M-Files®

THE GROWING PROBLEM OF DISCONNECTED
DATA REPOSITORIES

COMPILED FROM THE 2019 INTELLIGENT INFORMATION MANAGEMENT BENCHMARK REPORT

FUJIFILM
Value from Innovation

INTRODUCTION

The way organizations manage company information sits at the crossroads of just about all business processes. Day after day and week after week, employees are wasting a significant amount of time dealing with the myriad of challenges related to working with company documents — across the entire document lifecycle. That wasted time is a silent killer to productivity, which can cost organizations a tremendous amount of money in opportunity costs.

In a recent study, IDC revealed that the unproductive time workers spend as a result of information management inefficiencies amounts to a loss of 21% of the organization's total productivity, which costs the organization an astounding amount — nearly $20,000 per worker per year.[1]

Early American colonist William Penn embodied this sentiment best when he said, "Time is what we want most, but what we use worst." The data in this whitepaper was compiled from a research project commissioned by M-Files to better understand how companies across the globe are managing their growing store of company information. With resounding clarity, the consensus is that document management remains a challenge.

DATA REPOSITORIES
Call it information sprawl. Call it content chaos.

Whatever you call it, the problem is only growing along with the rise in data volume, velocity and variety. The challenge is primarily caused by company information scattered across multiple data repositories. The problem can only be remediated if organizations heed the call to tame the sprawl in a systematic and intelligent way, perhaps as a leg of their overall digital transformation strategy. It's a status quo that remains alarming — the organizational penchant for storing and managing content across several information silos — ERP, CRM, network folders, email inboxes, file-sharing applications... the list goes on and on.

Worse yet, these common information storage locations generally lack the ability to interact with one another. This creates issues like version control, time-consuming searches through multiple repositories, and other issues that are productivity-killers. While the development of a single "data lake" remains a hot buzzword, it seems too many organizations have gone the opposite direction and developed numerous "data ponds" which has impeded overall productivity and created a "data swamp."

This whitepaper drills down to the heart of document management, surfacing statistics on how organizations in nine different countries are managing company information and how they are facing the challenges presented by their ever-increasing store of data.

...workers are dealing with several different interfaces, which slows user adoption and **decreases efficiency and productivity.**

🗄 DATA REPOSITORIES

Information stores are growing at an exponential pace. If dealing with large and growing amounts of information wasn't difficult enough, that information is often scattered across a variety of different systems and repositories — including shared network drives, email, traditional document management and enterprise content management (ECM) systems, file-sharing services, ERP and CRM just to name a few.

Many older legacy systems are essentially on life support and being phased out, while others are new services with frequent updates. Confusing matters further, workers are dealing with several different interfaces, which slows user adoption and decreases efficiency and productivity. In short, today's business information environment is messy, complex and expensive, both in terms of the costs of the actual systems and the necessary IT resources to maintain them.

Information Storage

The increasing store of company information continues to be scattered across multiple systems and repositories. But where exactly do companies tend to store their company documents? Which systems and repositories dominate the enterprise landscape?

Respondents were asked:

"TO THE BEST OF YOUR KNOWLEDGE, WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING SYSTEMS AND REPOSITORIES DOES YOUR ORGANIZATION USE TO STORE AND MANAGE DOCUMENTS AND OTHER INFORMATION?"

69%
Store and manage documents out of their email inbox

55%
Rely on shared network drives and traditional folder structures

Only 24%
Use a document management system

4 repositories
On average, respondents indicated that their organization uses 4 repositories to store and manage documents and other information.

Predictably, the most likely location used by respondents' organizations is email, cited by 69% of respondents, followed by shared network drives and folders (55%) and/or information saved locally to desktop or laptop (54%). Needless to say, using email as a makeshift storehouse for company information presents tremendous inefficiencies in searching for and finding the right document at the right time, as email systems tend to be inherently primitive in their contextualization of attachments and documents.

Only around one in four (24%) report the use of enterprise document management systems within their organization. On average, respondents identified four systems and/or repositories that their organization uses to store and manage documents and other information.

It's interesting to note the correlation between an enterprise document management solution and lower levels of difficulty in finding recent versions of a document. Respondents from Switzerland (33%), Finland (32%) and Sweden (28%) are the most likely to report the use of an enterprise document management system and are among the most likely to report less difficulty in finding the correct version of a document, displaying the positive impact such a system might have.

Email — arguably the least-equipped system to manage large volumes of company information — is the most prevalent repository for company documents.

Number of Systems and Locations of Information

On average, respondents must search 2 different repositories to find the most current version of a document or file with the majority (82%) of these respondents reporting that navigating through different systems and locations to find and verify the most current versions of documents or files has a negative impact on their productivity.

Furthermore, 91% agree that their job would be easier if they could quickly find and access the most current version of a document without having to worry about which system or repository it resides in.

By all accounts, workers are almost unanimous that benefits would be realized if all documents could be searched for in one place, and it makes perfect sense. With an intelligent information management platform, information could be contextualized and presented in a single interface rather than strewn across the information ecosystem. Documents could then be accessed in the same place, regardless of where they are physically stored.

2 Average number of different systems or locations that respondents have to search to find the most current version of a document or file.

82% Say navigating through different systems and locations to verify the most current versions of documents negatively affects productivity.

91% Agree that their job would be easier if they could quickly find and access the most current version of a document without having to worry about which system or repositiory it resides in.

Number of Systems and Locations of Information

Just under nine in ten (88%) respondents would find it beneficial to be able to reliably search for documents in one place, regardless of where they happen to be stored. This is also reflected across respondents from all countries, with the highest proportion (93%) being respondents from the US.

It is perhaps not surprising then, when looking at the reported use of enterprise document management systems, that only 22% of respondents from the US report that their organization uses an enterprise document management system. There is an obvious need to simplify document search capabilities for employees, which will have benefits not only for the company but for its employees too in their day-to-day functions.

88% Would benefit if they could reliably search for their documents from one place, regardless of where they happen to be stored.

24% percentage of companies who reported use of an enterprise document management system.

Finding Documents

With the growing number of disconnected silos that workers must sift through to find information, searching for and locating documents can be a challenge that poses a threat to productivity. The question then becomes: How easy is it for workers to find the most pertinent version of the document they need? Workers were asked:

When it comes to searching the repositories/ systems for documents and information while working in the office, what is your general experience?

46% say it's challenging or always challenging to find the right information.

Disturbingly, nearly half of workers report that searching their repositories and systems and finding the right information is burdensome and time-consuming.

This seemingly small problem can have a huge impact, considering how it's amplified throughout a large workforce. Most of an office worker's life is spent working with various company documents. Thus, it can be reasonably concluded that the pervasive challenges from that 46% of respondents in finding documents must be having an impact.

46% of workers find it sometimes or almost always challenging to find the information they're looking for.

Document Access in Line of Business Applications

The typical company, large or small, depends on several different enterprise applications to ensure that employees can complete critical, daily tasks. Apps like those for enterprise resource planning, customer relationship management, HR solutions, and accounting software have become commonplace in corporate settings. Doing things any other way is archaic, at this point. But SaaS sprawl leads to information sprawl. There are no two ways about it.

Microsoft Office Suite is the business application that respondents are most likely (61%) to be using in their day-to-day role, and 42% use file-hosting systems. On average, respondents identified three line of business applications that they use in their day-to-day role.
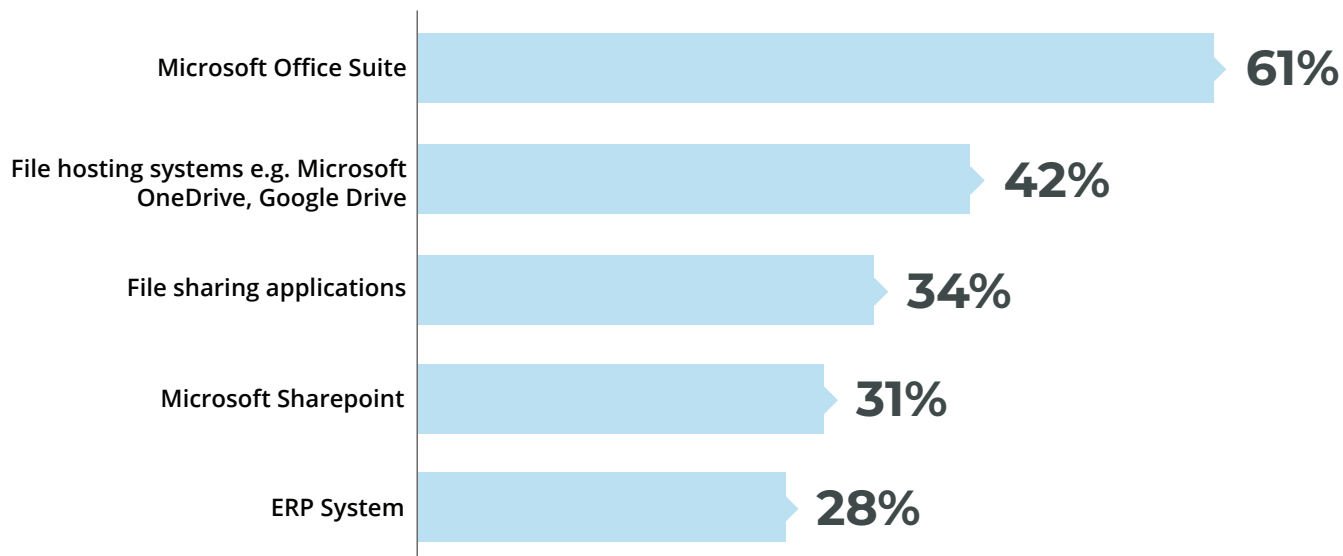
Aside from the obvious user-level inconvenience of having to navigate between several different systems and applications to manage information, the problem of multiple information repositories can be more far-reaching and drastic. Usually, separate data repositories are not effectively integrated with one another. This creates an information ecosystem governed by independent, disconnected silos.

It may, on the surface, make sense to have similar content exist in multiple systems — as a customer contract, for example, may reside in

the CRM with another copy saved in an ERP that Accounts Receivable uses to track payments. But, in the absence of a unified enterprise information system that connects disparate repositories, this duplication of information can become burdensome and unwieldy. Users are left to search multiple systems and then wonder if they have the latest version. In addition, from an IT standpoint the problem becomes the unnecessary use of information storage and an overall disparity in information systems.

Furthermore, organizations with multiple disconnected systems fail to get the best value out of their information due to the lack of context. These systems fail to share metadata characteristics with each other and thus further the divide between them. The solution to these problems often lies in an information management platform with a unified metadata layer that connects and contextualizes information across multiple repositories. As an example, with a sophisticated document management platform, a stored document can draw context from multiple data locations — customer information from the CRM, related documents from network folders, assigned employees from an HR system. It seems intuitive that anything organizations can do to make their employee's lives easier will surely benefit not only the employee, but the organization as a whole also.

"WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING LINE OF BUSINESS APPLICATIONS DO YOU USE IN YOUR DAY-TO-DAY ROLE?"

Application	Percentage
Microsoft Office Suite	61%
File hosting systems e.g. Microsoft OneDrive, Google Drive	42%
File sharing applications	34%
Microsoft Sharepoint	31%
ERP System	28%

DATA REPOSITORIES RECAP:
BY THE NUMBERS

Employees have to search through at least **two** systems to find needed information.

CLICK TO TWEET

82% say that navigating through different systems/locations for the most current versions of documents negatively affects productivity.

CLICK TO TWEET

88% say they'd benefit if they could reliably search for their documents in one place, regardless of where they're stored.

CLICK TO TWEET

91% say their job would be easier if they could quickly access the most current document version without having to worry about where it resides.

CLICK TO TWEET

81% say it would be beneficial to see documents in context.

CLICK TO TWEET

83% say it would be beneficial to link documents back to the information stored in line of business applications.

CLICK TO TWEET

The most likely line of business applications used are **Microsoft Office Suite** (61%), followed by **file hosting systems** (42%).

CLICK TO TWEET

CONCLUSION

Clearly the research supports the notion that workers across the globe still have nagging issues when it comes to the most basic document management functions — issues that will worsen as time goes on and the store of information gets larger. Businesses face a multitude of pressures — some of which can be mitigated by a simple information management strategy. A few of these challenges that could be assuaged include the weight of:

- Keeping up with the demands of an everchanging workforce, one that includes millennials and digital natives that carry expectations of a flexible/mobile work environment.
- Gaining a competitive advantage through the ability to attract and retain the best young talent.
- Optimizing productivity, especially by freeing up key personnel to work on mission-critical or strategic tasks rather than spending an inordinate amount of time searching for the correct information.
- Ensuring compliance and auditability in an environment of mounting regulations like GDPR.
- Safeguarding quality standards with a traceable and auditable document trail that can be called upon in minutes rather than days.

Unless information management issues are addressed in an intentional and meaningful way, companies will continue to suffer from less-than-optimal productivity.

The Solution to the Problem
The good news is that there is a solution for organizations seeking to modernize the way they manage documents. All the challenges faced by the employees surveyed in this research and those billions of others around the world can be mitigated by an intelligent information management system. Think about the issues cited in this research:

- Finding documents easily
- Locating the most recent version of a document
- Document chaos caused by scattering of

information across several repositories
- The process for reviewing, approving and signing documents
- Enabling the mobile workforce to manage documents away from the office
- The risks of personal device and file-sharing app use
- Contextualization of documents

Every single one of these issues has a single solution — an intelligent information management platform. Documents are the lifeblood of an organization and fast, secure access to the correct versions of documents can be the difference between success and failure. Research from Forrester suggests that 70% of organizations have a poor content strategy — if at all. Companies cannot afford to settle for the status quo and let the problem get worse.

Document Management: Integral to Digital Transformation (and the ability to compete) Information systems are the foundation of modern IT. Thus, integral to any digital transformation initiative is the implementation of a flexible and intelligent information system. Yet, while digital technology is opening the door to completely new ways of doing business, some organizations flounder in their ambitions and instead stand pat without improving existing ways of operating. Some $2 trillion dollars will be spent annually worldwide on digital transformation technologies, according to analysts, while as many as 70% of enterprises polled admit that they don't have a coherent plan.[2]

Over the past few years, document management strategies have progressed significantly, driven by other trends in the IT market and the more widespread use of intelligent information management systems. Organizations that do not embrace digital transformation will be less likely to outclass competitors and reach the pinnacles of their markets. Modernized document management is central to the digital workplace and the adjustments necessary to compete.

METHODOLOGY

M-Files commissioned a survey of 1,500 office workers to understand several factors related to how their organizations manage company information and the challenges encountered when accessing and managing corporate information.

The survey was conducted by independent market research firm Vanson Bourne. Respondents' organizations varied in size, ranging from small-to-medium sized businesses (SMBs) to large enterprises, and came from a broad range of industries. In addition, the respondent group represented constituents from nine countries and a variety of business departments.

Specific lines of questioning were deployed around four primary areas of interest:

1. **General Document Management:** The overall end-user experience of managing company documents

2. **Document Management on the Move:** Accessing and managing company information from off-site locations with mobile devices
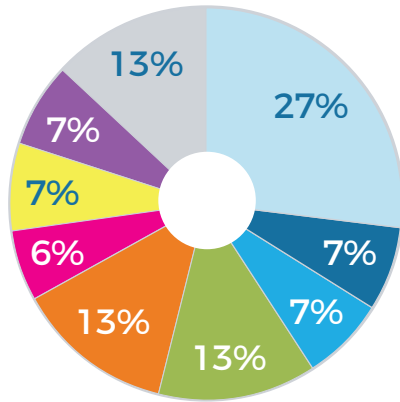
3. **Data Repositories:** Managing company information contained in multiple systems and silos

4. **Artificial Intelligence (AI):** The perception and use of AI to contextualize company information
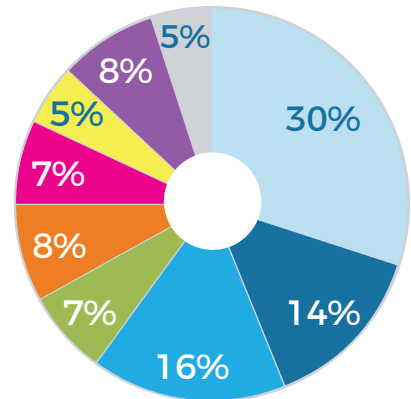
DEMOGRAPHICS
1,500 TOTAL RESPONDENTS

RESPONDENT COUNTRY

- USA — 27%
- Finland — 7%
- Sweden — 7%
- UK — 13%
- Germany — 13%
- Australia/New Zealand — 6%
- Switzerland — 7%
- Austria — 7%
- France — 13%

Legend:
- USA
- Finland
- Sweden
- UK
- Germany
- Australia/New Zealand
- Switzerland
- Austria
- France

COMPANY INDUSTRY

- Professional Services — 30%
- Construction/Property — 14%
- Consumer Services — 16%
- Energy/Utilities — 7%
- Manufacturing/Production — 8%
- Public Sector — 5%
- Other — 7%
- Technology/Telecom — 8%
- Retail/Distribution — 5%

Legend:
- Professional Services
- Construction/Property
- Consumer Services
- Energy/Utilities
- Manufacturing/Production
- Public Sector
- Retail/Distribution
- Technology/Telecom
- Other
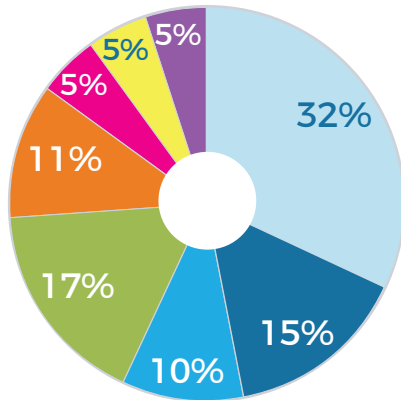
RESPONDENT DEPARTMENT

- Operations — 32%
- Quality/Compliance — 10%
- Sales and Marketing — 17%
- Finance/Purchasing — 11%
- Human Resources — 5%
- Information Technology — 5%
- Legal — 5%
- Other — 15%

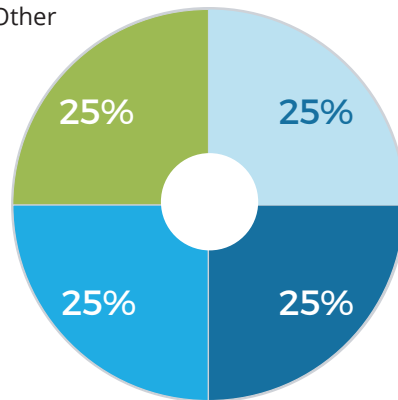Legend:
- Operations
- Quality/Compliance
- Sales and Marketing
- Finance/Purchasing
- Human Resources
- Information Technology
- Legal
- Other
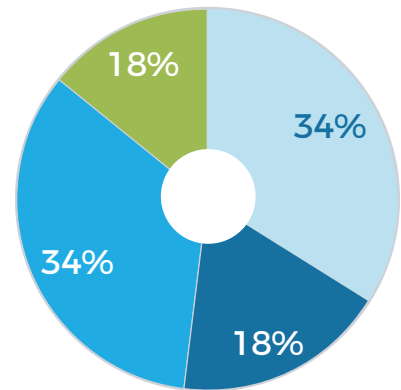
WORK EXPERIENCE

- 1-5 Years — 18%
- 5-10 Years — 18%
- 10-20 Years — 34%
- More than 20 Years — 34%

Legend:
- 1-5 Years
- 5-10 Years
- 10-20 Years
- More than 20 Years

COMPANY EMPLOYEE COUNT

- 101-250 Employees — 25%
- 251-500 Employees — 25%
- 501-1,000 Employees — 25%
- 1,000-3,000 Employees — 25%

Legend:
- 101-250 Employees
- 251-500 Employees
- 501-1,000 Employees
- 1,000-3,000 Employees

SOURCES

[1] Webster, Melissa. *Bridging the Information Worker Productivity Gap: New Challenges and Opportunities for IT.* IDC, Sept. 2012.

[2] *Kimura, Akihiro et. al. Worldwide Semiannual Digital Transformation Spending Guide.* IDC, July 2018.

FUJIFILM

For more information or detailed specifications, please call or visit us at

FUJIFILM Business Innovation Vietnam Co., Ltd

Head Office
12th Floor, Vincom Center
72 Le Thanh Ton, Dist.1, HCMC
Tel: (84-8) 3829 0038
Fax: (84-8) 3829 0032

Hanoi Branch
14th Floor, VCCI Tower
9 Dao Duy Anh, Dong Da Dist., Hanoi
Tel: (84-24) 38 241 063
Fax: (84-24) 38 241 113

Hai Phong Branch
5th Floor, TD Office Building
20A Le Hong Phong, Ngo Quyen Dist., Hai Phong
Tel: (84-225) 3859 236
Fax: (84-225) 3859 239

Da Nang Branch
3rd Floor, Danabook Building
76-78 Bach Dang, Hai Chau Dist., Danang
Tel: (84-236) 3892 896
Fax: (84-236) 3892 895

fujifilm.com/fbvn