DATA-DRIVEN INFORMATION GOVERNANCE: ENTERPRISE CONTENT AND RECORDS MANAGEMENT

Implementing an enterprise-wide enterprise content and records management (ECRM) environment can be daunting. In the face of this challenge, a transportation agency in a major US city was beginning to suffer from analysis paralysis. Progress had stalled on making decisions about hardware, configurations, technology add-ons, site design, content types and metadata, security, and more.

THE END OF THE SHARED DRIVE?

When considering an ECRM such as Microsoft SharePoint, organizations often assume the new technology will replace the shared network drive. However, shared drives fulfill many functions that cannot (and should not) be done in an ECRM such as mocking up web sites, creating customer databases, developing or deploying software, archiving old materials, and sharing holiday party pictures.

In the end, only 41% of the transportation agency's content could be migrated to SharePoint. This was an eventual blessing since SharePoint storage can be many times more expensive than shared drive storage, and you only want to move content that will benefit from being moved. Thankfully, the transportation agency found another cost-cutting avenue through a complementary technology: Nuix.

SHAREPOINT INFORMATION GOVERNANCE IN NINE STEPS

NUIX SHED LIGHT ON THE TRANSPORTATION AGENCY'S DARK DATA AND HELPED IT MAKE FACT-BASED DECISIONS TO MOVE THE PROJECT FORWARD.

1. **Planning the technology strategy:** The first step in designing an environment is choosing which technologies and add-on options to include. In this case, we analyzed the transportation agency's file shares and found that the contract resolution processes created many scanned images, which were scattered throughout the folder structure. The agency needed additional functionality to search and classify the existing images and make sure all new images were automatically captured. Nuix can also help answer questions such as:

   - Are you storing emails, multimedia, images, engineering drawings, or other compound documents that need special treatment? Does that require additional ECRM capabilities?

   - Are you using databases on file shares to track information that could be managed in an ECRM? (Examples include correspondence tracking, resolution coordination, case management, contact lists, etc.)

2. **Quantifying the effort:** The transportation agency answered to several boards and political constituencies; it needed approval and authority to move forward. Educated guessing on the potential value of implementing an ECRM was not enough. Once again, the answers to the value questions resided in the past 20 years of content residing on the file shares, and Nuix helped to quantify the answers.

   - How quickly are different types of content growing and how does that impact storage requirements?

   - Which workgroup should move to the new system first to provide the greatest amount of benefit?

3. **Designing functionality:** SharePoint sites can easily proliferate since most users have the authority and capability to create them. Planning and controlling this proliferation is critical. It is helpful to intentionally design functionality.

   - Why are sites duplicated between departments? Does it reflect an overlapping function, a security restriction, or a collaboration opportunity?

   - Are web content or databases being created on file shares that represent SharePoint site opportunities?

4. **Applying content types and metadata:** SharePoint content types are the basic unit of classification. They can be tied to retention periods, metadata schemas, security, and other capabilities. Nuix showed the transportation agency the frequency and locations of several thousand content types. Using a properties word list, we also determined likely options for additional definitions. Other useful metadata questions included:

   • What should the metadata standards for date formats and lifecycle status be named?

   • Which files were linked to, and could be tagged with, specific external agencies or geographic location?.

5. **Purging old content:** There were a number of records classification and purging capabilities that the transportation agency could do directly in Nuix, without needing to move the content to SharePoint.

   • Where are the temporal (not event-based) files older than their retention period? (These include computer logs, standard system reports and other database outputs, and accounting data.)

   • Which specific completed projects, comprising large numbers of files, could be isolated and removed?

6. **Fixing past problems:** In the process of indexing and classifying content, the transportation agency came across a number of file handling and storage management issues that it needed to address.

   • What happens to files that systems administrators moved in bulk, thus removing file ownership and creation dates? Which files are "owned" by former employees?

   • Who is making backups of files, folders, email archives, and entire PCs onto the network share?

7. **Migrating good content:** The transportation agency had selected a SharePoint content migration tool which could only identify minimally useful information from the file system such as name, date, and format. However, the real value in any ECRM is the ability to classify content based on metadata. Nuix was able to group files and identify additional metadata values to populate this migration tool. In addition, Nuix can be used to answer:

   • What files reside in old Lotus Notes databases or SharePoint sites and should we migrate them?

   • Which shares and storage devices should we prioritize for migration based on their volume of records?

8. **Tracking progress, measuring accuracy:** Many organizations, a year or two down after implementing an ECRM, realize that only a portion of the expected content was manually migrated by staff. The transportation agency plans to continually update its Nuix indexes to answer:

   • What level of accuracy are we achieving with our point-forward human classification effort?

   • How successful have workgroups and departments been in moving content to the ECRM and removing from the shared drive?

9. **Tackling other IG tasks:** The transportation agency now knows that SharePoint can address a number of IG issues. IG now has a firm starting point and appropriate representation within the organization. Next, the agency will be looking into:

   • Where is private data stored? Are those areas secure enough?

   • How can we increase accuracy and reduce the level of effort we are putting into public records requests?

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