Best Practices for Records Management
– The Case of Electronic Document & Physical Files

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www.mitiget.com | info@mitiget.com

21-23 Ize Iyamu Street,
Ceflix-Scepter Centre,
Off Billings Way, Oregun Ikeja, Lagos
P. O. Box 10448, Marina, Lagos, Nigeria
+234 806 719 1062, +234 806 007 8227

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Management of Physical and Electronic Files

Most organizations today have a significant footprint when it comes to the management of electronic files or documents. Organizations typically use a document management system or other software tools to manage their information assets. These best practices are in place to help organizations, reap the value of electronic files.

This process includes creating, managing and archiving information assets. Mitiget is a leader in physical and digital information management. Visit our website (https://www.mitiget.com) to see how we help businesses protect their most valuable assets.

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Management of Electronic Files
Electronic Document Management Software (EDMS)

In managing electronic files, use a multi-user document control system software that allows businesses to streamline processes and become better organized, more secure, and decidedly more efficient. Document management is very important for organizations to reach the goal of "Paperless offices". In today's world, organizations of all sizes possess and manage a legacy of paper documents, accumulate a rapidly growing share of electronic documents, and anticipate a future that is mostly, but not entirely, electronic.

Electronic Document Management software (EDMS) is an essential requirement in business, where there are large amounts of client and organizational information needing to show transaction history and to be stored over long periods of time. In managing the electronic files, EDMS is your best bet as you transit from physical file system. The following should be considered in deploying on-premise EDMS:

- EDMS: Liaise with Mitiget to source for the suitable EDMS for your organization and to hand-hold you to end to end deployment. We also create the implementation plan for technical installation, customization, UAT and go live.

- Hardware: The specification of the server hardware to be used depends on the EDMS requirement. The hardware components must comply with the minimum specification indicated by the software Original Equipment Manufacturing (OEM). We help to source, supply, install and support servers from any OEM of choice. We also supply laptops and mobile devices for the set up of EDMS for your users.

- Network: The network architecture must cover user locations. A segmented design will be ideal to cater for the security of the records management system unless you already have a structure that is preferable for the deployment.

Management of Electronic Files
Electronic Files Creation

There is a limit to how much information can be included when naming electronic folders and files. As long as files are being saved to the appropriate vault or folders, the structure can be used to provide further information.

When naming an individual file, stick to the details of that specific file and allow the storage location provide the context. The file name could simply include the correspondent's name and the date. Be sure both the folder/subfolder names and the file names are meaningful.

It is also useful to include dates in the files names, either the date the information in the file was valid or, as in the case of a report, the date or dates that the information in the file covers. Here are some guides:

- Use file naming conventions – Conventions help your company locate and manage documents while providing a timely way to ascertain the content of files.

- Determine the folder hierarchy – A dependable file hierarchy structure can help keep files organized and supports data migration if information migration is required.

- Determine whether to use version control – Version control is offered with many document management systems and helps support collaboration. In some cases, it may be cumbersome as it restricts file names and accessibility of files for modification.

Managing Electronic File with Security Focus

## Understand and develop processes for regulatory requirements –

Understand the regulatory requirements and create business processes that support adherence and monitoring of information compliance. This may include creating risk and audit reports, periodic reviews of data retrieval practices and establishing policies around retention period.

Make use of file indexing

Indexing files allows for optimized retrieval times of information, ensuring that information is available at the right place and time. Information classification and access control are key in the assignment of indexing and authorization.

Manage information access

Define information access rules so that electronic files are secure, allowing for the right information to be available at the right time, for the right individuals. Be conscious of segregation of duty principle.
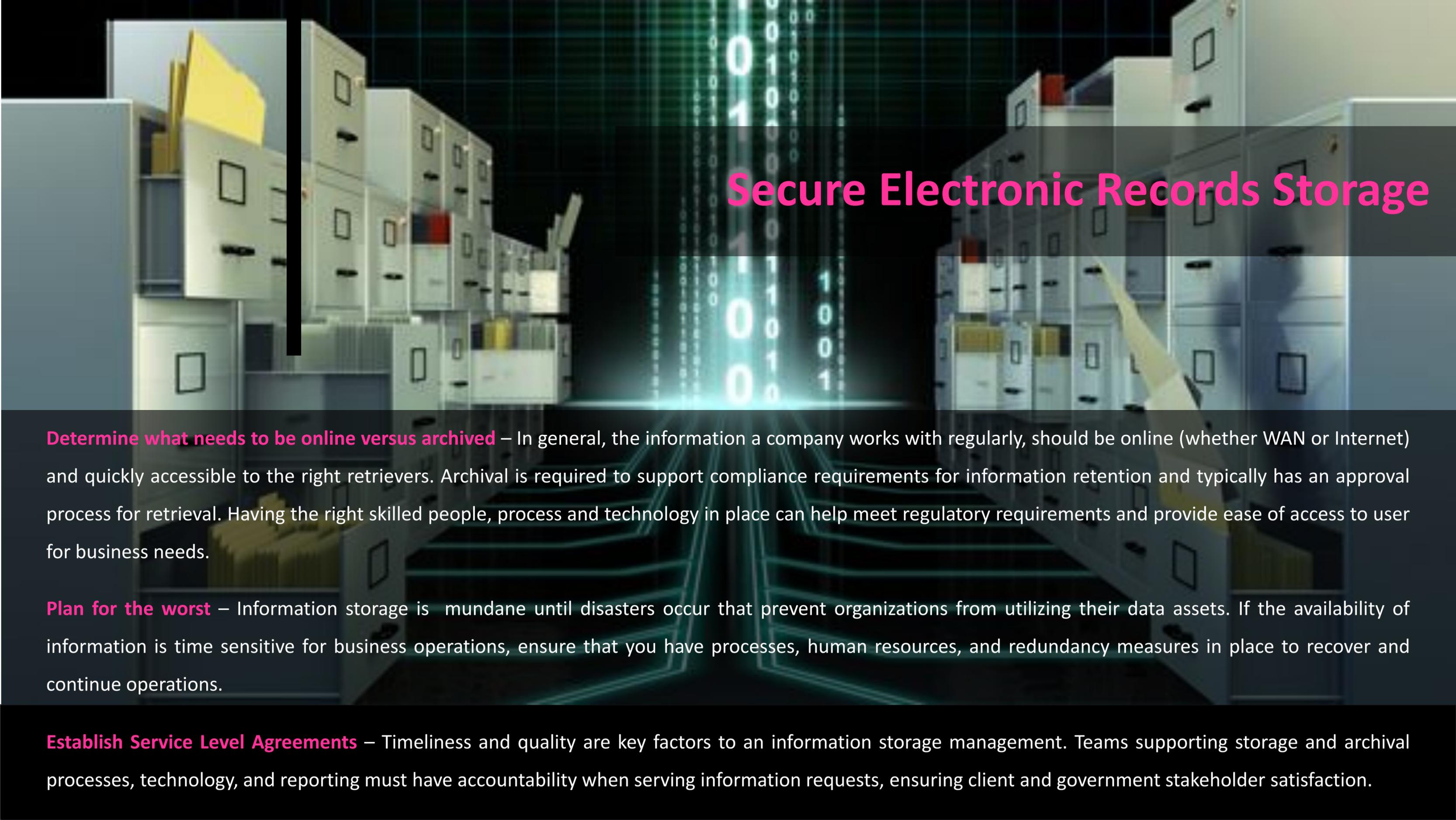
Secure Electronic Records Storage

Determine what needs to be online versus archived – In general, the information a company works with regularly, should be online (whether WAN or Internet) and quickly accessible to the right retrievers. Archival is required to support compliance requirements for information retention and typically has an approval process for retrieval. Having the right skilled people, process and technology in place can help meet regulatory requirements and provide ease of access to user for business needs.

Plan for the worst – Information storage is mundane until disasters occur that prevent organizations from utilizing their data assets. If the availability of information is time sensitive for business operations, ensure that you have processes, human resources, and redundancy measures in place to recover and continue operations.

Establish Service Level Agreements – Timeliness and quality are key factors to an information storage management. Teams supporting storage and archival processes, technology, and reporting must have accountability when serving information requests, ensuring client and government stakeholder satisfaction.

Management of Physical Files

With all the wonders of technology, there still doesn't seem to be a perfect substitute for doing business in paper and writing. Here is an overview of best practices on managing physical files and documents.

Creating Physical Files

Rationale for documentation

Consider if the documentation or form is already available. Often a quick email or desk-side chat can help you identify whether a new document is required.

Know your priority document types

As a business, it pays to understand what documents are of great significance versus those of less significance. A business has many types of critical documentation yet, without proper understanding can hamper operations.

Use a classification system

Create a classification system to help store, locate, and update documents once they are created. Having a strong classification scheme helps protect your business from being impacted by fines or legal ramifications.

Managing Physical Files

Use a process to identify the value of record and retention

Determining the value of documentation is key to helping ensure your storage site remains lean and relevant to your business.

**Establish a process to record changes in location**

Organizations that have clear accountability procedures for managing their document storage will make better use of that document storage.

Have a master list and index of documents

This seems daunting but it also emphasizes the question, "is a document significant enough to track?" Having a master list helps determine whether the right documentation is being managed and also supports access later on as storage grows.

Utilize a file tracking system

The market has a number of available solution to help organizations track their files. Try Mitiget's ArchivePro©. With the addition of asset tagging and ID bar-coding, it is even easier to manage access and compliance.
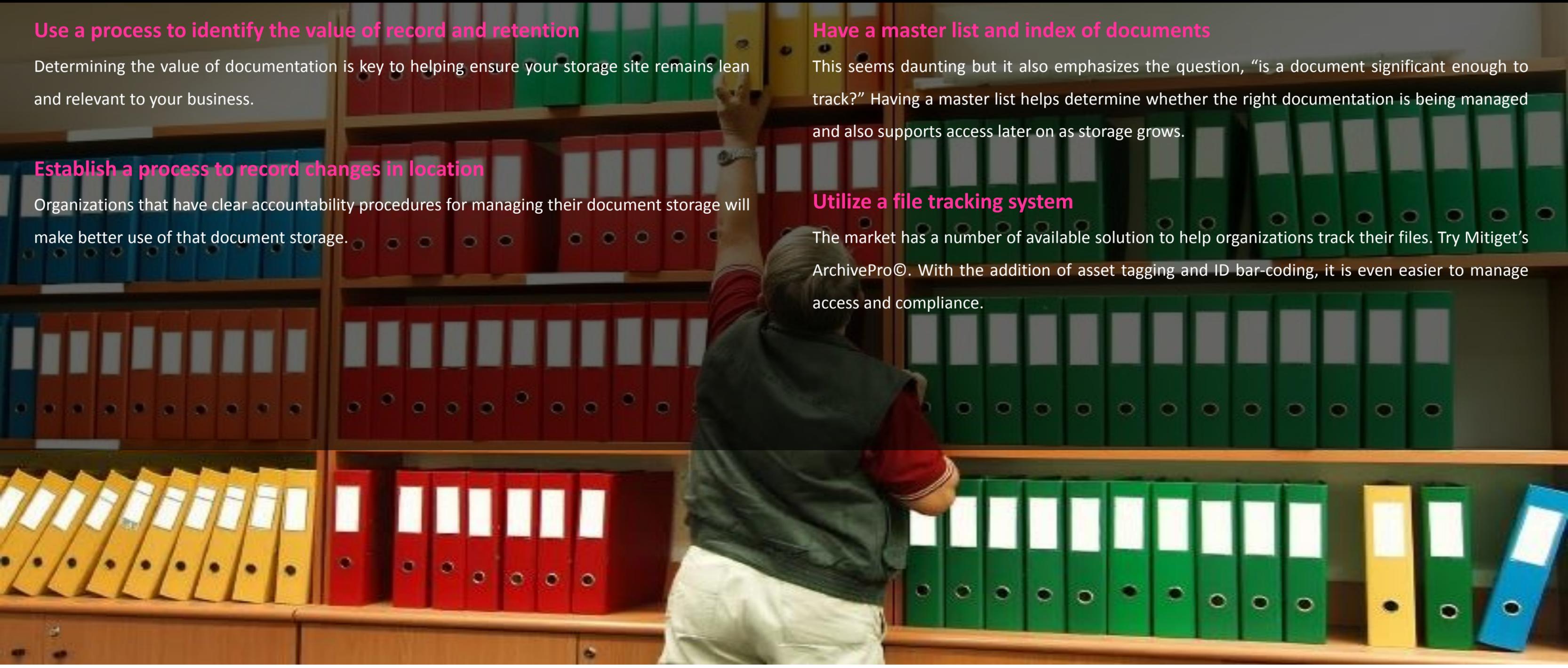
Storing Physical Files

Use a centralized storage point

This provides a single destination for all archived documents and simplifies business processes for having to manage multiple destinations. For certain industries, this may even be a regulatory requirement along with geographic restrictions on where records can be stored.

Have a process to manage site access

Sites for documentation storage, can benefit from tracking and controlling who is accessing what documentation. Organizations may elect to have a designated official(s) list, on who can physically be in the storage site.

Have a business continuity plan

The storage site should be supported by a site team, processes, and applicable technology (i.e. alarms and detection systems) to ensure confidential information is not exposed.
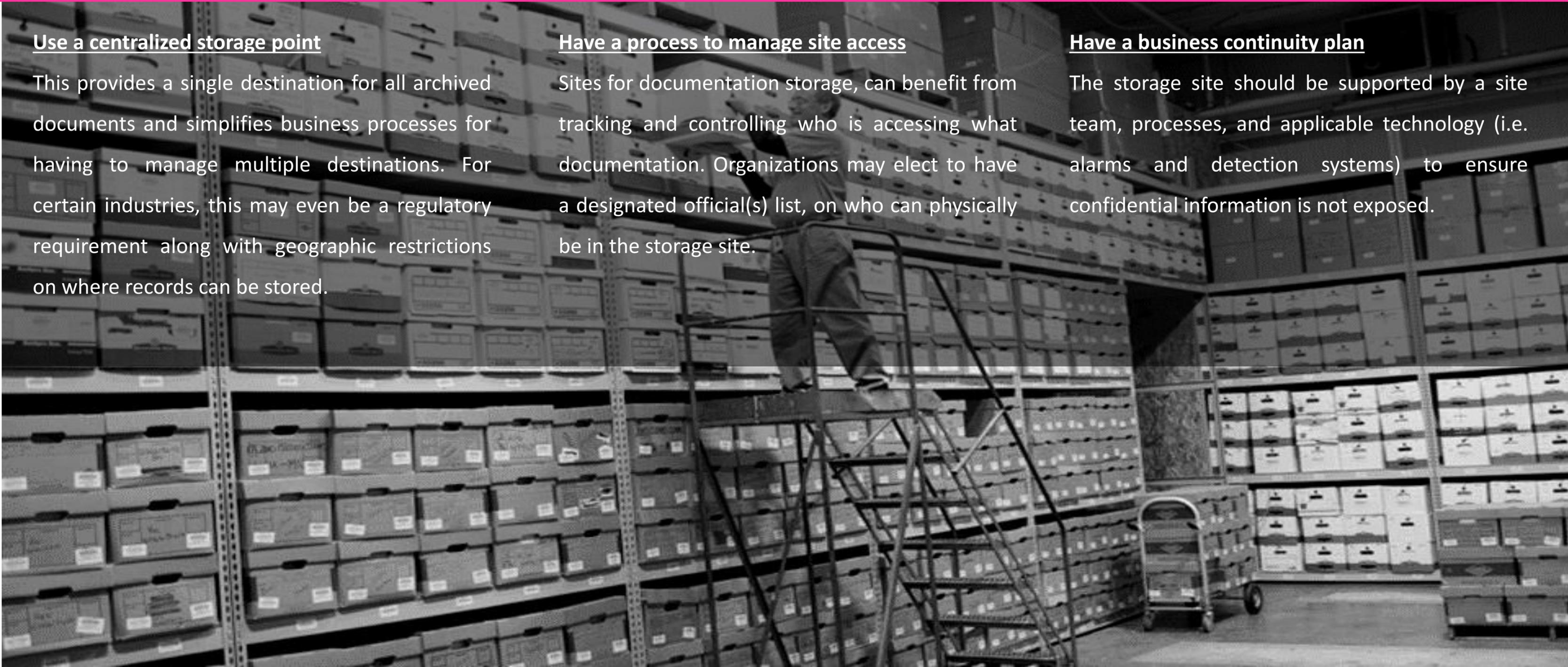
Secure Records Management & Archives Solutions

Mitiget can digitize valuable paper documents into any electronic format using high-speed scanners for compact storage and secure access.

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We redefine document & records handling practice

LET US SOLVE YOUR RECORDS MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES

Provision of Records, Governance & Management Capabilities such as:
1. Deployment of Records Management Software
2. Establishment of Records Governance & Policies
3. Secure Storage & Seamless Retrieval of Records

Provision of Records Physical Archive such as:
1. Design/Setup of Paper archives
2. Deployment of Archival Boxes
3. Paper Preparation & Indexing

Secure Records and Information Management Services

Provision of Secure Records Digital Solutions such as:
1. Scan/Capture–on or off site
2. Workflow Automation
3. Secure Storage & Access

Provision of Records Evacuation & Shredding such as:
1. Secure Pickup and Evacuation
2. Onsite & Offsite Secure Shredding
3. Secure Media Destruction
4. Residential & Consumer Records Handling

We also Supply, Install & Maintain these:

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File Cabinet & Fireproof Safe

High Speed Industrial & Office Scanner

Customized Archive Box & Folder

We protect your most valued asset – business information, data, records…

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