



DOCUMENT DISPOSITION: THE COMPLIANT WAY FOR SMALL BUSINESS

LEARN HOW A DEFENSIBLE RECORDS DISPOSITION POLICY CAN HELP YOU MANAGE INFORMATION AND KEEP YOUR SMALL BUSINESS COMPLIANT.

Everyone has that one junk drawer in the kitchen full of clutter they don't use. While it's trivial in the home, storing unused items is a major issue for small businesses.

From full hard drives to disorganized filing cabinets, your business information may start to become increasingly difficult to manage, store and access in compliance with regulations. The solution? Put together a defensible records disposition policy that outlines clearly what should be permanently archived and what can be securely destroyed.

STORE OR DESTROY?

Records and information management (RIM) policies on defensible disposition go hand-in-hand with records retention schedules that capture all the different records created and used in your business. Regardless of its format, your retention schedule should indicate how long each class of record must be retained to meet legal, regulatory and operational requirements

Once a record has reached the end of its legal retention period and is of no further operational or business value, it must be securely destroyed or permanently archived.

Defensible disposition policies and practices will help guide your business compliance. Before you can decide what to keep or not, it's important to know what you have, where it's stored and how it's accessed.

Taking inventory of your records, their types, formats and where they're stored is essential. This index of records should include both physical and electronic versions as well as a map of your in-house and third-party stored record repositories.

From our global survey of business leaders, here are the bad habits we've found:

- 53%** have left business-sensitive or business-confidential information on their desks.
- 39%** have mislaid or lost this type of information in a public place
- 31%** have shared it over an unsecured wireless network



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WHY DISPOSE?

Given the rate small businesses are generating information and data, it would be pointless-not to mention impossible-to store all your records and information indefinitely. Here are the top four reasons for compliant records disposition:

1. Space

Wasted space is another (unnecessary) added cost to your small business. How much do you spend on office space? How much space could be saved by emptying every filing cabinet and storing your paper records in secure, offsite facilities?

2. Protection

As small businesses evolve with the digital economy, data privacy and protection laws are becoming increasingly important for operational success. Keeping personal information about your customers may put your business in breach of data privacy regulations. Are you holding on to customer data you are not legally entitled to have? The fines could be an unwelcome financial surprise.

ONE MISPLACED DOCUMENT COULD RESULT IN THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS IN FINES AND UNTOLD DAMAGE TO THE REPUTATION OF YOUR SMALL BUSINESS. SO WHY TAKE THE RISK?

3. Leaks

Destroying data no longer in use guarantees it won't fall into the wrong hands. Leaks from employees are more common than you might think. Inadvertent data disclosure can be just as damaging as a deliberate data breach.

4. Theft

If the data doesn't exist, it can't be stolen. With the steady increase of cybercrime and the vulnerabilities small businesses have, the need to protect stored data is pressing. Secure destruction is the ultimate safeguard.

WHAT TO HOLD ON TO

Sometimes, there are records that just can't be destroyed. Typically, this includes things like evidence in an ongoing dispute or documents under a legal hold in anticipation of litigation.

PHYSICAL DANGER

Most employees have more than one device. Multiple phones, laptops and tablets mean more data that needs protection in more places. As device lifecycles continue shrinking, businesses need an effective, defensible asset disposition plan.

26.6 BILLION DEVICES CONNECTED GLOBALLY AVERAGE 7 DEVICES PER PERSON

ANIL GUPTA, READWRITE

With our Secure IT Asset Disposition (SITAD), there's now a responsible, secure way to dispose of end-of-life IT equipment. Each asset's location can be tracked throughout the destruction process. Our unbroken chain of custody and certificates of data deletion ensure your old electronic equipment and the information it contains are destroyed safely.

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* Research was undertaken for Iron Mountain by Opinion Matters. It questioned a total of 4,006 workers in mid-market companies (250-3,000 employees - 250-5,000 in North America) across the UK, France, Germany, The Netherlands, Belgium, Spain and North America.

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