LONG-TERM
ARCHIVING SOLUTIONS
FOR YOUR BUSINESS

Data archiving is an integral part of any business's record management process. As millions of business documents are produced daily, finding a way to store them can be a daunting task, and the repercussions of not storing them correctly can bear serious consequences for your business in the future. Industries that play a fundamental part in society (such as healthcare, government, education, legal, etc.) all have legal obligations regarding document management and the archiving of certain files. Whether these files are required to be kept by law, or simply because retrieval would be helpful for day-to-day operations, establishing a file archiving process is vital to your organization.

The importance of building an electronic archive for organizations is paramount. Long-term preservation of and access to data files is essential for businesses and should be a standard practice for any given company.

Documents are easily accessible to anyone who is granted access, allowing for a more effective and efficient workflow. Manually managing documents can be extremely time-consuming and costly. With the use of electronic archiving, organizations can devote their resources and employees to more effective tasks and projects, and the cost of physical storage space for paper documents is virtually eradicated. Instant access to important documents eliminates time spent searching for information that can be found in a matter of seconds using electronic archiving. These documents can be found immediately and shared with any employee who needs it. With easy access to these files, businesses can respond to queries more efficiently, helping to build and maintain relationships with clients while establishing deals promptly.

IMPORTANT NOTES FOR PDF ARCHIVING:

1. *Always confirm documents contain a **password**.*

2. *Determine important and relative **metadata**.*

3. *Ensure all **fonts** are embedded.*

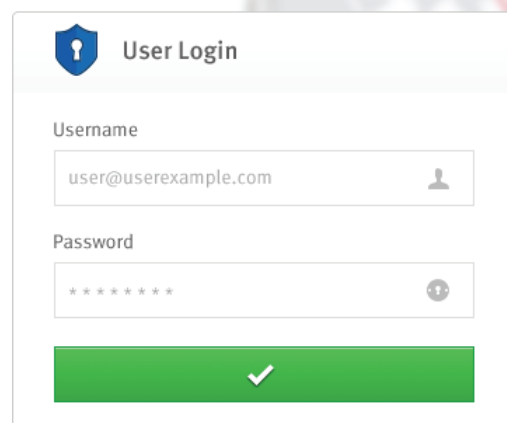4. *Determine a method of **file linking**.*

Many archiving solutions incorporate Optical Character Recognition technology (OCR) which enables users to turn an image of text into searchable and editable data. One of the many benefits of having an OCR system integrated into PDF software is that users are able to edit documents that were originally in paper form. Retrieving information is much easier and more efficient with OCR, limiting the likelihood of losing vital information which otherwise would have been neglected. Paper documents that are scanned and converted to PDF files can be made searchable by the use of OCR technology.

Thus, PDF files are extremely convenient as an archiving format because the text can be obtained through an indexing engine which is available in most record management systems. For example, if a business needs to find all documents containing a certain word, they can search the document database for every mention of that particular word (or sentence). Through the use of semantic search engines, users have the ability to retrieve data based on text meanings as opposed to the exact word. The goal of this type of search is to provide a more accurate and relevant result without the user having to be explicit with their entry. In addition to having easily accessible documents, electronic archiving also reduces the risk of losing important papers, as data is stored permanently.

SECURITY

Having adequate security to protect sensitive documents is imperative. With paper documents, controlling who has access can prove to be very challenging as security is limited. It is the consensus amongst record managers that documents must be accurate and reliable, and any electronic database supporting these documents must preserve their integrity indefinitely. Electronic document archiving systems are designed to monitor users, enhance security, and alleviate any potential losses should a system crash occur. Any activity occurring by electronic means is traceable, meaning data can be collected on who accessed, viewed, or read the document. PDF files contain security settings that work conjointly with electronic systems in ensuring proper file protection. PDF files can be secured with encrypted passwords using complex encryption algorithms. Evidently, the more sophisticated the user is with their security settings, the less susceptible they are to document breaches. Keeping documents safe is at the forefront of any document processing program, so adopting new security features and applications is vital. The way in which Soda PDF has integrated an e-signature service is an excellent example of this.

PDF/A

PDF/A is a version of PDF designed specifically for archiving and preserving electronic documents. It was a project formulated by the Association for Suppliers of Printing, Publishing and Converting Technologies (NPES) and the Association for Information and Image Management in the hopes of creating an international standard that defines the use of PDF in relation to archiving files.

The purpose of this was to address the increasing need to store electronic documents while ensuring all original content could be retrieved in the same format in the future. It prohibits certain PDF features that are detrimental for long-term archiving. Its main purpose is to preserve the original appearance of the file. For example, it allows fonts to be embedded inside the file to allow for exact retrieval in the future, regardless of whether or not the font exists on the device. Some of the other features include encryption, audio/video content, and JavaScript. PDF/A standards aim at maximizing device independence, self-containment, and self-documentation.

Thus, an effective data archiving strategy is a necessary component of every organization. Soda PDF understands the importance of archiving and therefore has created features designed to make storing, searching, and retrieval effortless. From Bates numbering to OCR to PDF/A, Soda PDF ensures that data archived can be acquired at any time, in the same format as originally created. With the help of Soda PDF's intuitive archiving and indexing features, businesses can feel secure storing vital documents for the purposes of long-term data preservation.

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