

Information governance assessment and strategy

Evaluate the current state of your records management or information governance program, develop a comprehensive roadmap, and benchmark against industry peers.

Launching or updating a records management or information governance program quickly raises key questions that should be addressed early on to ensure the program's success.

As a trusted, independent vendor that sells no products, Contoural delivers an independent, objective evaluation of your current information governance or records management program, recommends a target maturity level tailored to your organization and industry, and develops a clear, prioritized roadmap. Our benchmarking service details your current and target maturity as compared with industry peers.

Move forward with confidence knowing you're focusing on the right initiatives, sequencing them effectively, and investing at the appropriate level to meet compliance, risk, and business objectives.

Why start an information governance initiative?

Information governance initiatives can realize a variety of benefits. Understanding which ones are of most interest to senior leadership can facilitate adoption and rollout of the information governance program.



Ensure compliance

Reduce regulatory risks by ensuring compliance with legal records retention and privacy requirements



Optimize discovery

Reduce costs and risks in eDiscovery



Reduce risk of data breaches

Identify, classify, and secure personal and sensitive information



Clean up data and documents

Save on storage costs by defensibly deleting unneeded or duplicative information



Enable use of generative AI

Facilitate more effective and compliant use of AI with improved data quality



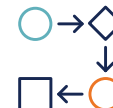
Increase productivity and collaboration

Identify and make accessible high-value information and delete low-value information



Facilitate mergers and acquisitions

Enable better and faster information integration for mergers and separation in divestitures



Automate information management

Reduce or eliminate the burden on employees by automating processes using existing technology

What should you know first?

When embarking on records management or information governance program development or update, key questions should be addressed early on:

- What are our current records management and information governance capabilities and how do they impact employee productivity, collaboration, compliance, risk, and cost?
- Who should be involved in developing and executing the program? How do we make this an enterprise-wide effort supported by multiple stakeholders?
- How should program development activities be ordered? How long should they take? How should they be coordinated with other initiatives?
- How do we avoid underbuilding or underinvesting in our program? How do we avoid overbuilding and overspending based on our needs and profile?
- Are we meeting current legal, regulatory, and privacy requirements?
- What capabilities does the organization currently have in place? Which pieces are missing or need to be updated?
- What level of maturity should our program be? What resources will be required to support this level of maturity for our company in our industry?
- What internal, external, and technology resources will be required over what period of time?
- How do our capabilities compare against peers in our industry?
- How do we communicate this plan effectively and credibly to senior management?



Our assessment and strategy services



Maturity assessment and strategic roadmap

We provide an independent, objective evaluation of the current state of the organization's information governance program, recommend a target maturity level, develop a strategic roadmap, and determine effort and resources needed to meet the target state, including identifying opportunities to leverage current in-house technology. Our process engages a cross-functional team of stakeholders to foster buy-in and adoption and concludes with a presentation to senior leadership to review findings and justify required investments.

Independent assessment by a trusted vendor that sells no products

We collect, review, and analyze existing information governance policies, procedures, and documents related to records retention, litigation readiness, data security, privacy, organizational structure, high-level applications and infrastructure, process documentation, lists of record types, taxonomies, data maps, and any available assessments or information life cycle reviews.

This includes structured interviews with key stakeholders from legal, records management, compliance, privacy, data governance, IT, and information security, as well as business units to gather first-hand information on how employees create, retain, manage, access, and delete documents, records, and other information.

We address all media, especially electronic. Our approach encompasses unstructured data including files, semi-structured data including email, structured data in databases and applications, and paper.

The final report summarizes strengths, weaknesses, gaps, key findings, and best practices for records management and information governance.

Today's greatest risks (and greatest opportunities for increased productivity) lie in management of electronic information.

Target the right level of program maturity for your organization

Records management requirements vary widely across industries and even across similar companies. The appropriate level of program maturity varies from company to company, even within the same industry.

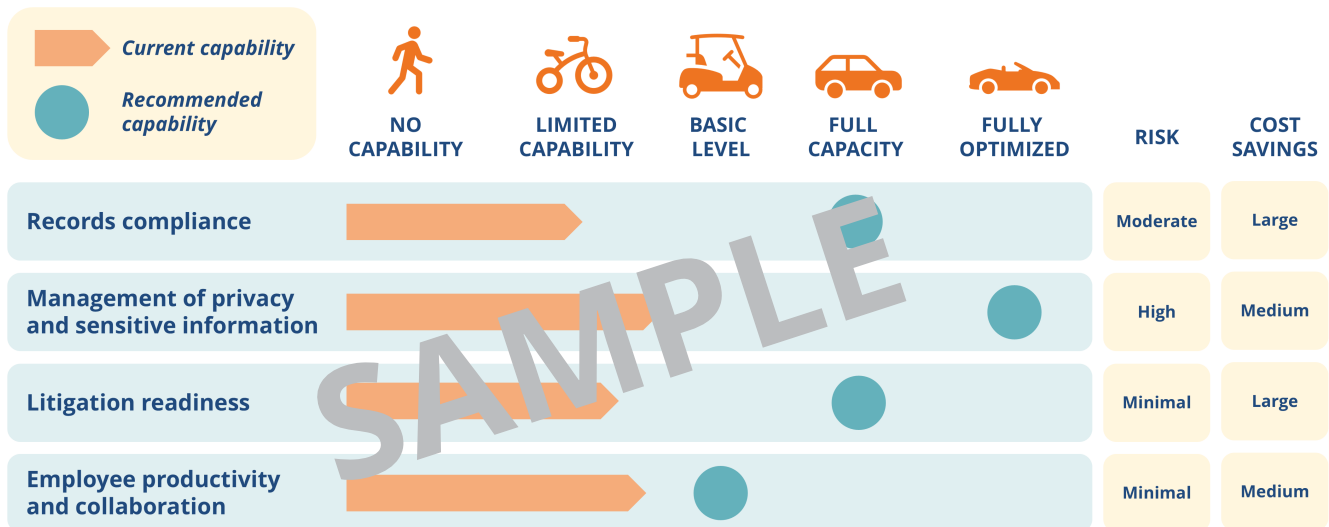
We define an appropriate level of records management or information governance program maturity for multiple program components based on factors that include:

- Regulatory and compliance requirements
- Volume and sensitivity of personal information
- Litigation profile
- Company size
- Industry
- Geographic locations
- Culture
- Business needs
- Capabilities compared to industry peers

Targeting the right level of maturity is key. Underinvestment leads to non-compliance and productivity issues, while overdesigning can result in overinvestment and sluggish execution.

It is generally better to have a well-executed, simpler approach than a more complex, difficult, and expensive “sports car” target that spends more time in the repair shop than being driven.

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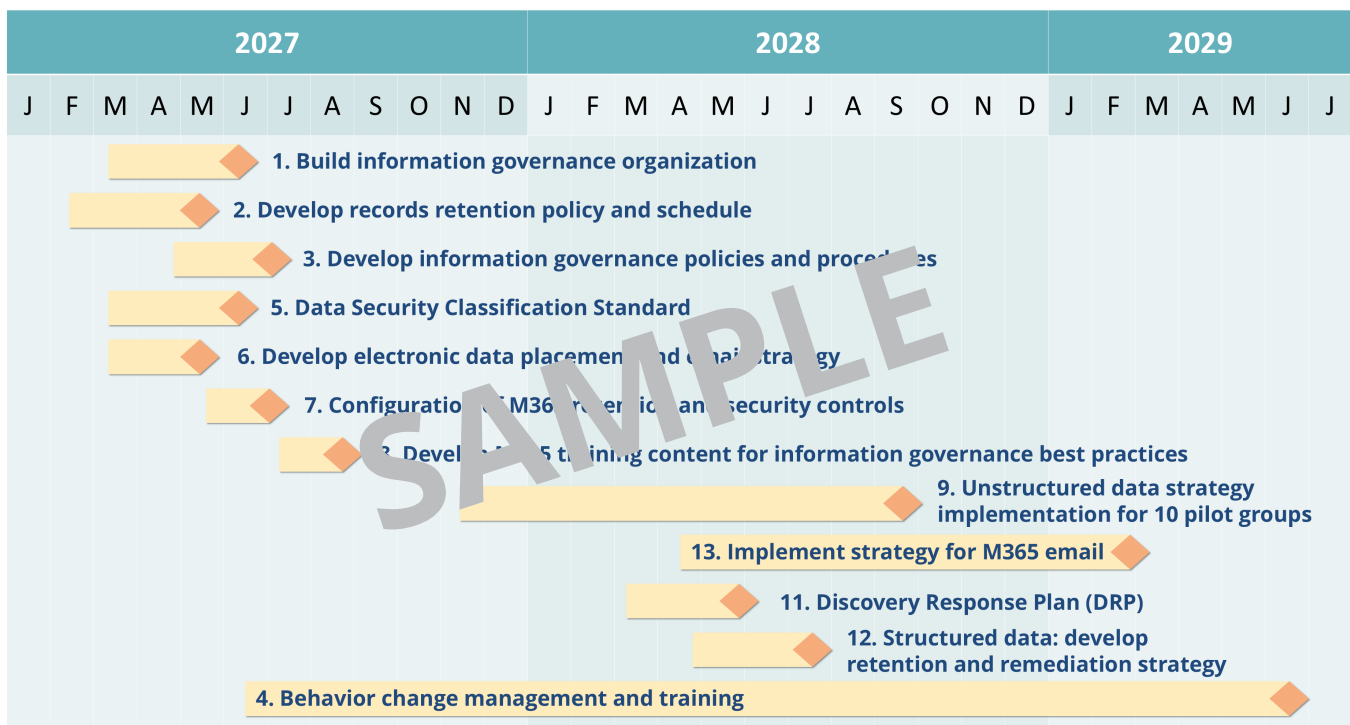
Gap analysis of current state versus target state and strengths, weaknesses, and risks

The assessment produces a detailed maturity model that identifies current state, target state, and the activities and resources to address gaps between the two. The gap analysis focuses on key areas including records retention policy and schedule/data retention policy; organizational development; training practices; records management processes including retention and disposition practices for various information types including paper, email, file shares, and databases; governance of infrastructure and technology; management of sensitive information; and litigation readiness.

We also identify potential risks to an information governance or records management program, including failure to comply with legal and regulatory recordkeeping requirements, data breaches from data stores that should not have been created, discovery risks and costs due to over-retention, challenges establishing ownership of intellectual property, and spiraling record and data storage costs, especially for offsite paper storage.

Actionable strategic roadmap including high-value quick wins

For each area of the assessment, the strategic roadmap outlines a set of prioritized recommendations and high-level steps to achieve the desired level of records management and information governance maturity, including policies, processes, required resources and technology, and anticipated cost estimates.



This plan is an open roadmap that may be subsequently executed internally, by Contoural, or by any other provider. The high-level roadmap is supplemented with detailed project plans.

Starting or updating a records management or information governance program can be complex and daunting. Approaching it as a single, large project risks stalling progress.

We employ a divide and conquer strategy, breaking the effort into manageable steps over time and identifying quick wins that showcase program benefits and foster support. This helps the enterprise realize the benefits of that program segment and executive sponsors understand the return on money and time spent. Early victories build momentum and buy-in throughout the process, in contrast to a single win at the end of prolonged projects.

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Key stakeholder engagement to create early program buy-in

Throughout the process, we engage cross-functional key stakeholders including legal, privacy, compliance, risk, IT, AI, InfoSEC, data governance, and business units building support and joint ownership for information governance initiatives.

Presentation to senior management that details findings and justifies required investments

Working closely with project sponsors and stakeholders, we communicate concise, executive-ready findings and recommendations to senior leadership detailing the program's needs and justification to support informed decision-making.

Following leading industry frameworks and standards

We consistently apply broadly accepted industry information governance and records and information management standards, including:

- Association of Corporate Counsel Records Management Maturity Model
- ISO 15489
- ARMA Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles
- EDRM Information Governance Reference Model
- MoReq2010
- Gartner Information Governance Reference Model
- GDPR, OECD, CCPA and other global privacy frameworks and regulations
- Sedona Conference and Sedona Canada Guidelines

Recommendations for increasing employee productivity and collaboration

Work-from-home and hybrid environments, siloed information repositories, and information “clutter” driven by over-retention can significantly reduce employee productivity and effective collaboration. Through our maturity assessment and strategic roadmap service, we assess information sharing capabilities including:

- Individual employee productivity, including the ability to find information
- Impact of work-from-home and hybrid environments on information sharing
- Intra-departmental information sharing and collaboration
- Inter-departmental collaboration
- Potential to eliminate time-consuming and burdensome records processes

Many recommendations focus on leveraging information governance programs to drive productivity.

Industry benchmarking

We help organizations understand how their information governance program compares with those of relevant industry peers. We collect and analyze information about peer organizations' governance practices, including program structure, staffing, policies, technology, retention, privacy alignment, defensible disposition, and overall maturity. Using a consistent assessment framework, we then compare the client's current capabilities against peer performance and identify areas where the organization is leading, keeping pace, or falling behind.

The benchmarking results give information governance leaders credible, objective data to share with senior management, legal, compliance, privacy, and IT stakeholders. Rather than relying on general best practices or internal opinions, leaders can demonstrate how the organization's maturity compares with others facing similar regulatory, legal, and operational risks. This helps build support for investment, establish realistic priorities, and provide assurance that the organization is not operating at one of the lowest levels of information governance maturity within its industry.

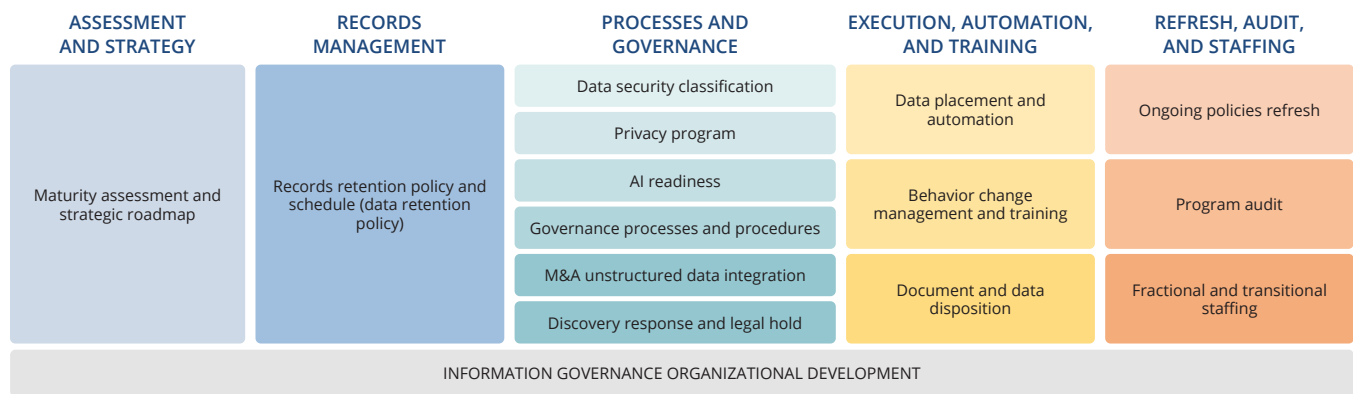
About Contoural

Contoural is the largest independent provider of strategic records management and information governance, privacy, and AI readiness consulting services, serving more than 30% of the Fortune 500 along with numerous medium and small enterprises, non-profits, and public sector organizations.

We do not sell products or take referral fees. Our seasoned team of attorneys, compliance officers, records managers, IT professionals, and change management experts brings both deep industry-specific knowledge and a proven methodology refined across hundreds of engagements worldwide.

What we do

We offer the industry's most comprehensive suite of information governance strategic consulting services, from assessment and planning to execution, training, and staffing.



TRUSTED BY
30%
OF THE FORTUNE 500

PROGRAMS
IMPLEMENTED IN
150+
COUNTRIES

INDEPENDENT
CONSULTANTS WITH
26
AVERAGE YEARS OF
EXPERIENCE

How we help

Our expert consultants help organizations ensure compliance, mitigate risks, reduce costs, achieve executable outcomes, and enhance employee collaboration and productivity, all based on their unique profile.



INDEPENDENT

We do not sell or resell products, take product referral fees, or provide discovery services. Our advice is based solely on the needs of our clients.



EXPERIENCED

With both deep and broad experience within and across industries, we leverage our tried-and-true methodology and the expertise of our consultants.



CROSS-FUNCTIONAL

We work with major stakeholders in legal, privacy, compliance, records management, IT, information security, and business units to create consensus and execute projects.



GLOBAL

Having developed programs for information governance operations in 150+ countries, we understand local requirements and can integrate these into a global program.

Our approach

Developing and executing records management or information governance, privacy, and AI readiness programs can feel like climbing a steep mountain. Choosing the right path to ascend is difficult. Some routes are shorter but very steep, while others are longer but more gradual.

We employ a divide and conquer strategy, breaking the effort into manageable steps over time and identifying 'quick wins' that build momentum and buy-in throughout the process. Many clients participate side by side in our engagements, leveraging them as skill-building opportunities.

The name "Contoural" comes from our founder's passion for trail running. Understanding the contours on a topographical map can suggest the best way forward.

Contact us today:

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