



Paperless Office – Moving from Myth or Must Have

All technologies have their day – the time when they move from the periphery to the mainstream; the point at which many factors converge to create a sweet-spot. The first mobile phones in the 80's, lovingly referred to as "bricks", were heavy, expensive and only used by a chosen few. Due to the availability of cheap electronics, high performance batteries, and wonderful apps, smartphones are light, inexpensive and perform tasks we couldn't have dreamed of in 1985.

The Changing Face of DMS

The same analogy can be applied to Document Management Software (DMS) options from the early 90's -The concept of the 'Paperless Office' using DMS solutions mainly catered for the scanning and retrieval of paper. They were expensive to purchase, infuriating to implement and were mostly implemented by large corporates.

By the late 90's, DMS had moved into the SME market place but really only addressed certain pockets of corporate information such as the storage and retrieval of finance documents or the scanning of delivery notes; they provided a great solution for some areas of the business but not for the company as a whole.

Technology and the Evolution of DMS

In today's world, like the mobile phone scenario above, many factors have converged to make DMS a must have for any size of business from SME to the largest corporate. For example:

- Connectors, web services and standard protocols now mean it's far easier to collect and consolidate all types of content from many disparate sources
- a fast web platform provides a standard methodology to present information via thin client web browsers or apps
- the ability to connect to information via low cost devices such as smartphones, touch screen tablets and PCs
- scanning and OCR technology is far more reliable and cost effective
- disk space/storage is now incredibly cheap

The convergence of these factors means that DMS really can deal with any type of corporate content, be it an email, Excel spread sheet, ERP report, purchase invoices or even corporate logos and videos. Successful companies can now:

- Respond quickly to queries and provide fantastic customer service
- share their corporate content and intellectual property (IP)
- work efficiently and reduce budget overheads

So, has the paperless office has now moved from myth to must have?

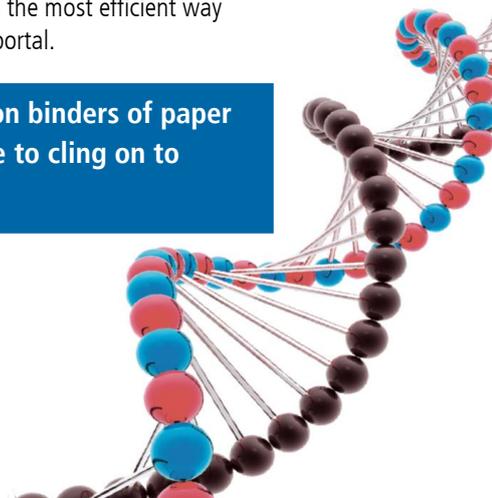
Why bother with DMS?

We're often asked, "Why do I need a DMS, I've got an email system for storing emails, I've got a great ERP system for storing all the documents it generates and I've got my Z drive for managing all the miscellaneous stuff?"

OK, it's a fair question and a robust argument against DMS, but it's missing the point.

Of course your business works now and probably makes a good profit, but are you working in the most efficient way possible. A great DMS strategy connects IP from all areas of the business to one information portal.

"I look around many offices as I visit clients and they've got binders upon binders of paper that no one will ever look at again.... 'Just in case' is a really bad excuse to cling on to paper." (Hanns Kohler-Kruner, Research Director at Gartner)

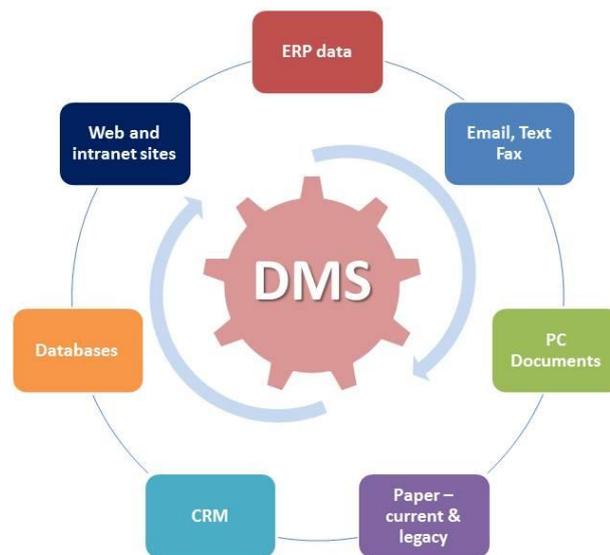




Islands of information

Look in any business large or small and you find islands of information. We're talking about silos of information which really aren't connected to rest of the business – this could be as simple as a filing cabinet sitting in the warehouse containing the only copy of an export invoice or perhaps a quote sitting on a salesman's laptop. Does this matter? Well most of the time, it doesn't, but what happens if there's a query from a customer, or a new order which doesn't match a quote. Very quickly you can waste many man hours hunting for the information which should be accessible at the touch of button.

So in an ideal world, let's consider the key silos of information our DMS can manage – see diagram below.



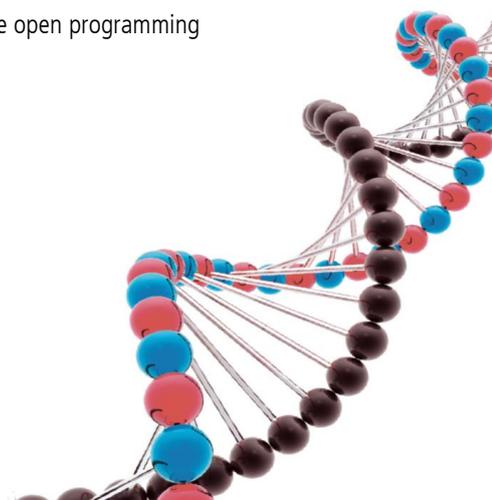
This diagram isn't exhaustive in terms of all of the potential information sources but we've covered some of the main ones.

Connectors, modules and protocols

Good DMS software connects easily to any data source whether it's a legacy ERP system or a web service over the internet; it is simple to install and intuitive to use – if you can't install the basic server, setup some users and create some simple libraries in an hour, you probably have a "[bloatware](#)" solution - our term for the old fashioned, outdated and overtly complex products.

On the overhand, some seemingly modern platforms can appear to provide a flexible and agile development platform, but in reality they often need a team of highly trained consultants to provide the customisation you need. For example, SharePoint can be a great solution but you must factor in the specialist consultancy skills required for setup and configuration and don't forget SQL database costs, which can be expensive. (You can read my white paper on [infoRouter vs Sharepoint here](#)).

Furthermore, the best DMS solutions are now web-based, use standard technologies and have open programming interfaces to allow easy integration with line of business applications.





How can we help?

We'd love to show you how quickly and cost effectively we can implement a paperless office in your business.



Our infoRouter software is web based (using standard technologies) and includes all the enabling modules as part of the server install, so there are no hidden costs. You don't pay extra for our MS Office Plug-in, you don't pay extra for the import export tool, you don't pay extra for our email scanner service, you don't pay extra for the scan station client.....I won't carry on as I'm sure you get the picture and we've got lots more free modules.

infoRouter can be used with a variety of databases (MySQL, SQL or Oracle), can be installed in half an hour and end users require very little training.

In addition, we can build custom presentation layers to tailor infoRouter to specific applications – this means we can offer users a simplified experience by only showing the core DMS features required by the end-user.

Lastly, the API (Application Programming Interface) is free – so if you want to integrate infoRouter into your ERP software or any backend system you can ask us or do it in-house. For more info on integrating infoRouter to other applications [click here](#).

If you'd like to have a play with infoRouter, that's fine – we can provide a demo license to allow you to install it yourself and start working with it..... and remember you don't need an army of consultants to install it!

Contact Document Genetics

Document Genetics is an established UK based company providing a comprehensive range of business automation software. We focus on improving document automation, workflow and collaboration within our client organisations, and our range of innovative solutions and specialist services help to save time and money by processing documents and data more efficiently. If you'd like to discuss your supplier invoice application with Document Genetics, we'll be delighted to help.

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