'Fun' in 'Functional':
An Empirical Study of Factors Influencing the Implementation of EDRMS in Canadian Public Sector

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Background

- *NA 04 Putting the 'Fun' Back in 'Functional'*
- Literature review
  - Human-technology interaction in organizational settings
  - Personal information management
  - Game studies and gamfiication
- Semi-structured interviews
  - Ontario Public Service: an online meeting system (8 interviews)
  - BC Public Service: an EDRMS (6 interviews)

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An EDRMS…

- Electronic Documents and Records Management System (EDRMS)
    - "[A]n automated system which supports the creation, use, and maintenance of paper or electronic documents and records for the purposes of an organization's workflow and processes. An EDRMS includes recordkeeping functionality and also managers documents of informational rather than evidential value. The EDRMS includes the whole of documents, records, methods, procedures, tools, [meta]data (index terms), knowledge, means and persons with which an organization operates and fulfills its requirements to preserve evidence of its activities, maintain its memory, and preserve its knowledge"

-- Johnston and Bowen (2005)

More than an EDRMS...

- "...well I'm *excited* because as the records clerk I see how much the management of paper documents ..."

  -- Interviewee1

- "...they were *nervous* at first..."

  --Interviewee2

- "... so I've got people that will be *hesitant and skeptical* ..."

  --Interviewee3

- "...I mean it can be kind of *overwhelming* ..."

  -- Interviewee5

- "...because um, people get *confused*..."

  -- Interviewee5

- "... they were *afraid* that it was going to be a waste of money..."

  --Interviewee6

Reasons for introducing EDRMS

- Managing physical records
  - Out of convenience
  - Free
  - Aligning with government standard

- Managing electronic records
  - The volume of paper and the amount of time spent for paper filing
  - Email
  - Space deprived
  - Going paperless
  - Protecting the organization from staff turnover
  - Mobile workforce
  - To be more efficient

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The EDRMS *per se* is ...

- "...it's got way more functionality..."

  -- Interviewee1

- "...is much more versatile..."

  --Interviewee4

- "...there is so much capability within ..., that we can use it several different ways..."

  --Interviewee6

- "...it's extremely comprehensive..."

  --Interviewee6

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Initial Reaction

- "*neutral to negative, I would say*"

  --Interviewee6

- "*...as soon as they told me about it. It's kinda tough because like we actually had an old version of [EDRMS]...*"

  --Interviewee4

- "*...they were nervous at first... *"

  --Interviewee2

- "*like everybody's been really receptive ...*"

  --Interviewee1

- "*...they were concerned that it would be hard, interfere with their everyday work...*"

  --Interviewee2

- "*they were worried about more work load.*"

  --Interviewee2

"Standardized" implementation

- *"when an organization in government decides that they want to go to electronic filing you develop like a project charter, and you follow a timeline [with the EDRMS implementation team], so it's rolling out according to their schedule, or we negotiate the schedule, so there's a communication piece that's built into it, ... where we've got executive support, it's presented to the executive, we presented options in the form a decision vote, ... and so all along we're keeping staff updated on our progresses ..."*

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--Interviewee1

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"Standardized" implementation (con't)

- Training
- Continuing support
- Guides and manual

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Problems

- Training
  - "... the training session was really good, but unfortunately we did the training session before [the EDRMS] was actually set- like before we had all of our files uploaded. I didn't realize it but it took like 4 months to upload all the files ..."

    --Interviewee4
  - "they get everything set up and they get it configured and ... they'll put them through training... And they go away and they don't use it so they forget..."

    --Interviewee5
  - "... you are sitting in a classroom working with you know, fake files, and stuff you know information that's not pertinent to your own group..."

    --Interviewee5

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Problems (con't)

- ## People

  "…because you've got two separate things, you've got people and you've got records and sometimes they don't like up…"--Interviewee3

- ## Records management program

  "There's definitely no naming conventions for those kinds of one-off type of filing."--Interviewee5

  "And so if somebody out in the branch, … had a taxi receipt or whatever it may be it, it was just basically just transitory, they were not allowed to make a file for that because it wasn't their job to file that. But here that's not the case,… and takes the time to file a lot of stuff that probably … doesn't need to be filed." – interviewee5

Resist...have it shelved... or be "innovative"

- *"they put their guard up. ... that'll give them a good reason, in their mind, of 'nope it doesn't work, nope can't find it'..."*--Interviewee3

- *"oh I don't, I don't really know what I'd like classify that quite yet as, so I'm going to throw it over here make a folder in my outlook and drop it in there and I'll go back when I have..."*--Interviewee5

- *"... I had a couple of people in the last little while that got quite creative that they would be taking the box number and putting in the alternative contained within field so that it was actually relating the box to the record, but it wasn't actually enclosing the record in the box."*--Interviewee5

Solutions and adjustment

- **Staged approach**

  "I think probably the first thing I would tell her is to do it in stages, because if you don't do it in stages you risk alienating people that would eventually come around to liking the system…"--Interviewee6

- **People**

  "So you have to remember the two different things that are happening at the same time, you just not, you can't just have a narrow view, go 'Ok let's go forward electronically' it doesn't work that way, … but you've got to remember there 's people attached to that action as well "--Interviewee3

Solutions and adjustment (con't)

- **Customized training (to the business unit further to the individual)**

  "… make more customized training…"--interviewee6

- **On-going support**

  "…I have found that it is a vital key thing to be there with somebody and walk them through it beyond the training that they've done in the classroom."--Interviewee3

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Solutions and adjustment (con't)

- **Community learning**

  "I go 'if you want to … instead of listening to me' praising it because you know that's my job, I go 'why don't you go over to somebody else in this section here and watch what he does, and he'll tell you how great it is.'" -- Interviewee2

- **Records management is part of everyone's work**

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Influence on records management

- *"people are realizing it's not just the records clerk who manages records ... it's reinforcing the fact that everybody is responsible for managing records"* – Interviewee1

- *"so the administrative assistants open a file folder in [EDRMS], when you open a file folder you can't actually complete the action until you say its classification and its retention schedule..."* –Interviewee6

- *"... I think we rely on EDRMS now that we have it. So rather than try to come up with some sort of new writing, I'll often use [EDRMS] as search tool ... I will search for an old legal opinion rather than trying to write a new legal opinion on my own."* –interviewee4

Thank you

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