# HOW TO ASSESS
SCANNING & CAPTURE
REQUIREMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

From the beginning of time, there has been a need to capture information for various reasons. We use the captured information to communicate, and share ideas and history with others, evolving from hieroglyphics to modern day content in both paper and digitally-born form. To manage the capture of paper-based information, imaging is the tool used to scan and connect the paper world of the past with the present. All of this effort in capturing and managing information revolves around the desire to organize and find those bits of information deemed to have business value. In the following chart taken from a recent AIIM survey, The Paper Free Office – dream or reality, we see some of the drivers for scanning and capture initiatives in an organization.
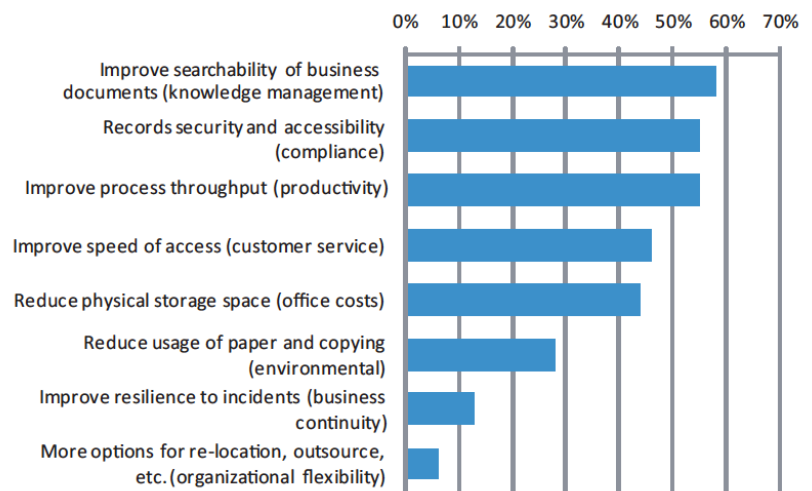
Of course like many initiatives that change the way you work with information, there are challenges. Resistance to change the way work is done, perceptions of legal admissibility and usability for audits, a lack of trust in the technology, and identifying who will perform the capture and where it will be performed are all potential barriers and the foundation for developing strategic capture requirements. In order to make a proper assessment, you should map and document your processes along with the types and sources of content associated with those processes.

In the following pages I will provide insights on the following topics:

- Capture Strategies
- Imaging
- Benefits of Imaging
- Organizational issues

Here you will gain insight onto how the pieces fit together and the challenges you face in making changes and in focusing your organization to move forward.

CAPTURE STRATEGIES

The first step in addressing scanning and capture is to know what types of content are stored, the format it is in, and where it resides in your organization. While identifying the type and format may seem like a difficult task, in many organizations it is finding where it resides that presents the most daunting task. Some possibilities include databases, individuals' desktop computers (this is particularly challenging given how disperse and numerous your employees might be), intranets, extranets, and public websites. All tend to store content that is duplicative leading to an additional task which is determining the value of what is found and the decision of what to keep and what to discard.

Things to consider and ask as you develop your strategy include, but are not limited to:

- How much content you have
- The types of content you have and the relative value of that content
- What content needs to be scanned, archived, retained, or deleted
- Who "owns" the content in order to determine proper security, roles, and permissions
- Who or what creates content in order to properly tag/index and otherwise contextualize and enrich content

As a result of this, you should create a content model that maps out the strategy and elements of what should be scanned and captured as well as when, where, and who will do the scanning and capture function.

CONVERSION

Conversion is more commonly found in discussions of scanning paper and converting it into digital form, otherwise called imaging. Today the term can be used to describe not only scanning but the conversion of files from one format to another. As an example, converting a word file to a PDF format is part of the conversion process.

When referring to scanning or imaging there are many considerations to make when assessing the effort and tasks needed to achieve the goal of converting paper to digital form.
These include:

- Document preparation – staple and paper clip removal, paper condition, color and sizes, and whether they should be scanned in batches, which requires sorting

- Scanning – the act of scanning is dependent upon the type of device chosen which could be a flatbed, sheet-fed, large format, book scanner, and even specialty scanners designed for checks

- Use of recognition technology – this technology is designed to streamline indexing the content you have captured through the use of bar codes, optical character recognition (OCR), and forms processing used to extract information from the image and populate the index fields with metadata

There are many ways to scan and capture paper-based content and the option is there to do this in-house or even outsource to a service bureau specializing in the capture of paper-based documents. In developing your requirements, conversion of both electronic and paper-based files needs to be part of the discussion and support the long-term preservation of your organizational content.

BENEFITS OF IMAGING

Many organizations struggle to find ROI in their assessments related to scanning and capture initiatives. This may seem like the logical approach, but it often overlooks additional benefits that may not be so obvious yet provide significant organizational benefits that include:

- Reduced risk around document disclosure
- Improved audit efficiency
- Reduced paper costs
- Increased employee efficiency

Looking closer, in an AIIM survey on scanning, we found that:

- On average, more than 15% of floor space in offices is taken up by filing cabinets: the research shows that the introduction of a DM system is likely to reduce this by 35%.

- A DM system can reduce routine copying and filing activities in an HR department by 25%.

- Invoice Automation can halve the time taken to approve and process payments and reduce the number of lost invoices by 66% (Aberdeen: 56% more efficient).

- Electronic processing of delivery documentation can reduce the time taken chasing and sorting documents by 46%, and halve the number of lost documents.

ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUES

The term organizational issue conjures visions of change management and resistance to change but organizational issues in relation to capture and capture requirements includes whether or not you should use centralized or distributed capture. If you choose distributed and plan to capture content in the field, you need to assess if the skills and technology to support this function are in place. Additionally, are the remote locations and their devices integrated with the line-of-business applications and content management solutions?
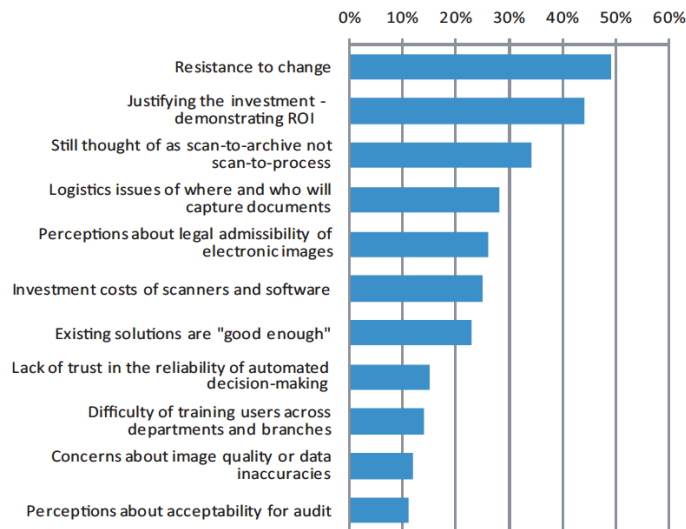

What would you say are the biggest barriers to greater strategic adoption of scanning and capture in your organization? Max. THREE. *Source: Document Scanning and Capture: Local, Central, Outsource - What's Working Best?*

If you choose centralized capture, typically used for high-volume environments, you would have multiple scan stations heavily automated with well-tuned capture and quality control tasks. Some examples of centralized capture include:

- The Insurance industry - high-value transaction-related documents such as claims
- Human resources – high volume of incoming applications and resumes, and payroll tax forms
- Legal departments - during eDiscovery, paper volumes may be huge
- Finance departments - high volume for invoices, purchase orders, and remittance processing

The following chart shows those areas of ROI in relation to capture, document types, and processes. The length of the bar indicates where organizations use Capture technologies and the color indicates the perceived success rate / ROI of each process. Here we see a good result with almost all processes or content types producing around 60% "Excellent" or "Good" scores, invoice processing being narrowly ahead at 68%.
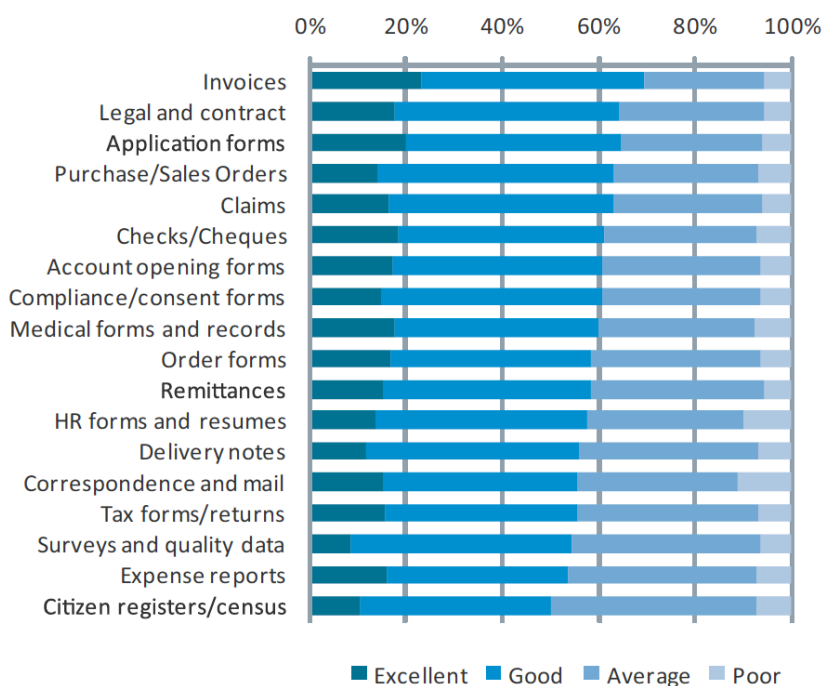
How would you rate the success (ROI, service improvement, etc.) of the following processes/document types? *Source*: Document Scanning and Capture: Local, Central, Outsource - What's Working Best?

Most popular;

- Legal documents and contracts
- Correspondence
- Invoices

The decision you make in relation to your organizational issues and challenges will be based on when and where you want to capture information as well as volume. Small volumes might benefit from distributed capture while high-volume environments would benefit from centralized capture.

CONCLUSION

Developing a capture strategy is an important element of an ECM environment and in order to develop your strategy, detailed requirements gathering is essential. This is not an easy task and takes a lot of time, planning, and focus. In order to develop your requirements identify:

- What content and information you have stored
- Where the information resides
- Who owns this information
- When and where should it be captured
- How should it be captured and who will perform the capture function

Once you have gathered your requirements, developed a strategy, and implemented your plan, you should take time and periodically assess whether it is still relevant and how it can be improved.

ABOUT AIIM

Here at AIIM, we believe that information is your most important asset and we want to teach you the skills to manage it. We've felt this way since 1943, back when this community was founded.

Sure, the technology has come a long way since then and the variety of information we're managing has changed a lot, but one tenet has remained constant. We've always focused on the intersection of people, processes, and information. We help organizations put information to work.

AIIM is a non-profit organization that provides independent research, training, and certification for information professionals. **Visit us at www.aiim.org**.

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