



Embrace the Cloud, Big Data to Take Control of the Digital Deluge

Highlights of the Forrester Research and ARMA International RM Survey, 2015

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2015 marks the seventh year that ARMA International and Forrester Research have surveyed records and information management (RIM) decision-makers in an effort to track the profession's key trends and challenges. In June, more than 500 respondents from around the world shared their perspectives through their survey answers. Here are some quick results of particular interest:

- North American representation was once again dominant: 69% of the respondents are from the United States and 24% are from Canada.
- 33% of the respondents work in government, topping all vertical industries.
- 31% of the respondents work in large enterprises that have more than a billion dollars in annual revenue.
- 20% of RIM programs report to IT, compared to 15% from last year's survey; 16% report to legal, 16% to a corporate services group, 11% to compliance, 9% to a line of business, and 24% to "other."
- The most frequently used vendors were Microsoft (for electronic records solutions) and Iron Mountain (for offsite storage of physical records).

The Pivot to IG Has Begun

RIM professionals are instigating change inside their organizations, as shown by their response to this new question in the 2015 survey: "Have you restructured or re-organized your RIM and/or IT programs to support an information governance [IG] strategy?" Nearly a third of survey respondents (32%) said they have (see Figure 1), and 34% said they plan to make this change over the next 12 months.

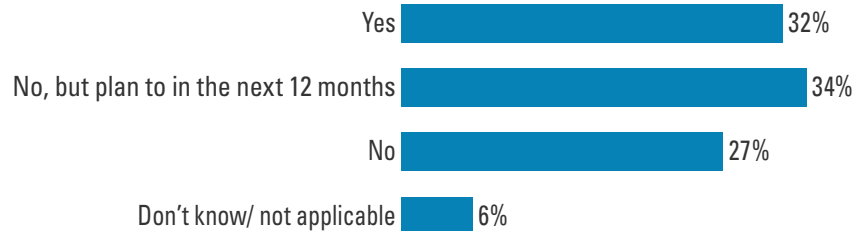
But there is still work to be done, particularly in the following three critical areas for IG success.

Stakeholder Alignment

Forrester notes a slight rise in the number of RIM programs aligned to IT – an indication that an alignment of policies and priorities may be on the horizon. This needs to continue, as evidenced by what respondents noted as two of their top three challenges: 29% said it is the lack of stakeholder alignment among IT, legal, compliance, and business decision-makers, and 29% identified it as lack of staffing or in-house expertise development (see Figure 2).

According to the survey, 59% of surveyed RIM professionals are included in their company's IT strategic planning, which involves such activities as requirements definition and vendor selection. This figure has remained relatively consistent over the seven years of the Forrester-ARMA survey, regardless of where RIM reports.

"Have you restructured or re-organized your RIM and/or IT programs to support an Information Governance Strategy?"



Base: 467 records management professionals

Figure 1.

Source: Forrester Research and ARMA International Records Management Online Survey, Q2 2015

Governance Structure

Governance structures for RIM programs also remain in flux. While 28% of respondents said they have "a steering committee of senior stakeholders" to guide decisions, 24% said they have no formal governance at all. Other responses include "multiple, coordinated, cross-role committees" (11%), "a center of excellence or dedicated program team" (11%), and "multiple, disjointed cross-role committees" (9%). Just 4% rely on

legal to make decisions, while 3% let IT run the show.

Executive Sponsorship

Executive sponsorship for RIM programs continues to be influenced by legal: 41% report that the general counsel or the senior legal decision-maker is the key executive sponsor, particularly in the private sector. Of government respondents, 42% identify the CIO or the most senior technical decision-maker as the executive sponsor.

Digital Content Is Top IG Challenge

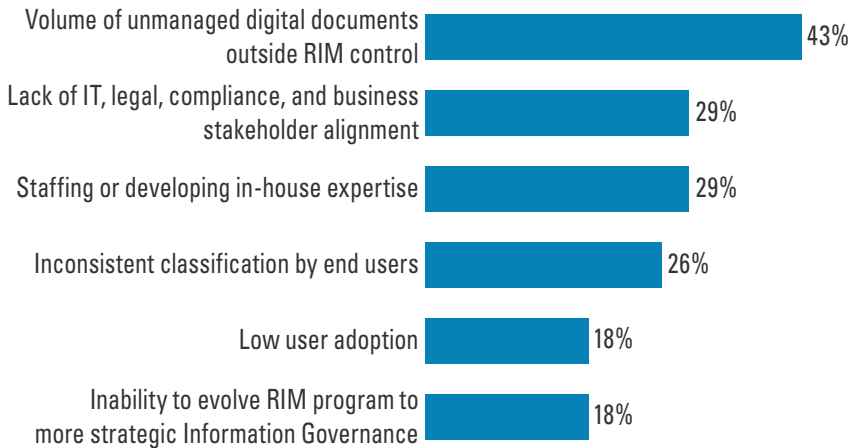
Respondents identified a new top challenge in this year's survey. Given a list and the opportunity to choose more than one challenge, 43% said their greatest challenge is "the volume of unmanaged digital documents outside of RIM control" (see Figure 2).

Growing Volume

The unabated growth of electronic information provides enterprises with a wealth of opportunities to use data and captured knowledge to make better decisions, but it also presents an ever-greater burden to the information professionals who must organize and manage it.

Only 6% of respondents expect the volume of "non-record" documents to decrease over the next year, and only 1% expect the volume of electronic re-

“Which of the following represent the top records management challenges for your organization?”



Base: 453 records management professionals

Figure 2.
Source: Forrester Research and ARMA International Records Management Online Survey, Q2 2015

records to decrease. In comparison, 43% expect the volume of onsite physical records to decrease, and 34% project a decrease in physical records held in third-party storage facilities.

Emerging Sources

RIM professionals still are not adequately controlling the emerging sources of business records in their enterprise. An IG strategy must look beyond traditional sources of records and know where the organization’s client-facing peers are communicating and creating content.

Enterprises largely have a handle on physical records, e-mail, and office documents but are failing with new content. Big data sources, social and collaboration sites, cloud-based file sharing tools, and mobile messaging apps are least likely to have any retention management implemented. For example, more than three-fourths (82%) of enterprises say they are applying retention policies to paper files, but only 18% claim to do so with their collaboration sites.

IG programs need to consider the “non-records” generated inside their organizations. Forrester sees a delib-

erate shift in technology investments as enterprises increasingly focus budgets on priorities like revenue growth and improved customer experience.

The apps and platforms that generate and hold data and documents – potential business records – will continue to change. External engagement with customers, citizens, or partners is driving new content management use cases, and governance now needs to extend to repositories beyond the firewall.

Big Data Presents Challenges and Opportunities

Big data is not just about size and volume; it is about new-generation analytic technologies that help organizations get more value from their information assets. Big data programs help shed light on customer behavior and reveal patterns that can be used to improve operations or detect problems. As shown at <https://solutions.forrester.com/big-data-ban>, Forrester has defined big data as “the practices and technology that close the gap between the data available and the ability to turn that data into business insight.”

RIM’s Current Role

Forrester included several new questions to understand what role, if any, RIM professionals already are playing in their organizations’ big data projects. One-third of survey respondents reported that their organizations are pursuing a big data project, at least at a pilot level. A further 17% expect a big data program to be kicked off over the next year. A surprisingly high 75% of those who know about a big data program indicate that the RIM team is indeed part of the big data planning or governance discussions.

The primary roles RIM professionals play in a big data initiative are to:

- Advise on deletion or disposition policies (84%)
- Assess big data technologies as part of automated categorization projects (52%)
- Advise on security or privacy risks (48%)
- Consult with big data teams on sources of historical data to be included in analysis (34%).

Yet despite this apparent activity, only 6% have retention policies for big data, and just 7% have them in early implementation stages.

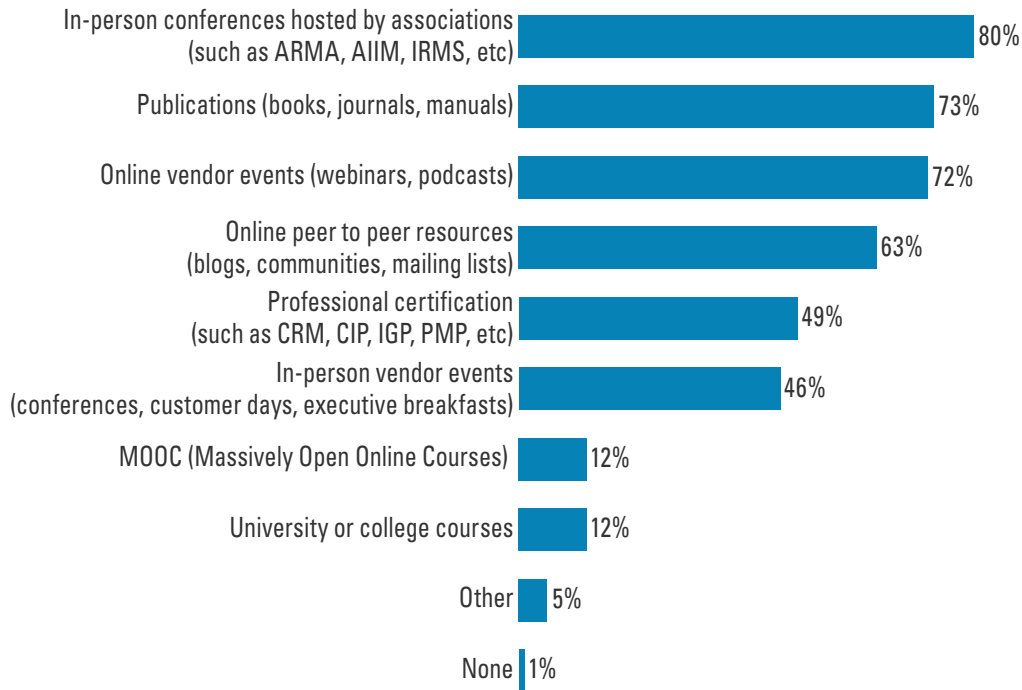
RIM’s Evolving Role

RIM professionals must position themselves to be a key resource for their business and technical peers who want to understand what data is, in fact, available. A decade’s worth of customer communications could be a tremendous asset to a customer experience program, yet in most enterprises it likely will lie untouched in an e-mail archive.

As big data initiatives begin to extract insights to inspire better, smarter actions, RIM professionals also must be prepared to rethink some of their retention policies. Disposal policies for data are often established based on diminished “business value.”

But the promise of new-generation analytic technologies from the world

“In which continuing education activities do you plan to engage to stay current on records and information management trends?”(Select all that apply)



Base: 357 records management professionals

Figure 3.
Source: Forrester Research and ARMA International Records Management Online Survey, Q2 2015

of big data has the potential to shake up how business value is defined. Individual documents or e-mail messages may have little or no business value over time, but when they are combined with other data sets or in large volume, their business value can be extracted in new ways.

Forrester advises RIM professionals to understand where these new analytic projects are in place and the data sources being mined, and to be prepared to adjust traditional assumptions about retention rules.

Keys to the IG Evolution

Enterprises that fail to invest in their employees’ skills will find it difficult to shift to a more digital business. While 48% of respondents expect their RIM budgets to increase over the next year, a larger share of the budget is expected to go into technology investment than into people:

- 43% expect to increase their spending to upgrade RIM technologies.
- 30% will spend more on new technologies.
- Only 27% expect to spend more for in-house staffing.

Many organizations do not plan to hire additional full-time RIM resources.

Continuing Education

With limited budget and plans to expand internal teams, continuing education will be essential if IG programs are to be started, be rebooted, or reach the next level of maturity.

Attending in-person conferences hosted by professional associations such as ARMA, AIIM, or the International Records Management Society is considered the top continuing education activity (see Figure 3). Most (80%) respondents plan to engage in some

form of in-person event.

Other highly valued activities for continuing education include publications (73%), online vendor events (72%), and peer-to-peer forums such as blogs or mailing lists (63%).

Professional Certifications

Nearly half (49%) of respondents plan to pursue such professional certifications as the Certified Records Manager (CRM) designation, the Information Governance Professional (IGP), or the Project Management Professional (PMP).

The CRM designation is considered the most valuable by survey respondents, with 44% of participants describing it as “very valuable.” Only 13% described the CRM as having “no value.” Second on the list is the relatively new IGP designation, with 29% describing it as “very valuable.” The third most-valued certification

is the PMP, with 21% of respondents rating it highly.

The key motivations for professional certification are quite personal. Nearly half (41%) of respondents chose “personal interest and self-improvement” as their top driver for pursuing a designation. Finishing second, at 19%, was the benefit of differentiation during a job or contract search, and finishing third, at 15%, was getting a direct benefit such as a promotion or pay increase. Only 9% of respondents indicated they would not pursue a professional certification.

Advice for RIM and IG Professionals

With seven years of joint research with ARMA now completed, Forrester sees several constants in the results that suggest actions RIM and IG professionals should take.

Embrace the Cloud

Cloud adoption remains in a nascent stage, with security, privacy,

and other compliance risks holding back adoption. This worry over cloud services lingers despite the increasing adoption of the cloud for other content-rich use cases, such as archiving and e-discovery review.

RIM professionals may have to look at the cloud through a fresh lens; many of the leading enterprise content management – and thus records management – vendors are aggressively moving to a cloud-first roadmap.

Extend IG to All Content

Optimism about ongoing technology deployments is still high, although budgets remain tight, and there’s not much hope of expanding teams. Confidence in retrieving today’s records some 15 years from now is rising, which demonstrates hope on the digital preservation frontier.

The gap in applying retention policies to emerging sources of business content, however, puts a question mark on the future retrieval and preservation of these data types. Regard-

ing risk, Forrester continues to see that RIM professionals are not extending consistent governance practices to the social, cloud, and collaboration tools that their client-facing colleagues have embraced.

With the top RIM challenge described as “the volume of unmanaged documents outside of RIM controls,” the gap between governance and chaos is at risk of widening.

RIM professionals need to home in on where communication and content creation patterns are shifting inside their enterprise, and they must be prepared to extend their purview to the collaborative, social, and mobile world of today’s digital business.

This is the promise of IG as a “holistic strategy for using and managing information to meet business objectives.” It’s not just about documents vs. records anymore. **END**

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