

Noteworthy New Records Management Textbook

Lee R. Nemchek, IGP, CRM

Though out of print for many years, *Information and Records Management: Document-Based Information Systems* by Mary Robek, Gerald F. Brown & David O. Stephens (Westerville: McGraw-Hill Publishers, 4th Ed., 1996) is arguably the most well-known and respected textbook on records and information management (RIM) practice and procedure. A perusal of ARMA International's bookstore offerings shows a few other, more current general texts, but none of these has the cachet that has kept Robek, Brown & Stephens on most RIM 101/CRM study lists for more than 17 years. That is, until now.

Patricia C. Franks, Ph.D., IGP, CRM, an associate professor in the School of Library and Information Science at San José State University, has authored *Records & Information Management*, the first authoritative RIM text written from an information governance (IG) perspective. The IG model articulates a new set of imperatives for information professionals, one that includes legal, compliance, and information technology elements in equal measure alongside traditional RIM topics, such as inactive records management and records retention and disposition.

As Franks writes, RIM professionals must "master the fundamentals of different but related fields, including compliance, risk management, change management, and project management" in order to be successful in the new era of Records Management 2.0. This book may prove to be a worthy successor to Robek, Brown & Stephens, especially because shortly after its publication, the Institute of

Certified Records Managers (ICRM) adopted it as a source of test items for Parts 1 through 5 of the CRM exam.

Scholarship Broad and Deep

As might be expected from a library school professor, *Records & Information Management* reflects comprehensive, far-ranging reading in the discipline. The scholarship is impressive, with cited authorities going back to 1949 and as current as mid-February 2013. What's most impressive, however, is the overall breadth of coverage, which is evident on several levels:

Content

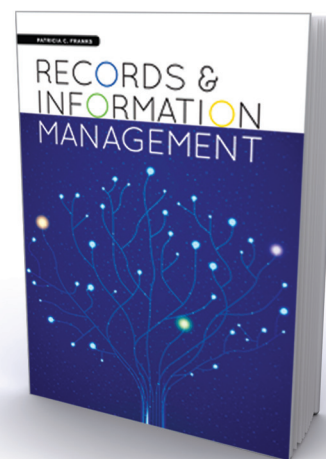
This textbook covers paper-based and electronic records management topics, as well as all of the major IG touchstones, including big data, cloud computing, social networking, bring your own device, information security and privacy, risk management, and information audits.

Jurisdiction

Examples and citations are drawn from U.S. federal and state sources, Canada, the United Kingdom, Italy, Australia, and the Philippines, among other jurisdictions.

Source Format

In addition to common formats such as books, periodicals, professional/academic journals, newspapers, encyclopedias and dictionaries, sources include press releases, news transcripts, videos, slide shows, websites, blogs, wikis, social media sites, product promotional literature, research and consultancy reports,



Records & Information Management

Author: **Patricia C. Franks**

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Source: **www.arma.org/bookstore**

and law firm client advisories. The extensive chapter notes are a great font of information on available RIM resources.

Organization Type

Franks describes RIM projects and processes from various national, state and local government and regulatory agencies, educational institutions, for-profit commercial companies, and non-profits.

Standards and Best Practices

Franks draws heavily from the literature of professional and industry associations, including ARMA International, AIIM, ICRM, PRISM, The Sedona Conference®, Project Man-

agement Institute, International Association of Privacy Professionals, International Council on Archives, Society of American Archivists, British Standards Institution, International Organization for Standardization, and American National Standards Institute.

Bibliographic Tools

Each of the 12 chapters includes an introduction, a concluding summary, a brief case study or perspective essay contributed by a RIM industry specialist, and notes. In addition, the book provides more than 100 illustrations (figures, tables and photos), sidebars, an appendix of international regulations, and 70 pages of glossary, bibliography, and index.

On the strength of its currency and coverage alone, Franks' book is poised to take over as the recommended go-to reference for both students and RIM professionals for many years to come.

Agree to Disagree

Experienced RIM practitioners will likely identify certain points of contention among the author's asser-

tions. For example, it is not a given that "the primary purpose of a records retention and disposition schedule is to ensure that records are retained only as long as necessary and then disposed of when they no longer have value." Some might argue that the *primary* purpose is to ensure that an organization meets its legal and regulatory obligations with respect to recordkeeping. Earlier in the same chapter, the author instructs records managers to establish retention periods while inventorying records, whereas actual practice dictates that inventory projects are almost always handled separately from retention/disposition projects, with each requiring a distinct set of resources. Records managers must decide for themselves whether they agree or disagree with the author on these and other issues that are open to differences of professional opinion and practice.

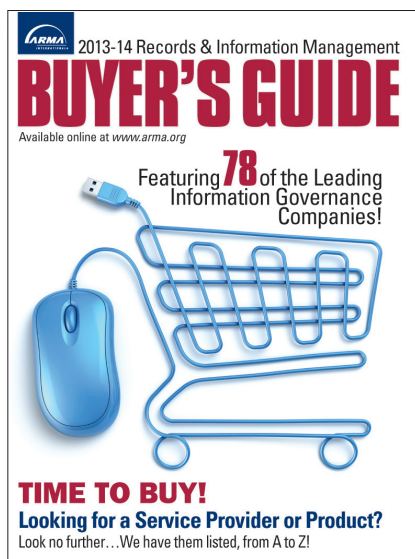
Stronger Editorial Oversight Needed

The overall high quality of this book could have been enhanced by stronger editorial oversight. For exam-

ple, a list of abbreviations/acronyms would have allowed the author to use standard terms instead of writing out the same proper names over and over. Editors should have caught citations to superseded references and other inconsistencies, such as mentioning ARMA's new IGP certification in Chapter 12 (IG programs) but omitting it entirely from Chapter 11 (RIM education, training and professional development).

Some figures are overly vague (e.g., p. 98), and a case can be made that the final chapter, covering development and implementation of RIM and IG programs, properly belongs up front, instead of at the end of the book. Still, the editorial issues do not detract from Franks' achievement in gathering a large volume of both new and familiar material and synthesizing it into an up-to-date, coherent, readable, and highly informative text that all RIM/IG professionals should keep close at hand for ongoing reference. **END**

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