

Guidelines for Managing Web Site Content: Section 6.0

Records Management for Web-based Records

6.1 Best Practices for Scheduling Web-based Records

Scheduling According to Content

Web sites are not considered a record series or category. They are a means of publishing information. Like paper or microfilm, web sites are the medium by which this type of record is created and maintained. Just as an agency cannot schedule all paper or microfilm records together under a single retention period, an agency generally cannot simply schedule a web site as a record series. Rather, retention or disposition of web site files must be related to the information they contain or the purpose they serve. The content of the various pages on a web site may vary considerably, and therefore, this content must be evaluated to determine the length of time the web resource must be retained.

Scheduling According to Format

Many web-based records are maintained in more than one format. In other words, a resource may be published on the web site and be maintained in a paper format by the agency. In these cases, the retention schedule should reflect the multiple formats and the agency might want to adopt differing retention periods based on format.

For more information on records management, contact your agency's records officer, the State Records Administrator or the State Archives of Ohio.

David Larson, State Records Administrator, david.larson@das.state.oh.us,
614-466-3064

Charles Arp, State Archivist, carp@ohiohistory.org, 614-297-2581

By using this method, agencies can commit to maintaining paper (or microfilm) copies of resources for longer periods of time than they commit to retaining electronic, web based copies of resources. Agencies are strongly cautioned, however, that printing out web pages is not a solution for all web resources. This option works best for distinct web resources that are routinely maintained in more than one format.

Best Practice 1

Government agencies must identify records that exist on their web site(s), or which are about to be placed online. They must ensure that these records are included on appropriate records retention schedules and that procedures to implement the retention periods are established.

Best Practice 2

Government agencies should ensure that full and accurate records of their web resources are captured and maintained as specified in the retention schedules. Agencies must capture full and accurate records of web-based transactions.

Best Practice 3

Government agencies should make and keep records that accurately document their public

web resources over time, so that it is possible to reliably establish the content of their web sites for the duration of the appropriate retention period.

Best Practice 4

Government agencies are encouraged to develop their own web-based records management policy.

Best Practice 5

Government agencies should develop a program for conducting regular reviews to identify the effectiveness of their records management procedures for web-based resources. Conducting a review is especially important when the web sites is modified or when business processes change.

[Section 6.2: Guidelines for Managing Web-based Records](#)

[Go to Table of Contents](#)