Zeitschrift: Arbido

Herausgeber: Verein Schweizerischer Archivarinnen und Archivare; Bibliothek Information Schweiz

Band: - (2010)

Heft: 2: Records Management in Verwaltung und Privatwirtschaft - ein neues Aufgabenfeld? = Le records management dans l'administration et l'économie privée : un nouveau territoire? = Il records management nell'amministrazione e nell'economia privata : nuovo territorio?

Artikel: From records to information management : the experience of a young professional in the United Kingdom

Autor: Mansfield, Walter / Dekens, Charline

DOI: https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-768645

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Siehe Rechtliche Hinweise.

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. Voir Informations légales.

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. See Legal notice.

Download PDF: 15.03.2025

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, https://www.e-periodica.ch

dira si celles-ci vont tendre à converger. MoReq2 représente néanmoins une solide base de travail pour penser, concevoir et formaliser les objectifs et les contraintes auxquels doit pouvoir répondre et s'adapter un système de records management. Dans cette optique, il s'adresse à un public large qui intègre non seulement les utilisateurs potentiels d'un ERMS pour préparer un cahier des charges ou les propriétaires existants pour évaluer leur produit, mais aussi les éditeurs de logiciels et les prestataires de services, que ce soit dans le domaine du conseil ou de l'archivage proprement dit, et enfin les organismes d'enseignement pour exploiter cette ressource de manière pédagogique. Officiellement rédigé en anglais, MoReq2 a fait l'objet de traductions dans différentes langues à l'initiative de bénévoles en Europe. Il existe ainsi en français, mais n'est pas encore disponible en allemand ou en italien[4]. Avis aux amateurs?

Documents de référence et informations complémentaires disponibles en ligne sur le site du DLM Forum (http://dlmforum.eu/) et le site créé par Inforesight Limited (http://moreq2.eu/).

Contact: Charline.dekens@lausanne.ch

4 Marie-Anne Chabin pour la Direction des Archives de France, «MoReq2: Exigences types pour la maîtrise de l'archivage électronique», 2008, <http://dlmforum.eu/index.php?option=com_jotloader&view=categories&cid=12_bcb6040aefc160c09ae4290ae1857b9f&Itemid=39&lang=en>.

ABSTRACT

Vom Interesse, MoReq besser kennenzulernen

MoReq (d.h. Model Requirements for the Management of Electronic Records) ist ein im Jahr 2001 veröffentlichter Anforderungskatalog, dem die in der angelsächsischen Welt als Electronic Records Management Systems (ERMS) bekannten digitalen Schriftgutverwaltungssysteme entsprechen sollten. Der Katalog wurde von einer britischen Beratungsfirma auf Initiative der Europäischen Kommission, unter der Schirmherrschaft des DLM Forums, einer wirtschaftlichen Interessenvertretung auf europäischer Ebene, erstellt. Im Jahr 2008 wurde er unter dem Titel MoReq2 einer Aktualisierung unterzogen. MoReq2 besteht aus vier Teilen, nämlich einem Metadaten-Modell, einem Testraster, einem XML-Schema und den eigentlichen Spezifikationen, die in 13 Kapiteln genau erläutert werden. Wie die Ausgangsversion konzentriert sich auch MoReq2 auf die funktionalen Anforderungen und die elektronischen Daten, ohne jedoch die Bedeutung der nicht funktionalen Anforderungen und den Wert von Papierunterlagen zu vernachlässigen. MoReq ist keine technische Norm, und auch wenn dieser Text praktisch und leicht zu benutzen sein möchte, bedarf er doch einer kritischen Lektüre, um die Anforderungen des Modells an die Bedürfnisse und Voraussetzungen jedes potenziellen Benutzers eines ERMS anzupassen. Im Übrigen wurde MoReq, als der Erfolg der ursprünglichen Version den Katalog in den Rang einer Norm erhoben hat, als zu anspruchsvoll kritisiert, sodass das DLM Forum seine Überarbeitung in einer neuen zukünftigen Version, MoReq 2010, in Auftrag gegeben hat. Es bleibt zu bemerken, dass ein Standardprodukt, Fabasoft Folio, 2009 als MoReq-konform zertifiziert wurde und dass GEVER sich auf ein Standardprodukt, die Fabasoft E-Gov Suite CH, stützt. Rückgriff auf ein Projekt und ein Dokument, das ein grosses Publikum interessieren könnte und das es verdiente, in der Schweiz besser bekannt zu sein.

Übersetzung: Annkristin Schlichte

From records to information management: the experience of a young professional in the United Kingdom

Walter Mansfied (WM),
Knowledge and Information Manager, Asset Protection Agency (UK)
Charline Dekens (CD),
Archives de la Ville de Lausanne

Professional path and formative experience abroad

CD: My first question is if you could introduce yourself as a young professional, if you can tell us a bit more about your background, your studies and your various jobs in records management.

WM: I completed an MA in Records and Archives Management at University College London in 2006–7. Prior to that, I had worked in a range of roles in information, archives, library management. Following completion of the MA, I worked as a records manager for a local government borough for six months. Subsequently I worked for one year with the International Records Management Trust (IRMT), a specialised consultancy focusing on improving records management mainly in developing countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. Following that, I worked for the UK's leading international cultural relations organisation as a records manager and around that time I also started carrying out consultancy for the European Commission as a trainer for their document management system. I recently started a new job as information and knowledge manager for a UK Government organisation.

CD: Tell me about your path to the profession?
WM: My first job in records management was for an international development NGO in Cambodia. Prior to this I had some experience of working in libraries and archives in the UK. I was quickly convinced of the need for and value of records management and following completion of my work in Cambodia I enrolled for the internationally focussed Records and Archives Management MA at University College London.

Post-qualification employment

CD: How did the course prepare you for your first experience as a records manager? After one year of hard work, how did you feel when you started your job for the London borough?
WM: I felt overwhelmed; it was a definite shock to the system. I wouldn't say that I was well prepared for the reality of the situation that I faced. It was nothing like what I had been led to expect by the course. The borough has a massive number of Freedom of Information [FOI] requests, something like six hundred a year, among the highest for local government. Since its introduction in 2005 FOI had become the main focus and records management was the bit that got to be done when there was time. I was recruit ed to develop policies, an organisation-wide retention schedule and classification scheme and I was also resourced in order to respond to various requests that came in for assistance. The aim of the corporate records management function was to create a single, consistent approach to records across the organisation.

CD: How did you go about your shock to the system? After six months, did you feel more confident about you future input in records management?
WM: I think the big shock was that from the MA we learned the good practice, what organisations are meant to do to best manage their records and the underlying theory. This ideal system is completely unapplicable to any sort of large scale bureaucracy where people don't follow policies and procedures. In reality it is very difficult to implement policies, there are multiple systems in place, there are competing agendas, and there are divisions and silos. I was trying to convince six thousand people to follow corporate policies for managing information – that was the shock. At the end of my time, I was less shocked. I definitely became more of a realist, more pragmatic, but I still have a belief that we can change things and I certainly saw the value of records management and that I was going to be in the job for a very long time! There was just so much to do, with multiple competing priorities combined with a lack of resources – a frequent issue for the information management function. I also saw the importance of stepping back and taking a corporate wide overview of what can be done through changing the organisation's working practices. This was a massive learning curve and I benefited hugely. I learned to do all sort of things, and was involved in a wide range of projects. The work was very interesting and I was supported by an excellent manager.

Information or records manager?

CD: You were mentioning the gap between theory and practice. How did you manage to bridge the gap? And where are you today, you are an information and knowledge manager, so are you still doing records management?
WM: I am still doing records management but I'm more of an information manager.

I think that people understand information management more than records management. Often records managers don't have the luxury to say "I am a records manager, I just deal with records". There is also all this unstructured information, e-mails, databases, wikis, blogs, internet forums. Records managers can't afford not to get involved in those things, otherwise they won't be capturing the records of the future and they will be failing to meet the information needs of the organisation.

Practical solutions

CD: How do you manage not to get swamped by all this information yourself? What kind of practical tools are you using?
WM: Tools, policies and guidance are important but they need to be simple. I remember my first e-mail management policy was composed of fifteen, twenty pages, which is impractical. No one is going to read that. The best tools are short and easy to use, they provide a clear benefit. If it's not easy to use it is useless.

CD: Would you go as far as to say that you have to market your work and your service?
WM: Definitely. You've got to market yourself and market your service because a records manager is providing a service. It's a service function. Unless you're talking to people and finding out what's going on in the organisation, you won't be able to get involved when you are most needed. It's also learning you can't do everything. You might be a single person in a large organisation with multiple competing priorities. You've got to use limited resources as best you can; so it's about prioritisation and project management, working out what you can do, committing and effectively completing what you set out to do.

CD: So precisely, when I read that in your current role as an information and knowledge manager, you are setting up "wikis", you don't feel that you are shooting yourself in the foot? How do you go about using web 2.0 tools to share information and still be a records manager?
WM: In my current role there is a conflict in that, in one sense, I am trying to create tools to enable people to do their work better, how to share knowledge, improve collaborative working, etc. And in the other part of my role, I am enforcing compliance. I am educating people in the government policies and legislation for protecting information, information security, the handling of data – none of which is really records management. The records management aspect is the development of policies and procedures and systems to preserve a record of the organisation's work under the Public Recordkeeping legislation and internal and external audit and reporting requirements.

CD: I think that's the root of the problem. How do you manage to resolve this contradiction in your role?

WM: It's a fine balance. On induction, all staff attend an hour's training course where we introduce them at FOI, data handling, information security, touching on records management in order that they know what the requirements are and they do see the importance, though there is the risk that I am still seen as a compliance figure. But then I've got recognition and if something comes up and they need assistance, they come to me and ask for my advice and guidance. It's about being available to assist the business when needed.

The importance of providing training

CD: I can see that in all your roles you've always done training. How do you see the role of training in records management?

WM: Training is a means of getting the most important messages across. You may have policies, but how are people going to learn about them? Training informs people what the policies and procedures are, and what they are required to do in terms of records management. If you can get people on induction, that's brilliant. It means that you can instil the organisation's information management values. You can tell them what the naming conventions and version controls are, how they are supposed to manage their documents, what systems they've got to use, and what they should do if they receive a FOI request. The information manager is also immediately increasing his profile. You are known to them and then they contact you with issues. You are opening their eyes to various problems and providing them with useful tools that will make their working life easier and they are going to appreciate that.

CD: I think that all the questions around security of information tend to be common sense but you have to remind people about it. You've got more challenging questions about how you classify information or your documents. How can you train people around those issues?

WM: What I am doing at the moment is trying to mainstream information management within the organisation. In order to engender ownership and organisational knowledge, we are creating a network of knowledge champions who own their team's information, and who have the responsibility to ensure that essential information is identified and kept appropriately. We have moved away from the concept of "records", we are not asking people to say "this is a record", "it must be declared as a record"; instead, we are saying "this is the information that needs to be kept in case of audit, in case of assessment to demonstrate the decisions you have made, and this is how you manage that effectively".

CD: Looking at your current and past roles, how do you manage the shared drives, which are quite old-fashioned in a way, and the wikis and these kind of newish ways of creating, finding and sharing information in a very flexible way? How the two of them are going together because in some ways, the shared drives are quite cumbersome while the collaborative tools are supposed to make work easier, more flexible, etc.

WM: I think wikis can be the friend of the records manager. They have an inbuilt audit trail. It is possible to control access and editing rights and in this way you can manage changes. It doesn't have to be a free for all; we are using a wiki as a knowledge base to capture, classify and organise information needed for audit and reporting requirements. The format of the wiki allows that information to be easily searchable and made as accessible as possible.

Misgivings on Electronic Documents and Records Management Systems (EDRMS); the importance of working with IT

CD: You mentioned before that you maybe were not so keen on EDRMS. Could you mention an experience where EDRMS were not working effectively?

WM: Yes, I think that this touches on the question of how to measure and demonstrate the benefits of records management. In short, I have seen no evidence to demonstrate that EDRMS, so large-scale, corporate-wide, complex, systems for managing documents and information, are good value for money. The UK public sector has spent millions and millions of pounds on these systems. There have been some large-scale implementation failures, multiple successive failures in some cases. Even for those systems that are now in place and are judged to be successful, when you talk to users in those organisations, they don't like those systems and avoid using them wherever possible. Given the user resistance I am not convinced that those organisations are systematically and consistently capturing their most important information. The technology is juvenile, the systems are slow, clunky, not user-friendly. They are massively expensive to implement, require huge investment in terms of IT resource, development, financial investment, training, change management, system development and process analysis. Despite the vast expense I have yet to see an EDRMS that I think is entirely successful. Having said that, I don't know what the alternative is for those organisations that need to demonstrate a flawless audit trail, perhaps the answer is to wait for the technology to mature.

CD: You don't go as far as to say we need to abandon completely EDRMS. I quite like your expression "juvenile systems". So maybe we can hope that developers will get better at it and will improve their products?

WM: I think developers do have to raise their game because of MS Sharepoint and other competing, low-cost, off-the-shelf document management systems which do not have the functionality of a full EDRMS but can be implemented quickly. The other challengers are the relatively cheaper and customisable open source products such as Alfresco and web-based document management systems including Google Docs. These kinds of systems have differently structured licence models, may be web-based or virtually hosted, reducing infrastructure costs. However, for many government organisations the security and information risks of these systems are too great, meaning that they can't be used. There remains a need for EDRMS. However, if I were going to an organisation which wasn't working in a highly regulated environment, I would look at other, better value solutions. The running costs of an enterprise-wide EDRMS in a large organisation would pay for a team of information managers, who could be on the floor within departments, providing effective, business-focussed advice and tools. This might be a more efficient use of resources.

CD: I share your views but I believe that it is easier to get budget to buy something technical, which sounds more like a new solution . . .

WM: IT is seen as an immediate answer to the information overload problem faced by organisations. An IT solution can improve already good information management practices. However, if you add an IT solution on top of poor practice, you simply compound the existing problems. In the worst case scenario you are spending huge amounts of money on a system that is not fit for purpose and that people don't want to use. For EDRMS you've got to think very carefully not only about the cost of the software, user licences, training support and administration, but also the user resource time used when asking people to carry their own filing and document management and the potential resistance. This can be very costly.

CD: In this context, what would you say about your collaboration with the IT department? I mean not only in your current position but in your career so far?

WM: IT normally understand the role of the records manager and are natural allies. In several of my roles I have been based within IT departments, which I think is a good place to be, it allows easier collaboration on projects and sharing of experience and means that you are more aware of new developments and can provide a records management steerage from the early stages of proposals.

Demonstrating the benefits of records management

CD: Finally, one remark and my last question. For the two of us, I think that records management is obvious, the need and the benefits of it are obvious. Why do you think it's not so obvious for people around us?

WM: You say it's obvious to you that records management is a good idea and once you know a bit about it, you realise "yes, it's obvious, clearly we should be doing this". Records managers have for years been saying it's important and has lots of benefits, however, we have no empirical evidence! Records managers are not effective at providing evidence that their role is good value for money and it addresses a clear business benefit. As a profession we need to do more. Projects are underway at the moment in the UK and elsewhere trying to do just that. Records management also has an image problem, people don't know about it. While they know they've got a problem in managing their information they don't know who should solve it – often, they think IT should provide the solution. So it's about saying "your e-mails are in a mess, you've got 7,000 e-mails in your Inbox and you've got information overload . . . a records manager can help you with that!", "you've got 20 versions of the same document and you don't know which one is right or the one that's up to date, records management can help you with that." It's up to records managers to reach out to people, provide solutions, and make that link. That is one of the most effective ways of demonstrating the benefits.

Contact: waltmansfield@yahoo.co.uk; Charline.dekens@lausanne.ch

[a[r[b|i]d]o]
ANNONCES/INSERATE
– arbido newsletter
– arbido print
– arbido website
→ inserate@staempfli.com
→ 031 300 63 89