asks if I ever met Chubby Checker or Bob Seger or Billy Joel. Because I don't use the word "information," nobody looks at me with a blank stare.

Even though the term "efficiency expert" has not been in use for some 60-plus years, everybody knows what I mean when I use it. And I'm not lying when I say it. That's exactly what I did – at least until the information charlatans took over. I worked to improve office systems. That's what records management is supposed to be.

There's a lesson to be learned here. I'll leave it to you to decide what it is. **END**
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Disasters, Regulation, Technology Drive Decade of Change for RIM

Julie Gable, CRM, CDIA, FAI

The overarching theme of my 10 years (1999-2008) as associate executive editor of the *Information Management Journal (IMJ)* was complexity. Significant changes in technology, law, globalization, and privacy occurred. Consider the following.

Disasters Occur

America encountered a horrific disaster caused by acts of terrorism on 9/11/2001. The avalanche of paper documents in the wake of the crumbling World Trade Center Towers provided a ghastly new impetus for digitization. The U.S. PATRIOT Act that followed had implications for surveillance of voice, e-mail, and web records as well as those of banks, libraries, and others.

Hurricane Katrina in 2005 was a natural disaster on an unprecedented scale, and beyond the heart-rending consequences for many people came sobering new attention to the need for disaster planning, backup, and recovery.

Regulations Evolve

The decade saw the collapse of Enron. The U.S. Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 that followed put new requirements in place for large, publicly traded companies and made CIOs and CEOs accountable for what they reported. Boards of directors suddenly became interested in how records were kept.

Also during this decade, organizations as diverse as Citigroup, TJ Maxx, Dai Nippon Printing, and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs experienced data breaches affecting tens of millions of records. The European Union adopted strict laws regarding the privacy of its citizens' records, and some countries outlawed the transfer of electronic records across borders.

In April 2006, the U.S. Supreme Court approved amendments to the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. Highlights included the recognition of electronically stored information as a category subject to legal discovery. Retention schedules were in high demand as companies realized that it was expensive and potentially detrimental to keep everything forever.

IG Emerges

Organizations began to realize that they could no longer deal with each new requirement in a piecemeal fashion, and the discipline of information governance was born. If compliance, law, and operations were the driving forces for controlling records, then policies had to be based on the input of records management, legal, and information technology as a collaborative team. Because the staggering volume of electronic records precluded the possibility of ever controlling all of them perfectly, new approaches like risk-based retention appeared.

Technology Explodes

Once focused on documents and e-mail, technology exploded with the advent of digital music, videos, smart phones, texting, blogs, data mining, software as a service, social media, and the cloud. The good news was that records management software came into its own, so much so that many highly regarded products were acquired by big-name technology vendors seeking to bring an enterprise approach to information management.

RIM Steps Up

It continues to be a challenging journey for records and information managers, but they have learned their lessons well. The degree of sophistication needed to deal with the complexity of information is enormous, but records managers have stepped up. Today's are as well-versed in laws and regulations as many paralegals; they are technically savvy and financially aware of the costs and benefits involved in governing information well.

ARMA International, through the *Records Management Quarterly*, the *IMJ*, and now *Information Management*, has brought knowledge and inspiration to records managers everywhere. It was my privilege to edit the work of some of the best minds in this profession. For 10 years, I read every word of every issue of the *IMJ*. I have never been smarter.

It is hard to believe that records management was once justified solely on the basis of saving floor space, and that knowing where the boxes were and what they contained was enough. After 50 years of ARMA, we are still in Kansas, Dorothy, but it sure feels like a different planet. **END**

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Although “Journal” was dropped from the magazine’s title in 2009 to correct the misperception that it represents the work of academics for academics, *Information Management* has continued in the tradition of its predecessors. Its editorial staff, Content Editorial Board members, and authors continue to strive for articles that will help RIM professionals respond to a rapidly changing business environment and be prepared strategically and technically for the challenges that loom ahead.

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