

S T O R A G E 2 0 0 5



# Solving the INFORMATION LIFE CYCLE MANAGEMENT Puzzle

**W**ho could have guessed what a nightmare the dream of a paperless office would turn out to be? Not only is there more paper than ever, but digital data has flooded the office landscape. The scene in the 1973 movie "Sleeper," where Woody Allen frantically tries to beat back an advancing lava-like flow of pudding with a broom, is an apt metaphor for the challenge IT professionals face today.

Early in Paul Stonchus's 25-year IT career, for example, the focus was on moving data progressively through tiered layers of increasingly remote but less expensive storage options — a practice known as hierarchical storage management (HSM). Today, Stonchus, first vice president and data center manager at MidAmerica Bank, relies on a strategy for organizing data known as ILM, or information life cycle management. ILM is more than just storage, he says. It's a key business initiative that reduces costs and increases the value of information assets at the \$9.4 billion Chicago-based bank. For that reason, managing corporate

information assets with ILM has become a primary responsibility for business executives as well as IT leaders.

## BETTER THAN A BROOM

"While the cost of storage for hardware has steadily declined," he says, "managing the infinite or ever-growing amounts of data that businesses generate without an ILM strategy would be extremely difficult. Being able to archive data intelligently has helped us to plateau our storage requirements, especially for imaging and e-mail systems. The paybacks are huge — not just from a dollars and cents perspective, but also from a manageability standpoint."

And yet, ILM is a loaded term for many storage vendors and users. An initiative

that storage makers once promoted as "HSM on steroids" has now taken

on a different meaning. "ILM is a robust information management practice," says Sheila Childs, chair of the Data Management Forum for the Storage Networking Industry Assn. (SNIA), in San Francisco. "It is designed to help companies better manage their information environment through archiving, security, and compliance."

When polled, most storage and business decision makers express disinterest in ILM. Yet when they reveal their current storage challenges, it turns out that a majority of respondents are involved in storage projects designed to achieve ILM's main goals: cost reduction and value enrichment.

Storage companies say that approximately 70% of their customers embrace archiving, compliance, and security tools and practices with the goal of containing storage costs that are skyrocketing. Experts estimate that the volume of stored data grows dramatically each year, with increases ranging up to

“For most of these companies, deciding how to employ the components of ILM is an optimization exercise. What changes can they make to get the most from their data and storage technologies?”

Chuck Hollis,  
EMC Corp.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

CO-PRODUCED BY SNIA AND COMPUTERWORLD  
[WWW.SNWUSA.COM](http://WWW.SNWUSA.COM)

### Storage Networking World

Apr. 3-6, 2006

Manchester Grand Hyatt  
San Diego, Calif.

### Storage Networking World

Oct. 30-Nov. 2, 2006

Orlando, Fla.

### Storage Networking World

Apr. 16-19, 2007

Manchester Grand Hyatt  
San Diego, Calif.

## UPCOMING SNIA EVENTS

[www.snia.org](http://www.snia.org)

### Management Developers Conference

Dec. 5-8, 2005

Santa Clara, Calif.

### SNIA Winter Symposium

Jan. 23-27, 2006

San Jose, Calif.

### Enterprise Information World

Feb. 28-Mar. 2, 2006

The Meadowlands  
East Rutherford, N.J.

traditional, tiered storage-management approaches to these new strategies.”

### GETTING THE MOST FROM THE TOOLS

Storage companies offer a variety of storage hardware, archiving software, and other technologies to support a company's ILM strategy. But technology isn't the whole story. Well executed, ILM can be a robust information management practice — one that allows companies to better manage their storage environment while enhancing security and compliance. To ensure that this practice is properly managed, organizations such as SNIA are working to re-educate the market to the need for ILM policies and processes, not just tools. Even storage vendors are quick to point out that maximizing ILM means adjusting business processes and methodologies. “Today's tools and technologies are easily able to support the enhanced value of information,” says Chuck Hollis, vice president of strategic marketing for information and storage management vendor EMC Corp., in Hopkinton, Mass. “For most of these companies, deciding how to employ the components of ILM is an optimization exercise. What changes can they make to get the most from their data and storage technologies?”

Many customers are reaching out to storage company experts who can help refine business processes and methodologies. “The number of existing professionals with these skills is small,” says Hollis. “Many organizations need to

hire providers to help categorize the information, understand how it is used from end to end throughout the business, and use the tools to automatically apply value to the information and process it according to predefined rules. The key to success in these arrangements is to ensure that the service provider transfers the knowledge to the company's IT staff.”

Looking forward, getting a grasp of ILM fundamentals could make the difference between competitive success and being run out of business by the high cost of complying with regulations and handling litigation requests. “It's not just e-mail, after all,” says Burton. “Many companies are starting to consider strategies related to instant messages, PDF files, and even conversations transmitted through voice-over-IP. It's an exploding amount of data that business and IT executives must be prepared to manage.” Trying to beat it all back with a broom isn't a winning strategy. ■

### WEB DIRECTORY

#### EMC Corp.

<http://www.emc.com>

#### Hewlett-Packard Co.

<http://www.hp.com>

#### Storage Networking Industry Assn.

<http://www.snia.org>

#### Symantec Corp.

<http://www.symantec.com>

#### Produced by

#### The Custom Publishing Group

<http://www.custpub.com>

#### Written by Cheryl Krivda

[cherylkrivda@custpub.com](mailto:cherylkrivda@custpub.com)

#### Designed by Ariel Studio

<http://www.arielstudio.com>

**“ILM is a robust information management practice designed to help companies better manage their information environment through archiving, security, and compliance.”**

**Sheila Childs,  
SNIA**

75% just in 2005. Thanks to burgeoning government and industry regulations, this data must be retained for longer periods – seven years for certain financial data and up to 20 years for some medical records. Moreover, companies must be able to quickly find specific pieces of this information to meet regulations and litigation discovery demands.

The discovery process is slowed by the fact that only about 10% of all corporate data is stored in databases, where it can be retrieved relatively easily. The rest of the data is considered unstructured, which means that it is stored as content without any formal means of easily retrieving it.

#### THE BROADCAST JOKES DON'T HELP

E-mail messages are the best example of the kind of unstructured data that is difficult to find and retrieve. Thanks to e-mail's ubiquity, the volume of e-mail messages (which for regulatory reasons must often be saved) soars each year. As a result, e-mail is a significant contributor to rising storage and retrieval costs.

The City of Oceanside, Calif., recently began using content-archiving software from Symantec Corp., in Cupertino, Calif., to help meet requests for public records. The city of 165,000 residents receives between 9,000 and 12,000 e-mails each day. California legislation grants the public the right to request information, including e-mail messages and attachments, on any topic related to city business, including election filings and results. Says Oceanside CIO Michael Lee

Sherwood: “We recoup the money we spent to purchase and maintain the system if we use it for just a few requests in a year. Since we process roughly 30 requests a year, and more in an election year, the ROI is tremendous.”

The ability to carefully store and efficiently retrieve e-mail is also important because e-mail is often the first target of legal discovery and search processes. “In more and more legal cases, e-mail is the smoking gun,” says Jeremy Burton, senior vice president for the data management group at Symantec. “The amount of money spent on litigation support – especially to disclose information – is huge.”

But cost reduction is just ILM's most obvious benefit. Some storage customers have figured out they can use ILM to create new or additional value from the information assets they already have. Companies in health care, biosciences, oil and gas, and financial services are using existing data to identify customer trends, understand historical data, and discover new business opportunities.

#### BLUE-LIGHT SPECIAL

Fortunately, storage makers are hard at work developing new technologies and different approaches that are designed to meet these critical business needs. Plasmon Inc., in Englewood, Colo., has introduced archiving systems based on Ultra Density Optical (UDO) technology. This high-density technology uses blue lasers to record data on optical media. Like a fine-point pen, blue lasers can write more data in the same space

than traditional red ones.

The new technology allows organizations to save data to rewritable and write-once media (good for data that must be kept forever unchanged) or to compliant write-once media that can be written and shredded once (good for data that you want to eliminate after the required retention period). Its cost is roughly one-fifth that of traditional optical storage.

“UDO provides companies with a secure, permanent, and cost-effective archival storage technology specifically designed to meet growing regulatory and compliance requirements,” says Chris Harris, Plasmon's president.

Being able to retrieve the data promptly also requires that organizations have a methodology in place that will address current and future needs. According to Don Loughlin, director of BrightStor storage management at Computer Associates Inc., in Islandia, N.Y., this methodology should consider three steps. First, companies need to classify their hardware to know what they have. Second, companies must classify their applications by business value, rather than the technology on which they reside. Finally, companies must classify their business processes, determining the value of each to the enterprise and the cost that is acceptable to protect them.

“Storage optimization and compliance go beyond storage hardware,” says Loughlin. “Our customers tell us they need to wring out the promised value from their investment, both in direct cost savings and in enhanced usability. Most of the optimization work will soon fall outside the