

1 Purpose of this Standard

This document outlines the purpose for having standards and guidelines that are written, vetted, published, and supported by individuals and organizations across Canada.

2 Risks of non-compliance

Some of the risks of not having, or not complying with these standards are:

- A lack of consistency within the field creating communication and expectation barriers
- Lost or inaccurate data for reporting
- Lost or inaccurate data for decision making
- Lack of trust in data, requiring users of the data to perform additional investigations, and invitations to duplicate data in multiple areas
- Fragmented data files, which could include documentation or data that has not been kept up to date with small changes, or the current version of a file that is a marked up version
- Poor integration of external system to manage data and metadata, requiring duplication of efforts
- Duplicated efforts often rely on human interface, which introduces additional quality concerns
- Delayed data capture by downstream information users
- Reduced ability to request and process incoming data from third party contractors
- Rework in recreating data that has been lost or was never provided from contractors
- Loss of version control if files are created and numbered differently
- Reduced ability to properly report on outstanding articles and deliverables
- Reduced ability to manage change to an asset or within a project, relating to ease of integrating change into all data

3 Why is it so important to create standards in Document Management?

Governing agencies are requiring more extensive and comprehensive documentation to show compliance with their standards and requirements. In addition, organizations are beginning to shift their value focus from annual revenue to how efficient, safe and reliable they can be. This is determined by many as their loss of value during audits, public disasters, loss of lives, and other litigation costs.

As a result, organizations are pushing the internally and externally generated requirements into their contractors or suppliers, without understanding the consequences of that action; causing rising costs of supply to accommodate the demand and a scramble to provide documentation and data deliverables with little consideration for the actual quality of content, approval requirements, authentication process or management.

Courts often require evidence of due diligence, not only documented processes and procedures, but proof of practice as well. See Canada Evidence Act Section on Business Records to be Admitted in Evidence (Section 30 of current act) and Electronic Documents (Section 31 of current act)

Public pushback on environmental and safety issues can cause delays or even cancellation of projects. Rather, with documentation or digital data provided, showing all possible improvements and safeguards

have been done, particularly in safety, quality, environmental impact, and risk mitigation, such projects have a greater chance of proceeding.

Liability concerns are rising as companies tend to allow free rein the creation of a multitude of forms and documentation with little regard to the traceability or cohesion of the data contained therein.

There is a shift in the type of contracts between companies, as distrust is rampant due to the lack of establishing documentation and data deliverable expectations; creating a “want more for less” demand. This will damage many companies through no fault of their own, unless they have established standards of deliverables to rely on.

Concurrent work and projects are common place, and currently the confusion, cost, and schedule impacts have to be written into the project plan as a norm.

4 So what is Document and Data Management?

Document Management is the principal authority that encompasses and governs all the divisions (elements) within the field of service that manages the expectations for creation, manipulation, approval, and distribution of hard copy and electronic documentation to fulfill the end user’s information requirements, prior to it becoming a record for archiving. It is more than the commonly termed ‘Document Control’, and a completely different service to Records and Information Management.

Data Management considers the movement and integration of the digital data bytes and metadata with the needs of multiple users and the relevant documentation to support their activities.

Document and Data Management is the overall workflow of documentation and information within, and external to, an organization. It covers aspects such as identifying documentation deliverables and expectations at the beginning of a project. Thereafter, utilizing scoping tools to ensure adequate resources are available and properly trained. This ultimately encourages and provides a platform for cross-functional communication and understanding, and systemizes the progression of any given project.

Document Management takes all departments and divisions into consideration when establishing naming conventions, system structures and inter departmental touch points. It is the umbrella that lays the foundation for the systems of quality and documentation governance for Document Control, Corporate Document Control, Vendor Document Control and Native Drawing File Management.

5 What steps are needed to resolve this widespread problem?

There are three main components of the solution to this situation:

5.1 Education

Education is a key factor for most people who want to perform their job functions to the best of their abilities. Providing training, education and support will greatly benefit Document Controllers who have been working at it for years as well as individuals new to this service, or for those wanting to progress into a new career. CDDMA, through education requirements and mentorship, is establishing this new career

that is based on a cross-functional and technical approach, delving into elements that have previously been left untouched, and have resulted in errors in communication.

Document Controllers who have been around for years have been exposed to many situations. Once exposed to and trained in the specifics of all the different divisions, they will be better able to utilize that experience and apply the combination to the real world.

5.2 National Certification in Document Management

The CDDMA certification has two main goals;

- The education, training and mentorship of resources
- The establishment of best in class practices and standards in Documentation Management.

The concept is simple - provide a vast pool of resources who understand the best practices, and create a platform for ingraining sound standards for all organizations to aspire to.

This will provide a gauge for employers to understand the level of competence they can expect from their employee or prospective employee. Currently in Document Control, the number of years of service does not always equate to number of years of growth in expertise.

If an employer can utilize an internal resource or external consultant to identify what type of Document Management division pertains to their needs, and there are industry standard specific job descriptions for those roles, then the certification ensures growth and training to the point they can hire a Junior, Intermediate or Senior Document Manager and confidently understand the capabilities of that individual.

5.3 Company Standard Procedures, Processes and Understanding

Companies have the most to gain in the understanding of what Document and Data Management is, both from an operational perspective as well as from an employer perspective, to ensure they support the creation and management of appropriate processes that ultimately provide protection and resiliency in the organization.

When it comes to operations, to understand Document Management is to understand the need for the systems and standards that not only create an environment where your core business can thrive minimizing miscommunication, but it also means that the necessary processes are in place to ensure a good quality operation, ultimately leading to more cost effective and efficient systems designed to protect all essential components of your company.

CDDMA provides standards and guidelines for the best practices of Document and Data Management to assist organizations by providing a platform upon which to build their own procedures.

6 What about Records Management?

Records and Information Management is a vital part to many companies, and there has been training in this field for many years as well as governance through ARMA International (formerly Association of Records Managers and Administrators), but a record is information that is at the end of its lifespan, not

concerning its entire lifecycle which includes the method of creation, content quality control, and approval.

Records Management is critical to the proper long term storage, retrieval and destruction of records, in accordance with statutory and governing standards.

7 Conclusion

This is an exciting turning point in the field of Documentation Management and a much needed one. It will not only bring companies into a more competitive position globally, but will assist Canada in surpassing other countries who may have started down a similar path, and especially those that have not recognized the importance of Document and Data Management and Control.