

Document Management and Archiving Trends in 2021

A forecast by archiving expert kgs

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Embracing innovation, achieving smart savings and focusing on corporate responsibility – these trends will set the agenda in document management and archiving in the coming year.

An extraordinary year is coming to a close, and it's highly unlikely that things will return to "business as usual" in January 2021. Our archiving experts have analyzed the market dynamics and cross-referenced them against the current state of technology to extrapolate the trends in 2021. Their findings: Businesses should embrace innovation, achieve significant savings and step up to their environmental responsibilities.

Trend #1: "Headless" and open innovation

The "hidden champions" of the world are leading the way. They operate largely unseen, focus on performance and do not seek out the limelight. In the software industry, these champions are referred to as "headless systems." For example, the top-level ERP system does not need a document management system with a dedicated frontend. It makes more sense to invest in a document solution that reliably takes care of archiving in the background without making its presence known.

An open system design and powerful interfaces are key prerequisites for implementing forward-looking business processes. To take an example from the SAP world, "ArchiveLink versus CMIS" illustrates the changes about to come and shows which innovations companies should adopt. As opposed to ArchiveLink, CMIS delivers an SAP-independent standard optimized for the cloud that can map all content management functions (metadata, versioning, rights and role concepts, etc.).

Trend #2: Achieving savings by replacing DMS with archiving and on-premises with SaaS

In the year of the pandemic, strategies such as cost reduction, budget freeze and zero investment are being embraced by businesses across the globe – and 2021 will be no different. However, cost savings

should not be equated with putting innovations on hold. Those who manage to focus on the essentials while freeing up budgets for new innovations by changing processes will come out on top.

One way to reach this goal is to replace expensive and feature-heavy DMS or ECM systems with intelligent archiving solutions that pay for themselves within a short time.

Also, the Software-as-a-Service trend is expected to pick up in 2021. Even in the sensitive archiving arena, SaaS will likely become the leading operating model in the coming years. It is not just the broad range of general technical, organizational and tax advantages that make SaaS solutions so attractive, but the way they change the distribution of costs further adds to their appeal. Therefore, reducing or freezing the IT capex does not rule out a system change. Rather, new operating models such as AaaS (Archiving as a Service) will introduce the necessary changes to the system landscape without overstraining the budget.

Trend #3: Assuming responsibility by helping the environment through data deletion

Vast data centers are being built all over the world, which means billions of servers that require power and cooling. The reason for this unbridled growth is that increasing data translates into more energy needed for storage and processing. Therefore, any company that doesn't duplicate data needlessly and deletes it regularly is actively helping the environment. In 2021, the concepts and techniques that ensure that data is archived and deleted as autonomously and intelligently as possible in compliance with all guidelines will evolve significantly, and this will lay the groundwork for future document management initiatives.

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