INFORMATION GOVERNANCE:

FUTURE TECH PREDICTIONS

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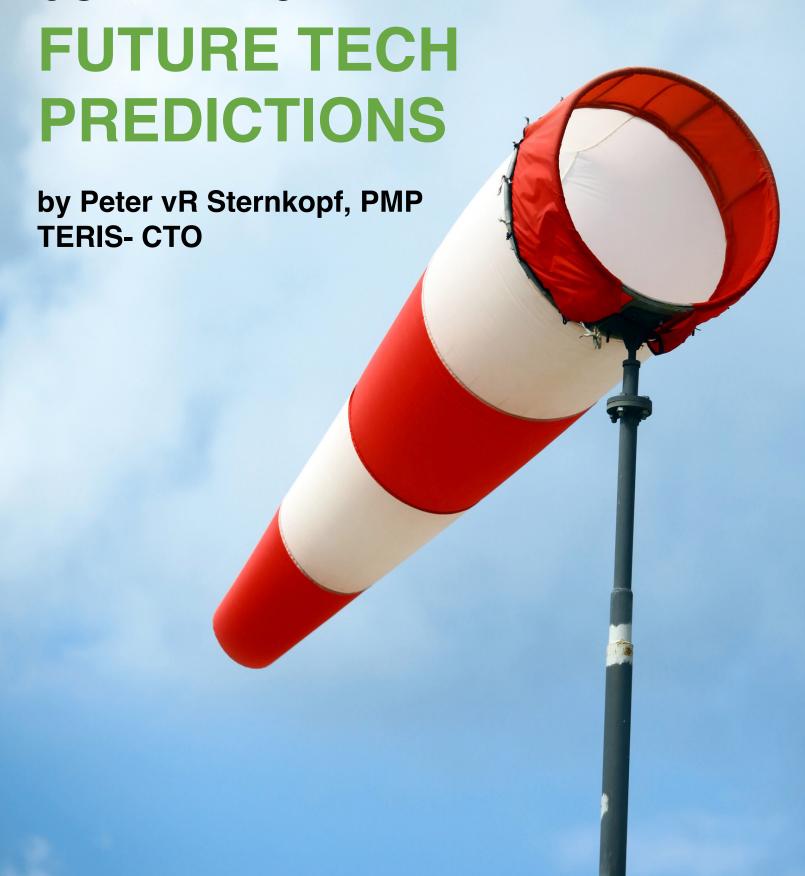
If you're not interested in the future of technology and how it will affect the success of your future, then this paper is not for you. If you're content to keep doing what you're doing on a daily basis without planning ahead for the evolution in computing that are an absolute reality, this paper is not for you. If you'd rather scramble in constant catch-up mode with data/information management and regulatory changes over the next several years, this paper is not for you.

If, however, you've realized the true costs of being caught in a permanent game of leapfrog with the ever-changing shifts in information governance and eDiscovery and you're ready to get ahead instead, this whitepaper series can help you prepare for what's coming or for what's already here. The key to a successful approach toward information governance lies not in instilling fear and panic, rather in educating and informing yourself and the key individuals in your enterprise and hopefully inspire action. Reacting to changes after they occur is a losing (and expensive) proposition.

Although there are some resources out there offering guidance for effective information governance, few of them talk about future technologies and regulatory shifts. It's also difficult to find blog posts, websites or papers that specifically discuss the reasons why enterprises remain resistant to addressing information governance at all. In fact, any real dialogue over the implications and challenges associated with data management and governance is suspiciously absent, considering we live in a world where business depends on digital data nearly 100 percent of the time.

Defining Information Governance

Information governance (IG) is a fairly new term for a philosophy that's emerged in response to the incredible volume of data that enterprises are accessing, storing and processing on a daily basis. The phrase can encompass everything from physical equipment to internal policies. Procedures and existing (or upcoming) regulatory considerations also fall under the umbrella of IG. Essentially, IG refers to the ways that information is managed at an enterprise level.

The best definitions that make the most sense include the following provided by Debra Logan in a January 11, 2010 article:

> "Information governance is the specification of decision rights and an accountability framework to encourage desirable behavior in the valuation, creation, storage, use, archival and deletion of information. It includes the processes, roles, standards and metrics that ensure the effective and efficient use of information in enabling an organization to achieve its goals."

And this definition found on Wikipedia:

> "Information governance is an emerging term used to encompass the set of multi-disciplinary structures, policies, procedures, processes and controls implemented to manage information at an enterprise level, supporting an organization's immediate and future regulatory, legal, risk, environmental and operational requirements."

Determining an effective approach toward IG is critical for enterprise success, not only in terms of daily operations, but also as a proactive measure against the potential for future litigation and eDiscovery. Upcoming technology changes, IG and eDiscovery can impact your relevance as an ongoing operation, and taking the right strategy toward these elements should be viewed as a critical component for securing your future success.

Why You Should Be Interested

So why, exactly, should you be interested in IG and eDiscovery? Many businesses feel that adapting to changes as it comes, just like most others, is more than enough. And with technology evolving at the nearly exponential rate it has been over the past decade, there's no possible way to keep up anyway, is there? How much can these things really affect your organization?

The short answer is that they can already make or break your business, and this will become even more apparent over the next several years. Let's take a look at the longer explanation behind that reality.

It's no secret that litigation is a major concern for modern enterprises. Taking a comprehensive, adaptable approach toward IG now can protect you against potential future litigation. As the cost of doing business becomes increasingly more litigious, adopting the appropriate level of defense can help keep your head above water.

It's no longer enough to respond to a request for eDiscovery; new case law is placing the cost burden back on ill-prepared enterprises if their lack of organization is found to be responsible for racking up millions in discovery costs to both parties. Accountability is taking a more central role in handing down sanctions. Preparing for your eDiscovery responsibilities ahead of time reduces both litigation costs and stress levels.

Litigation isn't the only risk that's lowered through adoption of a proactive approach toward IG, either. Intellectual property (IP) exposure is drastically reduced with the right IG plan in place, and client PII (personally identifiable information) exposure is also decreased. Understanding how to create an IG policy that limits your security risks while maximizing the rewards, is essential to doing business today; sanctions against companies who fail to take the proper precautions are only going to become more severe. More importantly, by building a failsafe structure for doing business, you retain the hard-earned trust of your clients and customers.

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While the above benefits of effective IG are virtually priceless, others are all too easily measured; the cost savings of making IG work for you are tremendous. Your company will be better prepared for major financial shifts, including mergers, acquisitions, divestitures, and recapitalization. You'll also be better prepared for investigations, either internal or external, and for future regulations that are already being implied. And perhaps most importantly, you'll be better prepared for **the future of technology.**

Ignorance Is Not Bliss

As tempting as it may be to brush your IG responsibility under the rug, failing to properly assess your information management and governance requirements appropriately can lead to liabilities, sanctions, and a number of other costly and significant penalties, not the least of which is losing relevance in the eyes of the modern market and your immediate customers.

The purpose of this whitepaper series is to help you realize what's coming… and coming fast… and get your provisions lined up accordingly. Here's a quick look at what the series will be addressing:

Part I: Integrated Computing Platforms: Trading Traditional Data Centers for Infrastructure as a Service

- Defining thin, zero and cloud client services infrastructure as a service (IaaS)
- Understanding the benefits and barriers of adopting these new technologies
- Looking at the industry impact of data stored in the cloud, and what this means for meeting future IG and eDiscovery needs

Part II: Today's Computers Are an Endangered Species

- Why desktop computers are becoming extinct, and why laptops are moving toward the endangered species list
- How this shift toward cloud-based interactions affects the world of IG and eDiscovery in terms of where data is now stored and how it can be collected
- Understanding the challenges and benefits of moving toward a tablet-based computing world

Part III: Social Media Will Take Over the World

- The entire world is taking a more reward-based collaborative interaction (RBCI) approach toward business, both personally and professionally
- Examining the benefits and challenges involved in User Experience Platform-as-a-Service (UxPaaS)
- Making UxPaas work for you when the majority of businesses fail to realize the potential in embracing this approach.

Until now, enterprises have treated the concept of developing an IG system that's efficient and effective for their current operations and adaptable for future changes, as an optional luxury at best, and a necessary evil at worst. As it relates to changes in technologies, those attitudes have to be adjusted in order to move forward and succeed in the future of business.

Only by grasping the vital role that IG plays right now and will continue to play in the future, can businesses lay the groundwork for successful ongoing ventures without leaving themselves so vulnerable. IG will only take on a greater sense of urgency as momentum builds and the technological evolutions barrels forward. If your heart's not in the race, you're likely to get either run over or left behind… and that's just bad business.

If you would like to learn more about how TERIS can help you with information governance, please contact **Julia Romero Peter at TERIS Silicon Valley.**

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About the Author

Peter vR Sternkopf, TERIS Chief Technology Officer (CTO), has more than 22 years of experience in business vision and strategy, business development, marketing, analysis, people development, project management, and delivering business value through innovation and technologies.

As the CTO of TERIS, he manages IT, oversees strategic initiatives, business partnerships, new products/services, sales training, and contributes to marketing initiatives.

Prior to joining TERIS, Sternkopf was a senior consultant with MA&A Group, handling technical, financial, and project management engagements for clients such as SunTrust Bank, YouDecide.com, Workstream, and several East Coast healthcare providers. He also served in several positions with IKON Office Solutions, including regional director of electronic solutions and applications development manager.

Sternkopf received a Bachelor degree in Flight Technology from Central Washington University and a United States Air Force Officer commission as a pilot in the EuroNATO flight program. He is a Commercial/ Instrument/multi-engine pilot.

Some of his certifications include: Project Management Professional (PMP); Certified Microsoft Exchange Server & Outlook Client; American Management Association (AMA) – Information Systems Project Management; AMA- The Art of Discipline of Managing Software Projects; Mooney Player & Associates- Leadership in Action; Steven Covey- Seven Habits of Highly Effective People; Center for Management and Organizational Effectiveness; Concordance Certified Software Trainer; and Concordance Certified FYI Administrator.