THE LIFE CHANGING MAGIC OF DIGITIZING GOVERNMENT RECORDS

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the life-changing magic of tidying up
the Japanese art of decluttering and organizing

marie kondo
Can digitization spark joy?
The answer is YES!

Digitization is about **access** & **accountability**
DIGITIZATION PROJECT GOALS

To develop standards and guidance that will help ensure that government digitization activities:

- produce digital copies of physical records that are **trustworthy, reliable, and usable**
- **comply** with legal and operational requirements
- are **cost-effective and efficient**
- enable the **timely, legally defensible destruction of originals**
- support the permanent preservation of archival information in the **digital archives**
Current RSR schedule lacks:

• adequate **standards** and guidance
• consistent **process** for archivists’ input
• option to **destroy** unscheduled source records
Chief Records Officer

Directive to Government Bodies Issued under Section 6 of the Information Management Act

Under section 6 (1) of the Information Management Act, S.B.C. 2015, c. 27, I. David Curtis, Chief Records Officer, issue the following directive respecting the digitizing and archiving of government information. This directive amends and replaces the directive issued on May 10, 2016.

For Government Information in Digital Form:

(1) Government information in digital form that is scheduled to be archived under an information schedule must be held by government bodies until further direction is issued by the Chief Records Officer on the timing of its transfer to the digital archives.

For Government Information in Non-Digital Form:

(2) Government information in non-digital form that is scheduled and will be eligible for archiving on or before September 30, 2019, is exempted from the requirement in s. 13 (5) of the Act for the information to be digitized before it is archived.

(3) Government information that is exempted in (2), above, is approved for transfer to the museum archives of government, upon notification by the Corporate Information and Record Management Office that the information is eligible for archiving.

This Directive is effective as of December 27, 2017. It remains in effect until rescinded or superseded.

[Signatures]
The elephant in the room: many source records will be destroyed.
LESSONS LEARNED FROM A SCANNING PROJECT GONE WRONG
(a digitization horror story)

- “The project was doomed from the beginning”
- “It was a reactive process rather than a planned project”
- Roles and responsibilities were not clearly outlined
- “Next time do more quality checks”
- Stakeholders’ interests not well identified or addressed
OUR APPROACH

• **Agile project management** - clients drive the design
• Looking at other jurisdictions for inspiration
• **Change management** methodology
RECIPE FOR SUCCESS
(we hope – still a work in progress)

Ingredients:
• Research
• Project planning
• Change management
• Collaboration
• Good design
DIGITIZATION STANDARDS & GUIDE

Technical Standard  Practice Standard  Guide
Digitizing Records

Practice Guide

CONSULTATION DRAFT
Plan to Digitize
Assess Records
Develop a Defensible Process
Prepare Source Records
Store & Manage Records
Assess Quality
Compile Metadata
Digitize
Digitization Quick Start Guide

01 Plan to Digitize
- What are the benefits, challenges and reasons for digitizing records?
- Who will be responsible for authorizing the digitization process?
- What is the level of risk for your organization?

02 Assess Records
- Are your records covered by an approved information schedule?
- What is the retention period and final disposition?
- What records need to be digitized, how many, and when?
- Can the records survive a digitization process?

03 Develop a Defensible Process
- Who will scan the records?
- Will the work be outsourced?
- Where will the work take place?

04 Prepare Records
- How will records be prepared for digitizing?
- Is special handling required?

05 Digitize
- How will records with additional information be scanned?
  (e.g. post-it notes, attachments, forms with physical photos added)

06 Compile Information About the Records
- What metadata needs to be captured?

07 Assess Quality
- What quality assurance measures will be used throughout the digitization process?

08 Store and Manage Records
- Where will the digitized records be stored and managed?
- Is there an office records management system?

Where to find this information
- Justify your digitization process
- Who will be responsible for this digitization process?
- Tools and Resources
- What are the records management requirements?
- Contact your Records Officer.
- Which records should be digitized?
- Select a digitization approach
- Physical preparation
- Post-digitization processing
- Step 5: Digitize records
- Compile metadata
- Metadata requirements for digitization
- Step 7: Assess Quality
- Step 8: Store & Manage Records
Digitizing in-house

Benefits

- More control over the entire digitization process, as well as handling, security and storage of both source records and digitized records;
- Digitization teams gain experience in project management and digital imaging technologies and techniques, which may be transferable to other projects;
- Digitization hardware and software is available for future projects;
- Access to confidential records can be restricted to authorized staff;
- Flexibility to alter project requirements and digitization parameters as the project develops.

Challenges

- Requires large initial and ongoing financial investment in equipment and staff;
- Timelines may need to be longer, and are subject to change due to other priorities or unforeseen issues staff will need to be trained and available and it will be necessary to implement a digitization process and associated technical infrastructure, with and to assume low initial production levels and efficiency typically limited;
- Staffing expertise is not always available;
- Ministry or agency must accept costs for network downtime, equipment failure and obsolescence, training of staff, and adherence to standards and best practices.

Outsourcing

Benefits

- Costs are more predictable: the organization pays for deliverables, usually a set cost per page, which facilitates project planning and budgeting;
- Economies of scale: service providers can handle large volume and high output;
- Broad range of options and services available;
- Specialist expertise and experience;
- Service providers absorb costs of technology obsolescence, failure, downtime, staff changes, etc.

Challenges

- Less control over how the digitization is carried out;
- Records owner will still be responsible for quality assurance (this is essential to ensure that the work meets requirements);
- Complex contractual process: digitization specifications must be clearly defined up front, solutions to problems must be negotiated, communication must be open and problems must be dealt with;
- Knowledge gaps may cause delays and confusion, as digitization service provider are unfamiliar with your specific business;
- Risk of the service provider going out of business or altering their practices;
- Risk of possible loss or damage to the records due to transportation and handling by the service provider (requirements for this must be defined in the contract to help manage this risk);
- Unforeseen circumstances or additional service requirements may cause budget overruns.
WHAT IS A DEFENSIBLE PROCESS?

A defensible process demonstrates:

• that the digitized record is a true and accurate version of the source record
• that you have developed and documented your digitization approach
• that you have met all of the relevant practice and technical standards
So, have we proven to you that digitization can be a transformative and possibly magical experience?
When you put your house in **order**, you put your **affairs** and your **past** in order, too.

*Marie Kondo*
THANK YOU!

Please contact us if you have any questions!

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And check out the Records Management website:

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/services-for-government/information-management-technology/records-management