

NUIX EASES UK GOVERNMENT AGENCY'S DIGITAL RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND REGULATORY COMPLIANCE WOES



SUMMARY

Two government reviews of digital records management forced a UK government agency to take a hard look at how it stored, used, and managed its data. Marelize Palmer, the agency's Head of Library and Archive Services, used Nuix

eDiscovery technology to get a handle on the unmanageable "morass of data" that it had accumulated over the years in network shares, mailboxes, and other locations. Over a four-week period in 2016, the agency's Knowledge and Information Management (KIM) team indexed more than 22 million items. This made it possible to:

- Provide nearly 70,000 items for solicitor review
- Minimize the time and effort required to respond to critical information requests including those from the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA)
- Meet the impending European Union General Data Protection Regulation (EU GDPR) requirements
- Manage information for transfer to The National Archives.



CHALLENGE

Managing data for any longstanding government body isn't easy. Marelize Palmer, Head of Library and Archive services for a large UK government agency, and the KIM team faced all the usual challenges of this situation. Adding to the

complications they faced was a targeted Cabinet Office review of how the UK government managed its digital records and archives, as well as impending new regulations such as the EU General Data Protection Regulation.

The "morass of data" that Palmer mentioned came after years of accumulation. Multiple government agency mergers and changes had forced previously separate departments to work on unified technologies and with the same file and data types.

"When we first started working digitally, we didn't always have the appropriate processes and systems," Palmer said. "Even though we had policies in place saying everything should be saved in certain places, the policies never kept up with the changes in technology.

"A vast amount of data came in from all sorts of systems, some of which we didn't have access to in order to read the files."



SOLUTION

The team needed to answer an important question when implementing a solution: How do you manage data appropriately to comply with information management legislation?

"We looked at a number of products and did a project where we even looked at open-source solutions," explained Palmer. "My team and I are information specialists, not technology specialists, and some of the products, even though they are very good, are far too technical for somebody who doesn't have the necessary IT skills."

That's when the team decided to trial Nuix Workstation and Nuix Investigate (formerly Nuix Web Review & Analytics), targeting 22 million items in a four-week period.

The data spanned network shares, Microsoft Exchange, Symantec Enterprise Vault, and electronic document, records, and customer relationship management systems.

"The Nuix product fit our requirements because it's a relatively easy product to use," said Palmer. "You don't need to be techy to use it."

ONE TECHNOLOGY, MULTIPLE USES

The agency is a great example of applying Nuix technology to meet a range of information management and governance needs. In this case, Nuix enables the agency to answer the requirements of the IICSA and respond to high-profile requests for information about child sex abuse scandals.

The agency can extract relevant information from emails, file shares, archives, document management systems, and other data repositories. Nuix also supports the information management team's everyday activities around finding, reviewing, redacting, and preparing data to be sent to The National Archives. The KIM team must review each document for 'sensitivity' to ensure it does not release personal or sensitive information in breach of information management legislation. "You can go word blind reading over thousands of paragraphs of text on screen," said Palmer. Using Nuix's search and analytics capabilities made it much easier for the team to find and redact sensitive data.

FINDING STRUCTURE

Information management doesn't happen until you answer the questions "What information do we hold?" and "Where is it?". By using Nuix to help impose structure on its data, the team was able to answer these questions and better enforce its record retention and destruction schedules.

"We're in the process of sifting through the information we have and putting some structure around it, so we can delete some of it and justify why we're deleting it if we get challenged, or store it within our electronic document management system so it's there for reuse," said Palmer. Using Nuix's search and analytics capabilities made it much easier for the team to find and redact sensitive data.

FACING FUTURE CHALLENGES

Government data challenges are not going away. The team is positioning itself to deal with new regulations, court cases, investigations, audits, and public inquiries by better understanding its data and defensibly reducing data volumes.

"Even though we're leaving the EU, we will still need to comply with the GDPR as a 'controller' and 'processor' of significant volumes of personal data," said Palmer, referencing the need to abide by a number of provisions in the way the agency handles EU residents' personally identifiable information—or face significant penalties.

"Nuix can help by identifying, redacting, or removing sensitive information from records. We envisage that Nuix would also help us to comply with the 'the right to be forgotten'."

OVERCOMING THE LEARNING CURVE

Despite its relative ease of use, Nuix tools also have a learning curve that new users face. Support from Nuix professionals was a critical part of the agency's engagement.

"I can't sing the praises enough of the support we received from Nuix," said Palmer. "When we started off, it took a bit of time to get used to the layout. The Nuix tool looks quite different, but once you're used to it, it's easy to use. The Nuix staff was fantastic and so patient working with us."

“The beauty of Nuix is that if you can get access to the data, you can open most of those files. If they were image files, you can search across it and make decisions to what happens with the information and capture the metadata, in case it needs to stand up to an inquiry or a court, to prove you haven't tampered with the data.”

Marlize Palmer

Head of Library and Archive Services for a large UK government agency



RESULTS

Using Nuix Workstation, the team quickly identified the types of regulatory privacy data that were of concern. This helped achieve insight into the scale of the potential problem and take a defensible, actionable assessment of its exposure.

For more information, visit nuix.com/information-governance

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