



Microsoft SharePoint Server and EDRMS

Introduction

The purpose of this Recordkeeping Advice is to:

- provide advice to managers, information and records managers and IT personnel who are contemplating implementing Microsoft SharePoint Server (MOSS) 2007 in their agencies and the implications on managing official records, and
- provide advice on the expanded capabilities of MOSS 2007 when integrated with an electronic document and records management system (EDRMS).

What is MOSS 2007?

MOSS 2007 is Microsoft's Office 2007 server tool. MOSS 2007 is software infrastructure that delivers good workgroup portal and collaboration functionality as well as restricted enterprise search, workflow and reporting functionality when used with MS Office 2007. It also integrates with other programs, servers, and technologies in the MS Office 2007 release. Note, to realise the full potential of the new functions in MOSS 2007 agencies will need to implement/deploy MS Office 2007.

What is an EDRMS?

An EDRMS is a safe, secure and governed information and recordkeeping system that applies business classification, disposal, metadata management and security to enable the capture and management of information and records:

- from creation through to disposal
- from the desktop as part of normal business, and
- content and context metadata, facilitating the efficient management and discovery of digital information and records.

IS MOSS 2007 an EDRMS?

Gartner¹ and Image Process Solutions² analysis indicates that MOSS 2007 is not an EDRMS and cannot replace an enterprise EDRMS solution.

MOSS 2007 can possibly deliver entry-level elements of document management software for small to medium size environments that have no requirement for records management compliance. MOSS 2007 includes basic document control capability but the software lacks key document and records management functionality necessary for wide scale enterprise use.

According to Gartner MOSS 2007 also creates information silos and has a high probability of creating a proliferation of ad-hoc databases, uncontrolled content and unscaleable repositories. Resulting in poor information and records management practice, including compliance, inefficiency and content confusion.

Issues for Information and Records Management

MOSS 2007 does not offer an Information Life Cycle (ILM) Strategy and is not designed to be a records management system and to preserve official records as archives. Both Gartner³ and Image Process Solutions⁴ advise that MOSS 2007 does not perform records management to U.K., Australian or New Zealand standards.

Note, to meet information and records management best practice agencies can implement an EDRMS product from the EDRMS Supply Panel without implementing MOSS 2007.

Meeting South Australian EDRMS Functional Requirements

MOSS 2007 does not meet the following South Australian EDRMS Functional Requirements:

- management and tracking of both physical and electronic documents and records, specifically semi-active and inactive records
- records disposal
- document and records metadata and classification
- conversion of record types, other than those created with MS Office products, to long-term, open preservation formats
- reporting for records management purposes
- electronic recordkeeping storage for automated workflows which would enable documents to be captured as records as part of normal business processes, and
- maintain records in series, consignments, unit for archiving.

Meeting Information and Records Management Best Practice

Best practice information and records management requires classification and metadata to be captured at the beginning of document creation, rather than at the perceived end of value or end of 'in-flight' life. This is the very premise of effective information management - to capture active, current content into the enterprise wide, single content/records system, in a manner that applies appropriate security, audit and search capabilities, without the users having to consider the records management implications.

With MOSS 2007, records management becomes an afterthought, as it allows users to declare documents as records into a separate EDRMS, such as TRIM and Objective, at some indeterminate point in the lifecycle of the document. This not only imposes an additional process at some stage in the lifecycle for users, but also results in poorer document and records quality, as users will have little concern for metadata quality and classification accuracy.

When Should MOSS 2007 Be Used⁵?

MOSS 2007 can be used in agencies to:

- facilitate team collaboration through the use of team 'sites'/workspace
- provide version control of electronic documents created using MS Office products
- provide a single user search portal using Enterprise Search to find and view different types of documents stored potentially across multiple information repositories within an agency
- create workflows based on business activities or processes utilising Windows Workflow Foundation, and

- replace shared and local drives to store documents with document metadata if templates and the server structure are appropriately set-up. Note that if templates and servers are not set up or structured then documents are saved without structure or metadata just like any other MS Office document is on a shared drive. The problem with shared drives is they become silos of poorly controlled and managed content resulting in inefficient searching of whole directories/drives. MOSS 2007 does not address these issues without significant development of document metadata templates and server structures.

Additional Microsoft components ('plug-ins') are available for MOSS 2007 to improve MOSS capability. Although the plug-ins increase the flexibility and functionality of the server application, they also require additional licences and therefore significantly increase the cost of purchase and implementation¹. The following components are additional to the standard MOSS 2007 licence:

- InfoPath Forms with Outlook 2007
- SharePoint Reporting and Excel Services
- Business Data Catalogue (an extension to Enterprise Search)
- Case Management tools based on MS Office products
- Exchange 2007 email integration, and
- MS Project and Project Server²
- SQL Server

MS Office 2007 is a prerequisite for realising the full potential/benefits of MOSS 2007, as it is designed to work seamlessly with MOSS 2007. Agencies utilising MS Office 2003 or MS Office XP will experience issues utilising the new MOSS 2007 functionality. Note agencies upgrading to MS Office 2007 may need to also upgrade or replace PCs to provide the required capacity and capability needed to run MS Office 2007.

MOSS 2007 and Digital Rights Management

Digital Rights Management (DRM) refers to technology that allows the creator/provider of digital information to control when and how that information is used. It consists of a set of technologies designed to apply and enforce persistent access restrictions to digital information, as specified by the information creator/provider.

State Records is concerned that the use of DRM technology may prevent South Australian State and Local Government from managing and accessing official records of government in accordance with the *State Records Act 1997*.

MOSS 2007 supports DRM on documents stored in document lists and libraries. DRM is an optional component of SharePoint lists and libraries. Care should be taken when implementing MOSS 2007 that deployment of DRM facilities does not occur other than by intent. Inadvertent installation of DRM technology could result in serious information and records access and preservation issues.

For further information regarding DRM technology and the potential risks to records management for agencies considering implementation of DRM please refer to Recordkeeping Advice *Digital Rights Management - Implications for Recordkeeping*.⁶

¹ With the exception of Project Server, the additional listed components can be included in an Enterprise licence of SharePoint Server at additional cost.

² Project Server is separately licensed.

Integrating MOSS 2007 with EDRMS³

Some of the benefits of integrating MOSS 2007 with an EDRMS include:

- information and records are captured and managed in a corporate information system that is safe, secure and governed
- records are preserved
- disposal requirements are supported
- content can be captured automatically (through business rules) or interactively
- records can be archived automatically through business rules
- team collaboration through the use of team 'sites'/workspace
- a single view of results through either the MOSS2007 enterprise search or the EDRMS enterprise search, and
- compliance with the State Records Act by agencies.

State Records has established the South Australian Government EDRMS Supply Panel. Some EDRMS solutions include a plug-in for integrating with MOSS 2007. Agencies wishing to provide the collaboration and portal capabilities of MOSS 2007 to their users while ensuring the capture of and access to discoverable records, and compliance with the *State Records Act* should speak to the EDRMS Panel suppliers regarding this facility.

To implement MOSS to capture documents and records at the desktop Agencies will need to:

- integrate a South Australian Government compliant EDRMS, at the backend
- establish and implement appropriate policies and procedures to meet business and compliance requirements.
- licence the MOSS Business Data Catalogue module to obtain full search capability through Enterprise Search function if the EDRMS enterprise search facility is not being deployed. The Business Data Catalogue module extends the search and metadata validation to external databases such as customers, properties or asset databases
- improve MOSS 2007's limited metadata capability by setting up:
 - document templates to capture basic document metadata
 - document centres with required metadata as columns, versioning rules, etc. and
 - document content types, which facilitates relating documents and folder to disposal classification.

Note agencies do not need to implement MOSS 2007 to use MS Office 2007 products with an EDRMS. Both EDRMS Panel products, without the implementation of MOSS 2007, integrate directly with core MS Office 2007 products and contain robust workflow functionality that meet government functional requirements for EDRMS solutions.

Further Information

Agencies considering integrating MOSS 2007 with a Government compliant EDRMS should speak to the South Australian EDRMS Panel suppliers.

For further information about MOSS 2007, please refer to the end-notes of this advice.

³ MOSS 2007 is not the only software tool available on the market that enables users to store and manage documents from the desktop and integrates with EDRMS.

¹ Gartner Consulting Research document: *SharePoint for Content Management Revisited*. 17 August, 2007 ID Number G00150828.

² Image Process Solutions, *Analysis of MOSS 2007 against Australian Records Management Standards*. July 2007.

³ Gartner Consulting Research document: *SharePoint for Content Management Revisited*. 17 August, 2007 ID Number G00150828.

⁴ Image Process Solutions, *Analysis of MOSS 2007 against Australian Records Management Standards*. July 2007.

⁵ Microsoft Corporation, *Introduction to Microsoft Office SharePoint Server 2007*. (accessed August 2007); TechRepublic, *Introduction to Microsoft SharePoint Server 2007*. July 2007

⁶ Microsoft Corporation, Information Rights Management in Windows SharePoint Services Overview. (accessed June 2007)