

## Digitizing Records: Business Needs Analysis

This separate document has been design to facilitate the business needs analysis process that program areas should do when digitizing records. See [Digitizing Records](#) for the requirements and guidance related to digitizing records in the Manitoba government.

The decision to digitize should be backed by a clear understanding of the benefits to your organization, the risks, and the costs. This should be supported by an articulated rationale for digitizing, and an analysis of the records (analogue and digital), the systems supporting the records, the technical requirements, and preparation for the post-digitization records management requirements.

When working through a business needs analysis, it is recommended that the rationale result in a project plan and should include:

- the benefits and anticipated business or cost efficiencies
- articulation of needs and requirements
- the minimum technical requirements to be met
- the necessary resource commitments
- a realistic budget
- compliance with legislation

The following questionnaire is designed to elicit the business needs of the program area and help to ensure recordkeeping requirements are addressed in a digitization project. This may be useful for the program areas to work through as a first step towards an articulated business plan. It is also valuable information for the Government Records Office in order to provide recordkeeping advice and/or assisting with updating records schedules or providing advice regarding digitizing archival records.

Please answer the questions in each section of the analysis template and once complete, submit to the Government Records Office ([GRO@gov.mb.ca](mailto:GRO@gov.mb.ca)) for review and consultation. For definition of terms, see the [RIM Glossary](#).



**Section 1 - Rationale and Overview**

1.3 What problems/challenges are you trying to solve?

1.4 How will digitization change work process and information flow? What are the implications?

1.5 How far back will you be digitizing? Will it include active files? Closed files? Do you have files in semi-active storage at the Government Records Centre? Will the digitization project include those records? Will it include records in archival custody?

**Section 1 - Rationale and Overview**

1.6 Will the work be done 'in house' or will it be fulfilled by one of the standing vendors? If by a vendor, have you initiated a purchase order yet?

**Section 2 - Managing Retention Requirements**

2.1 Are the records you are planning to digitize covered by a records schedule(s)? Please list all applicable records schedules or if not scheduled, indicate this is a gap.

2.2 Have plans for the original physical source records been considered? Are there any legal or archival requirements that may oblige your program area to keep the original, even after the records have been digitized?

2.3 How long do the digital records need to be retained? If longer than 10 years, has review of the records stability been built into planning cycles so that the need to upgrade the format or migrate to a new system is planned for?

**Section 2 - Managing Retention Requirements**

2.4 If the records have a long retention period and/or are not being stored in adequate recordkeeping systems, would the creation of a digital master and access copy be beneficial? Or creating microfilm as an offline back up?

**Section 3 – Assessment of the Original Records**

3.1 Some records are not suitable for scanning due to their fragile or poor condition. Records that are flimsy, brittle, have holes, tears, or flaking may require stabilization or repairs to prepare them for digital imaging without further damage. Do the records require any stabilization or repairs?

3.2 Some records are less suitable for sheet fed scanning than others due to their format, or require special digitization requirement and services – for example, bound volumes, large maps and plans. There are a number of options including sheet-fed scanning, flat-bed scanning, overhead scanning, and camera-based imaging. Have you considered what type of scanner the records will require?

3.3 Approximately how many cubic feet do you anticipate will be scanned? (A Government Records box = 1 cubic foot; a standard filing cabinet = approx. 3 cubic feet)

3.4 The time and resources to prepare the records should be considered. This may include the removal of staples, paperclips, etc.; flattening of folded items; removing records from binders or envelopes. What type of preparation will be required? Will this be completed 'in house' or by the vendor?

3.5 Records may be managed in a variety of ways, the most common being in file folders with file titles. How are the records currently organized?

**Section 4 – Assessment of the Digital Records and Systems**

4.1 Where will the digitized records be stored?

4.2 Do you have a system in place to manage the digitized records? For example, an enterprise content management system (ECM), a document management system (DMS), or a case management system?

4.3 Will there be integration with other systems (file tracking systems, line-of-business applications)?

4.4 Will user access and security be controlled? Program areas should define rules and determine system capabilities needed to control access and protect information.

4.5 What is the relationship to records in other formats? How will related records be linked to the digitized records and to the business context?

<b>Section 4 – Assessment of the Digital Records and Systems</b>
4.6 What are the file naming and indexing requirements? These should be determined by analyzing how users will access the records and how the records will be managed.
4.7 Will there be a change in the way that the files are organized or indexed once digitized?
4.8 What staffing is in place to support preparation, indexing, and quality control prior to and after digitization?

<b>Section 5 - Technical Considerations for the Digital Records</b>
5.1 What file format(s) will be used (e.g. TIFF, PDF/A)?
5.2 What resolution is required? A default resolution is often 300 dpi for standard textual documents. Photographs, plans, maps, some texts may require higher resolution.
5.3 Will the files be in black and white, grey scale, colour or a combination?
5.4 Will the digital files be added to after digitization? As a separate file or added to the file? If being added to, will it be done in house or via the digitization vendor? If being done in house, consider the format, colour options, and resolution options on the multi-function printer.
5.5 Will the files be compressed? For text-based records this will likely not be an issue, but may be considered for photographic records that do not require high resolution.

Once complete, submit the analysis to [GRO@gov.mb.ca](mailto:GRO@gov.mb.ca) for review.