

# E-MAIL RETENTION TRAINING SOLUTION

## BACKGROUND

Current resources available through the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources (DCR) to train state employees on how to handle public records include face-to-face workshops presented monthly at DCR; these workshops are also provided for agencies on-site by request by DCR's Government Records staff. In addition, the 2002 publication *E-mail as a Public Record in North Carolina: Guidelines for Its Retention and Disposition* is available on the DCR Web site. While these resources are helpful tools for employees seeking to strengthen their understanding of e-mail records retention and public records law, the Panel recognizes that training resources must be expanded and the obligations of state employees concerning e-mail (and all other public records) more clearly defined.

## RECOMMENDATION

The Panel recommends that training for managing e-mail as a public record be made available online to all state, local, and municipal government employees and be required for state employees who handle public records. State agency heads will require training for all employees in their respective agencies who handle public records. Completion of the training, in the form of certification, will be noted in the employee's personnel file. Whenever substantive changes in public records law occur, agency heads will require recertification of employees. Additionally, agency heads may require recertification as they deem appropriate.

The tutorial will be posted on the DCR Web site and linked from the "Other Resources" section of Information Technology Services' (ITS) [www.ncmail.net](http://www.ncmail.net). Agency Chief Records Officers will be notified of the tutorial's publication and communicate its availability to their agencies. This training, based on current workshop materials and in the form of an online tutorial, will cover public records law, public records found in e-mail and how to retain and archive e-mails based on DCR's *General Schedule for State Agency Records*, as well as the program records retention and disposition schedule specific to each agency. The tutorial will be updated as necessary based upon changes in public records law.

## IMPLEMENTATION

The tutorial will be created using an open-source content management system (CMS) that allows comprehensive reporting and tracking of users and completion rates. DCR

will work closely with ITS to launch a state-wide training initiative. ITS will implement and manage the CMS that will host content developed by DCR.

The appearance of the tutorial will closely resemble a Web site. Brief quizzes will be included throughout the tutorial to assist the individual and the results can be recorded as described above.

### **SOME POTENTIAL ADVANTAGES**

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The CMS allows for a variety of reports to identify employees who have and have not completed the tutorial.

The CMS allows the log-in to be linked to a pre-existing log-in (such as the North Carolina Identity Management NCID), and groups of users can be defined, allowing existing groups of employees different levels of access to the content and reporting tools.

Confirmation of completion can be easily disseminated to each employee's personnel file.

The tutorial can be completed in multiple sessions based on the employee's schedule and preference, rather than one thirty-minute session.

Should future training on other topics be recommended for government employees, the content could easily be incorporated in the CMS.

### **SOME POTENTIAL DISADVANTAGES**

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The CMS requires additional financial and human resources to provide the necessary set-up and additional programming.

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