Records for Advancement

Electronic Imaging – The Series

Part IV of a series on the use of electronic imaging in advancement.
Quality Control and Estimating Storage Requirements

Author: Ursula Shail
Manager, Document Systems
University of Toronto

What's On!

Quality Control

Whether you run a central imaging department or several departments/individuals archive their respective documents, quality control procedures must be established and maintained.

If you operate centrally, processing mass quantities of documents, then you should have a higher accuracy rate in comparison to individuals archiving one-offs.

At the start of your imaging project and for each new document type added, your scan operators should verify image quality, count pages scanned, check accessibility (ensuring the link in the database is operational), and any other criteria.

As the scan operators become familiar with the documents and its attributes and they reach a 99.9% accuracy rate, then you may choose to check accessibility randomly during your monthly audit procedures rather than for each document.

If document imaging is managed within each department or individuals, then the quality control process should be followed for each document imaged. Further, you should have documented which department and individuals are imaging and what types of documents they are imaging.

In both cases (central vs. individual/departmental), you should have an auditing procedure in place that randomly looks at all documents archived, regardless of their origin.

This procedure should include a central holding unit for all imaged hardcopy and electronic documents that will be retained for a certain period of time. These 'copies' will be used to: 1) verify accuracy through the random audit; 2) provide a source to re-image poor quality documents; and 3) provide a source to track owners and target issues.

Once your confidence level has increased with the imaging system, these documents can be disposed of properly.

It's always difficult to add duties and responsibilities to staff who already have a full workload. Quality control takes time and you may need to consider adding an additional staff member to do this once the volume of scanning is ramped up. In addition, quality control tasks should be added to the job descriptions of staff doing the scanning.

Performance expectations for quality control need to be added at the onset of the project and managed from the go-live point forward.

Quality control also encompasses system performance. You can't have staff waiting for minutes to have their documents scanned or served to them.

Estimating Storage Requirements

When this imaging project was first initiated, the product consultants and technical staff provided an estimate on the amount of storage space required for the first one to two years.

Now in post implementation mode, new documents and imaging projects are added weekly to monthly. Keeping this in mind, you really need to consider where you're at in terms of present

storage requirements and how much space will be needed for the next couple of years. More than likely, this will be precipitated by your archive administrator letting you know that the amount of documents archived has increased drastically.

As the functional project manager, you are most likely the key person that will be able to provide an estimate. First, you will need to know exactly what the archive administrator requires: incoming vs. outgoing traffic; number of years to project; average documents archived per month; whether to estimate/include back file projects; average size of documents (scanned vs. electronically archived); how long documents will remain in the buffer, etc.

Now you will need to do some data gathering and analysis.

This data will include: running activity reports from the last year or two; collecting industry standards of file sizes for various types of imaged documents (see document sizing for more information); estimating your own standards for high volume documents (i.e. receipts). As well, you will need to start jotting down imaging projects you will be working on soon or even conceptually within a couple of years.

It's always best to over estimate.

A good way to manage all this information is to break it down into estimates and enter it into a spreadsheet.

You will have to take into account the current year plus growth for the immediate 6 months (you're likely working on at least 3 to 4 imaging projects that will be completed within this time).

Then for every year you need to project, continue to use the current statistics plus your estimated growth rate and any projects you may be considering. The technical people involved in determining how to manage the archive space only want to see the total quantities, but it's a good idea to have this information clearly documented with exactly what projects and documents you included in the estimation.

This analysis can get quite large. However, having all the averages listed for each document or project, will keep you organized. As well, this process will document the root of this information for future use.

If you're part of an overall campus imaging project, advancement may end up taking up the lion's share of the resources. This is particularly true if you're scanning gift batches and you have a high transactional volume.

You may be asked to contribute additional funds to the acquisition of new storage devices, or contribute proportionally more to the license fees or ongoing maintenance. Make sure you have enough contingency in your budget to cover this in the future.

More Information

Supporting Advancement
http://www.supportingadvancement.com

Under the records and systems pages you'll find additional information on imaging and reporting.