Chapter 21
Trends in Contemporary Record Management

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ABSTRACT

This chapter examines the record management and its contemporary trends. It discusses the concept of record not only as evidence but also a proof of important transactions carried out in an organization. Records ensure effective and efficient updates to organizations if properly managed, organized, and monitored. However, most records in organizations, especially libraries, lack monitoring and enforcement, inappropriate vintage and governance. It is against this background that record managers should create a system of organizing records storage where essential records can be reduced to microform in order to conserve, space, and speed-up preservation and retrieval of information.

INTRODUCTION

Generally, organizations or libraries deal with records and information management. As the creation of endless information increase and regulatory laws evolve, the need for record management become more imperative. Therefore, it is paramount for the records and information managers to understand and familiarize with how to create, use, store records in their day to day activities as well as managing all types of files whether manual or electronic. Hence, many organizations are being faced with challenges of preserving records due to huge volume of electronic documents. Records are preserved in establishment for institutional memory because it is to the success of many organizations including academic libraries. Such record includes minutes of board meetings, job applications are gathered and preserved on paper hardcopy. Other information is recorded on computer disk or hard drive, microfilm or other media. The success of any organization depends on the efficiency of its records keeping and documentation. Information remains the important tool for the survival of any establishment. The onus,

therefore, rests on the management to employ competent and experienced records personnel who will control the records of such an establishment. Records management has come to occupy a pride of place in this present day digital age. It also deals with the creation, distribution, maintenance, protection, control, storage, receipt, use and disposition of records. Most recently, computer programmes known as automated record management system have been developed to make files, document, and other record accessible for management by computer.

WHAT IS A RECORD?

Any document created, received and maintained can be called record (Solis, 2020). For instance, in libraries, meeting minutes, invoices, registers, maps, photograph, conference proceedings, inventories of resources could be regarded as records. It should be noted that not all documents are records but subset document that organization/ libraries require to preserve as evidence are known as record. Some records are transitory/transient, that is, they are administrative, fiscal or legal values and are short lived. A transitory record encompasses voice-mail, routing slips, documents designated as superseded or as –updated, memoranda (paper-based or email), preliminary drafts (when superseded). Record and information manager decides what is a record and a non-record. A non- record is a document that is more expensive to keep than discard. The non-record does not serve the preserved organizational policies, functions, operations, decision, procedure, and routine that have occurred. Non-records are not confined to catalogs, listserv, materials, Central Ohio Technical College (non-COTC) publications personal correspondence, other library material, books, journals, faculty paper. Non records do not require retention like the transient/transitory record. The transient/transitory records are normally kept in a file or sub-file whether analog or digital which is assigned for a periodical review (John and Christine 2021) Processes, people and technology encompasses record management.

Finnel (2011) defines records as statements of facts, data element, evidence as well as institutional activities. Record is referred to transaction activities such as financial statement, personnel files, business correspondence, contract negotiation which serve as proof in the organization (Association of Records Managers and Administration [ARMA], 2020). Record can be defined as a document which organization utilizes in showing all evidences or proof of vital transaction done. Such documents help to regulate and monitor activities and business decision. Texas A&M system (2021) describes records as documented photographic, machine-readable, or other recorded information created or received by or on behalf of the university that documents the activities of the organization. Books, film, tape, microfiche, microfilms, letters, documents, printouts, photographs, maps, Photostats, a voice, data, or video representation held in computer central processing unit are seen as records. In the same vein, records encompass items like financial transactions, database and tables, websites, metadata associated with records, electronic messages, including email and voicemail, personnel and employment documentation, general correspondence and administrative records, significant working papers, drafts and version and student and class documentation etc. Records serve as any document item or devices that preserve organization policies, function, decision, procedures, operation as well as routine data.

The creation of data, set of data in an organization is termed record. It also entails creation, receipt, storage or use, which is maintained as proof of all organizational activity. Organizations especially health, government, legal, financial sectors contain personally identifiable information (PII). Equally important, record is a content that document business transaction/operation. Records are basic instrument of

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