RECORDS MANAGEMENT METADATA

What is Metadata?

Metadata is "data describing context, content, and structure of records and their management through time"[1].

Essentially, metadata is information that allows you to retrieve, use and manage information.

Why Have Metadata?

Metadata assists in helping maintain records:

1. Authenticity i.e. the quality of being genuine, not a counterfeit, and free from tampering.

2. Integrity i.e. the quality of being whole and unaltered through loss, tampering, or corruption.

3. Reliability i.e. the quality of being dependable and worthy of trust.

Planning and Standardization

If your agency is planning on using a content management system or electronic document and records management system, you must start to plan the metadata elements that you are going to use to effectively manage the information in these systems. Failure to plan properly will ensure that information is more difficult to find, retention periods will not be adhered to and the benefits of these systems will be limited.

It is vitally important that you standardize the metadata that your agency is using to manage your records. This is because it ensures that every employee is managing records in the same uniform fashion, which will help with retrieval and disposition of the records.

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[1] ISO 15489-1 Information and Documentation – Records Management

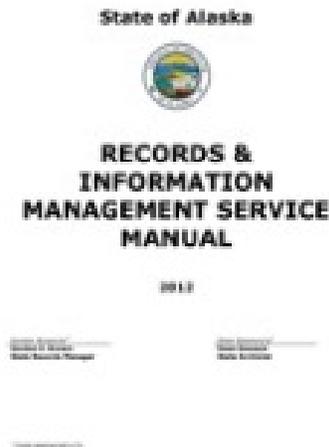State of Alaska - Records & Information Management Service (RIMS)

Records Management Metadata

Metadata Example 1

Artist:	Leonardo da Vinci
Location:	Louvre, Paris
Dimensions:	30.3" x 20.9" (77cm x 53 cm)
Genre:	Portrait
Created:	1503 - 1505
Media:	Oil Paint

In this example, artist, location, dimensions, genre, created, and media are all metadata that helps to manage the Mona Lisa. It works exactly the same way for electronic records.

Metadata Example 2

Creation Date:	07/16/12
Format:	Word
Subject/Title of Data:	Records & Information Management Service Manual
Record Owner:	Alaska State Archives/Records & Information Management Service
Information Security Classification/Access:	N/A
Business Essential Records:	No
Retention Category:	Permanent

In this example, the metadata elements shown will help use and manage this record.

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Records Management Metadata

Essential Metadata Elements

Element	Details
Unique Document ID	An alphanumeric value that is assigned to data.
Creation Date	The date the data was created.
Creator/Author ID	The individual (or system) who created the data.
Originating Organization	The organizational unit associated with the creator/author.
Format	The file format used to create and store the data.
Subject/Title of Data	A brief, high-level description of the data, or a set of keywords.
Edit Date and Time	The date and time the data was modified subsequent to creation.
Editor ID	ID for the individual (or system) who modified the data.
Declaration Date	The date when the "draft" version became the final version.
Declaration ID	The individual (or system) who indicated that the data was the final version.
Location	The server and file path, or equivalent indicator of, where the data resides.
Record Owner	The organizational unit that is responsible for the management of the record.
Record Custodian	The organizational unit other than the owner that either assumes responsibility for maintaining the record and/or has joint interest in the access to and preservation of the record.
Records Category	A primary functional grouping of related records with similar retention and usage requirements that is used to determine retention.
Record Type	A secondary functional grouping of related records with similar retention and usage requirements that is used to determine retention.
Retention Category	A standardized category associated with the length of time a record must be kept to meet legal, regulatory and/or business requirements.
Retention Type	Indication of event-based or time-based retention.
Information Security Classification/Access	Identifies the sensitivity and criticality of information based on the need for information confidentiality, integrity, and availability.
Business Essential Records Indicator	Indicator noting that the record is essential to resume and/or continue operations in the event of disruption.

These metadata elements are part of Moreq2, which is a widely used model requirement specification for the management of electronic records.