

# How to Share Services and Influence People



*By Melissa Henley, Director of Marketing Communications, Laserfiche*

Earlier this year, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo launched an initiative requiring local governments to prepare plans “for shared, coordinated and efficient services among the units of local governments contained within the county, excluding school districts.” The initiative is meant to keep property taxes under control while promoting more efficient operations at the local level. As many New York counties prepare and present their shared services plans, local governments outside of the state are watching closely in case their leadership moves toward similar models.

**From cost savings to the ability to leverage existing knowledge and best practices, there are many benefits of shared services.** Especially in IT, where procurement costs are high and the learning curve is steep, governments realize a significant return on their shared services investment. While identifying the pros to your initiative may be easy, change—especially change that requires the cooperation of multiple groups—is hard. In addition to being efficiency experts, government employees will need to become marketing masters to successfully get everyone on board with their shared services plans.

## Managing change

If your shared services plan initially comes up against resistance, know that you aren’t alone. According to the Center for Creative Leadership, 66-75 percent of all private and public change initiatives fail.

Technology change initiatives are notoriously challenging since they often require employees to step out of their comfort zones and learn something new in addition to their everyday duties—no small task considering public employees are increasingly being asked to do more with less.

So what happens when your shared services plan isn’t immediately embraced by everyone? **A thoughtful change management approach can help engage the hearts and minds of those involved, pushing employees along the continuum from rejection to openness.** Change management focuses on people, and is about ensuring change is thoroughly, smoothly and lastingly implemented. In many ways, change management pulls from practices used in marketing as you need to identify your target audiences, understand how they think and implement a promotional strategy to change their behaviors.

With this in mind, successful rollout of a shared service will require you to identify specific change management objectives. Typically, these will include:

- Sponsorship: Ensuring there is active sponsorship for the change at a senior level within the organization, and engaging this sponsorship to achieve desired results.
- Buy-in: Gaining buy-in for the changes from those involved and affected, directly or indirectly.
- Involvement: Involving the right people in the design and implementation of changes, to make sure the right changes are made.
- Impact: Assessing and addressing how the changes will affect people.
- Communication: Telling everyone who's affected about the changes.
- Readiness: Preparing people to adapt to the changes, by ensuring they have the right information, training and help.

## Change doesn't have to be a four-letter word

In order to find the best approaches to move forward with your shared services initiative, it's important to connect the project with the people who have to do their jobs differently, and be specific about what needs to change. **Understanding differences in personalities allows leaders, managers and coaches to predict how different personality types are likely to respond to a situation or change, and then to deploy the correct leadership or communication style in order to smooth the transition.**

So, for example, a municipality may want to implement a shared records management system to reduce the time spent on organizing, searching for and retrieving files, and reduce the cost of compliance with records

management statutes and regulations. Consider the specific changes you are trying to make—how documents are stored and accessed, and how retention schedules and disposition are managed—and the specific people involved in every part of those processes.

Leaders need to emphasize that the initiative is not just unavoidable, but urgent, strategic and helpful for the organization as a whole. In this case, you may already have sponsorship from a leader (such as Governor Cuomo), but it is also helpful to have sponsorship within the organization that is adopting the shared service. Make sure to educate your sponsors about the initiative, outline expectations for the sponsor's role (which may include advocating for the initiative and using the new shared service themselves) and involve the sponsor throughout the change process to ensure they stay engaged.

Try to get department heads to model how they're going to use the new technology and why it will help optimize citizen services. But executive buy-in doesn't have to be a cold directive. For example, after one local government organization in New York purchased electronic records management software, county staff was working on a project to scan documents from all departments into the system. Since some people were hesitant to give up their paper, the county clerk made neon t-shirts that said "Ask me how we're saving money!" for leadership to wear while they were in the process of collecting documents. It was a physical reminder that the project was necessary for the entire county, and that leadership was unified in its message and effort.

Be sure to engage all organizations early and often. Also, consider the audience's input so they feel a part of the process rather than change is happening to them—or worse, being forced on them. **When we feel like there are people and resources in place to support our transition, it feels less like a personal attack and more like a positive momentum forming in the organization.**

## Best practices for communication

It's common for those undergoing change to experience denial and anger, especially when their organization is not leading the shared service. You can combat this denial and anger with information—and you must be strategic about the way that you deliver it. Your role is to help people understand why the change is happening and how it can be helpful. **Think of this as a marketing campaign—you have to sell the idea. It's your job to create a vision for the future.**

Foster trust by maximizing face-to-face communication, embracing informal channels and multiple channels of communication—emails, presentations, or even meetings over coffee—if needed, and addressing any concerns by reiterating how the individual will benefit once the change is implemented. At the same time, don't overwhelm people; give them a place to go or someone to contact for more information if they need it, and reassure them you will take the time to answer any questions that come up.

As a leader, you cannot over-communicate when you are asking your organization to change. Here are some tips:

- **Communicate consistently, frequently, and through multiple channels**, including one-on-one meetings, workshops, email announcements, videos, training, focus groups, bulletin boards, Intranets, and more about the change.
- **Communicate the reasons for the changes** in such a way that people understand the context, the purpose, and the need.
- **Provide plenty of time for people to ask questions**, request clarification, and provide input.
- **Recognize that true communication is a conversation.** It is two-way and real discussion must result. It cannot be just a presentation.

- **Provide answers to questions only if you know the answer.** Leaders destroy their credibility when they provide incorrect information. It is much better to say you don't know, and that you will try to find out.
- **Listen and act with thoughtfulness.** Avoid defensiveness, excuses, and answers that are given too quickly, without thought.

## Effecting long-lasting change

**Building a community of support will solidify your shared services initiative, positioning it to be scalable and enduring.** Identify “champions” of the initiative and enlist their help to train others. Bring as much fun as possible into this stage. When onboarding users to your shared services initiative, for example throw a kickoff party, host lunch ‘n’ learns or establish an external user group. Center the events on sharing stories, again, to simplify abstract ideas, as well as simply to applaud shared successes.

Even after effectively taking your organization through the stages of change, however, your work won't be finished. First, be sure to limit the access to the old system to keep reinforcing the importance of your project. The project's sponsor will need to stay informed and involved, and you will need to provide ongoing training, continue hosting user groups and add educational resources to cement the change.

Finally, remember that change is a process, made up of small efforts over a period of time. Just don't forget to celebrate the small victories along the way.

 **Profile:**

Tompkins County, NY, has a population of more than 100,000. Ithaca, its county seat, is home to Cornell University, an Ivy League school.

 **Challenge:**

Tompkins County had 200 years' worth of criminal and court records stored in file cabinets and more than 9,000 storage boxes. To house the records, the county was considering building a multimillion dollar warehouse.

 **Solution:**

Tompkins County converted paper records to digital content and streamlined workflows, trimmed costs and built an efficient information environment for the county and 19 of its municipalities.

# Digital Records Management Saves Tompkins County \$5.5 Million

Two centuries' worth of county records ranging from birth and death certificates, to environmental health maps, to court and criminal files packed into 9,000 boxes takes up a lot of space—enough to (almost) justify building a multimillion dollar storage warehouse.

Before moving forward with the new warehouse, the Tompkins County Clerk's Office was tasked with cataloging the millions of archived documents and examining storage alternatives. Laserfiche quickly entered the conversation for its ability to track records in a digital database.

"Our original plan had been to put barcodes on the boxes of records to keep better track of them and then to either build a new records center or renovate the existing one," says Maureen Reynolds, Deputy County Clerk. "However, we quickly realized that we could extend the value of the system by scanning all 9,000 boxes of files into a Laserfiche system."

"Our analysis showed that with an investment of \$400,000 to \$500,000 for scanning, software upgrades and IT infrastructure updates, using **Laserfiche could save us as much as \$5.5 million dollars**," says Deputy IT Director Loren Cottrell. The majority of that \$5.5 million would have gone into building the new warehouse.

## Changing Minds & Old Habits

With a new records repository, the Clerk's Office envisioned a digital records system that would dramatically reduce the need for paper records. "We wanted to bring greater efficiency and cost savings to the county by implementing, maintaining and instructing all county departments on the best practices of using a digital records center enterprise system," says Reynolds.

Unfortunately, this vision hit an impasse as the county staff reverted to old paper habits.

"We looked around the county and realized everyone was still making paper," says Reynolds. "They're creating records on the computer, printing them, storing them in boxes and then three or four years later would bring the records to us and ask us to put them away and track them."



*Former Records Center*

Reynolds and her team went from department to department to prove the ease and value of digital records. Her team:

1. **Examined** departmental files and records.
2. **Interviewed** department staff to understand the use and flow of documents.
3. **Scanned** documents into Laserfiche.
4. **Destroyed** the physical documents.
5. **Created** a digital folder structure within Laserfiche that mimicked the organization of physical folders.
6. **Integrated** Laserfiche into other systems used by the department.

The Laserfiche repository provides a more sophisticated indexing and retrieval system that improves how the departments use and process their information. More importantly, the repository is integrated with the applications employees are already using.

"Records are available through a web browser either on the desktop or via a mobile device," says Cottrell. "The mobile feature makes key documents and records available to engineers, inspectors and other employees working in the field."

"You can have the best software in the world, but if your end user isn't comfortable with it, they will not use it," notes Reynolds.

**This approach worked, and end users started to become fans of paperless processes.**

For example, the sheriff’s department previously used an archaic index card system to track arrest reports crammed into a records room that overflowed into a garage. After scanning the arrest reports, the department was able to reclaim office and parking space.

Court officials are also supporters of digital processes. The county court handles approximately 1,400 civil cases and 4,500 criminal cases a year. Automatic routing and processing of these case files has improved efficiency and lowered printing costs by allowing judges and employees to use iPads to easily access court documents while in court. Before Laserfiche, it could take hours for law clerks and legal secretaries to find and retrieve pertinent records.

**Laserfiche as a Shared Service**

Laserfiche has been so successful for the county’s records program that Reynolds decided to expand the repository to the county’s municipalities. **After receiving \$450,000 in state archiving grant money, the county formed the Tompkins Shared Services Electronic Records Repository (TSSERR),** a Laserfiche-powered digital archive that is hosted by the county and serves 19 municipalities including the City of Ithaca.

This shared service approach has been especially cost effective for the county’s taxpayers. Rather than having the different municipalities owning and supporting their own content management systems, each municipality could use the Laserfiche system managed by the County Clerk’s Office. This has reduced support maintenance costs and allowed participating municipalities to focus their resources elsewhere.

Because the County Clerk’s Office uses Laserfiche Rio, which offers unlimited content servers and

**Real Results for Tompkins County:**



Tompkins County named a Top Digital County by the Center for Digital Government in 2014.



Tompkins County received \$450,000 in state grant money to implement Laserfiche for participating villages, towns and cities within Tompkins County.



Tompkins County won the Robert Arnold Award for Distinguished Service from NY Association of Local Government Record Officers for extending its electronic document management system to its towns.



Eliminated the need to build a new Records Center, saving \$5.5 million.

repositories, each TSSERR member is given its own dedicated repository and has complete control over its content with various levels of security. This also means the Laserfiche system can continue to grow and accommodate with every new TSSERR member.

“We have established a user group, bylaws, a governance structure and are establishing policies and procedures,” says Reynolds. “Our user group has also worked on eliminating redundancies between the local governments.”

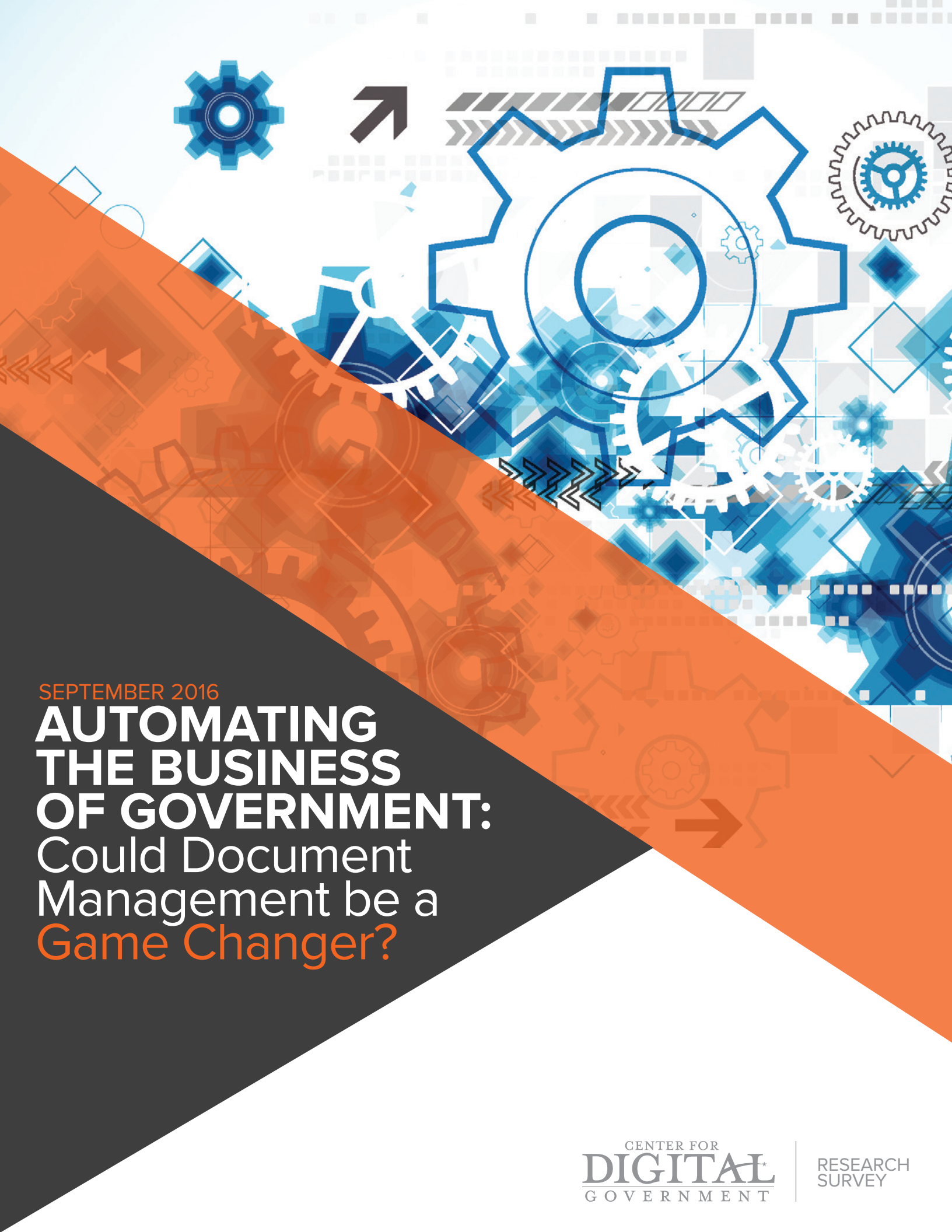
Laserfiche’s indexable repository combined with its shared service capability has given Tompkins County the means to create a public portal that allows citizens to search for public records. In addition to saving taxpayer money at all levels of government, TSSERR ensures that records across the county are compatible and easily accessible.

“We wanted to be transparent for years and years,” says Reynolds. **“People always say the government is hiding information. It wasn’t that we were hiding anything—before Laserfiche, we just couldn’t find it!”**

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SEPTEMBER 2016

# AUTOMATING THE BUSINESS OF GOVERNMENT: Could Document Management be a Game Changer?



Traditionally, the business of government has relied on various paper forms and documents that must be filed, signed, managed, shared and protected. These processes require high levels of manual intervention, making them tedious and prone to human error. However, state and local governments are finding there is a better way.

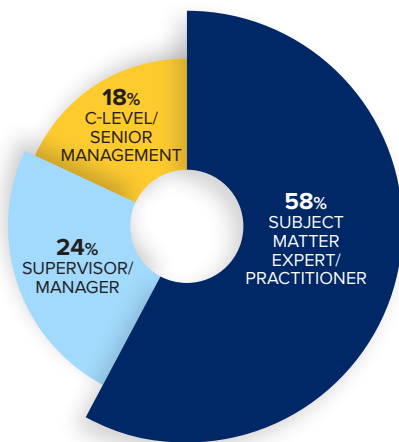
Document management software can reduce or eliminate paper, improve citizen services and help agencies comply with regulations. When simple tasks — such as compiling personnel files — are automated, they take minutes to complete versus the hours it could take if done manually.

In February 2016, the Center for Digital Government surveyed 203 public sector decision-makers to learn more about their document management processes, challenges and needs.

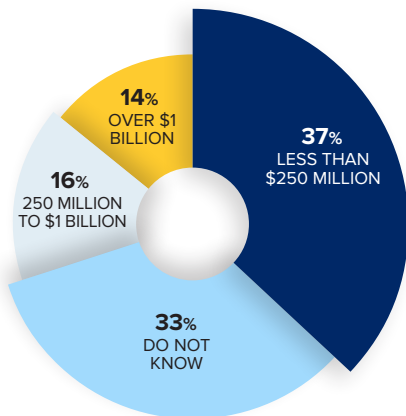
## Respondent Demographics

While the results of this survey cannot be projected to the entire population, they are reflective of those who subscribe to the GovTech Exchange community.

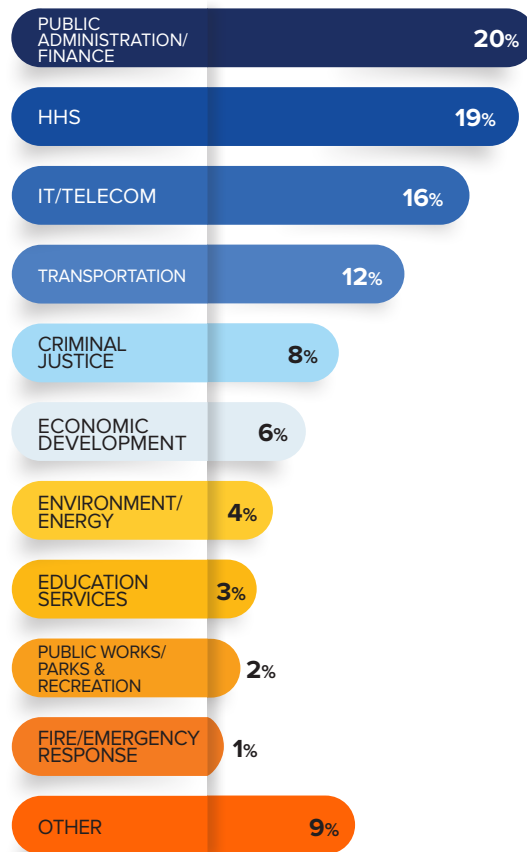
### What is your job role?



### What is your agency's annual budget?



### What agency or department do you represent?

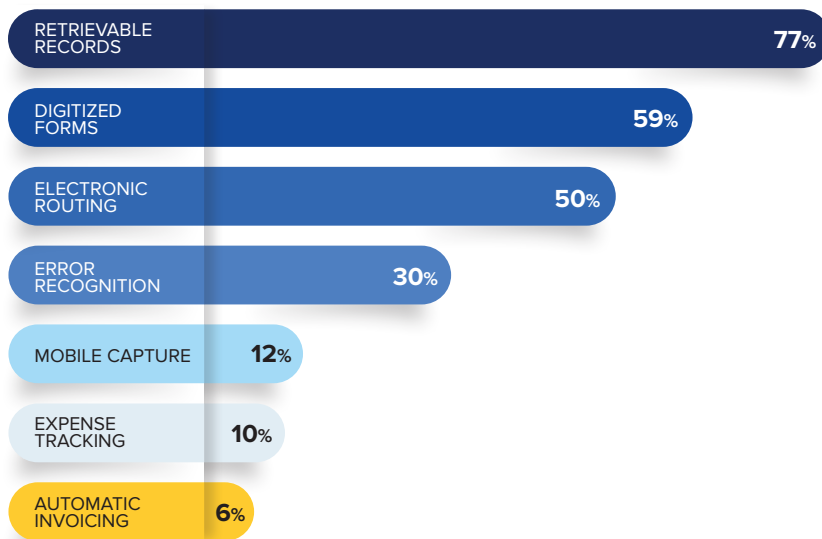


# Engaging in Proactive Modernization

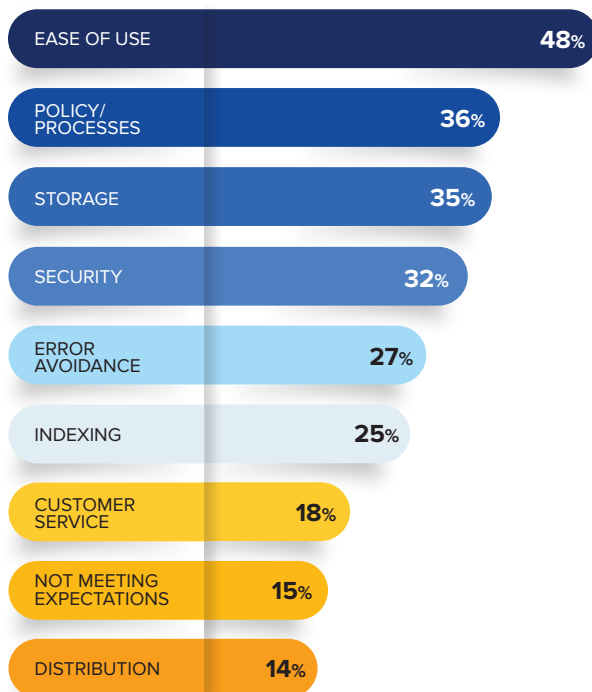
Legacy systems may allow agencies to store and organize files, but leading commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) solutions move beyond storage and offer much more in the way of automation. Knowing this, a strong document management strategy is top of mind for many respondents. More than 80 percent of respondents agree improved document management is a priority both personally and organizationally. Additionally, nearly 70 percent of respondents are proactively modernizing their approach to document management.

Respondents are also interested in similar document management features. For example, respondents say retrievable documents (77%), digitized forms (59%) and electronic routing (50%) are the top three most important features when automating document management. Nearly half of respondents wish their current solution was easier to use.

## Which features are most important when automating the document management process?



## What are the greatest unmet needs with your current document management solutions?

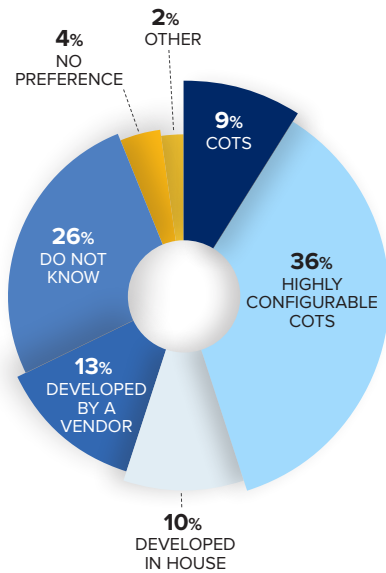


# Overcoming Document Management Dilemmas

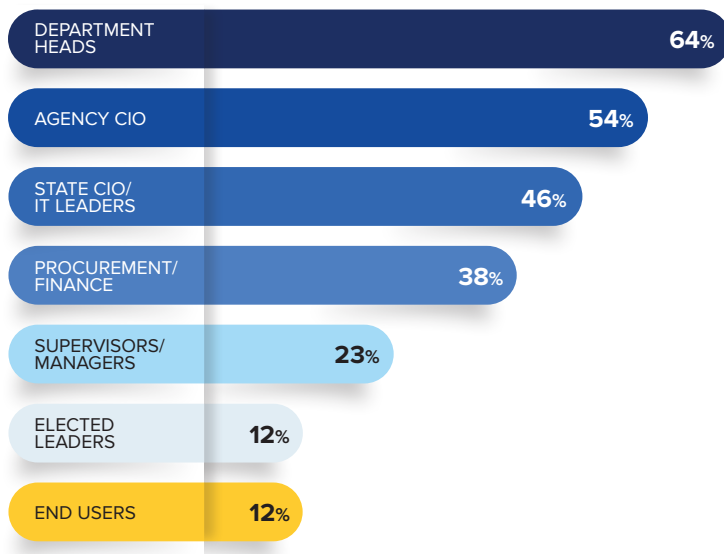
Despite the fact that public sector leaders identify document management as a priority, agencies still face challenges when justifying a need for a solution. Respondents cite integration (38%), cost (33%), expertise/manpower (31%) and organizational inertia (30%) as barriers to procuring and implementing a document management solution.

These barriers are leading decision-makers to be more strategic when selecting their document management solution. Thirty-six percent of respondents are opting for highly configurable COTS solutions that are quick to implement and easy to integrate. Additionally, agency leaders are ensuring all important stakeholders are involved in the decision-making process.

## Which of the following is your organization most likely to prefer when implementing a document management solution?



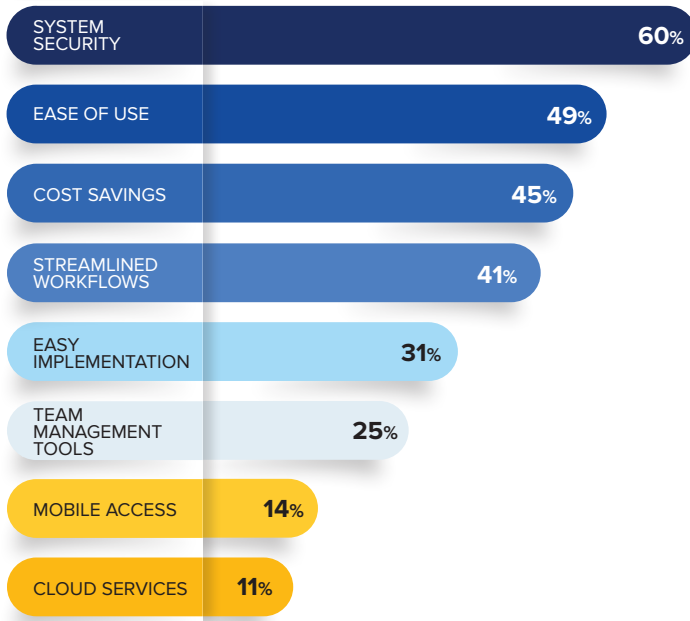
## Who is typically involved in the decision-making process when purchasing a document management solution?



# Navigating the Procurement Process

Another key to success for agencies is conducting thorough research to know exactly what is wanted and needed in a solution before starting the procurement process. Thirty-one percent of agencies conducted in-house research prior to issuing a solicitation for a document management solution. Additionally, nearly half of respondents indicated they had the solution type determined prior to issuing a request for proposal (RFP) and were just seeking a vendor. When selecting a solution, agencies most value security (60%), simplicity (49%) and cost savings (45%).

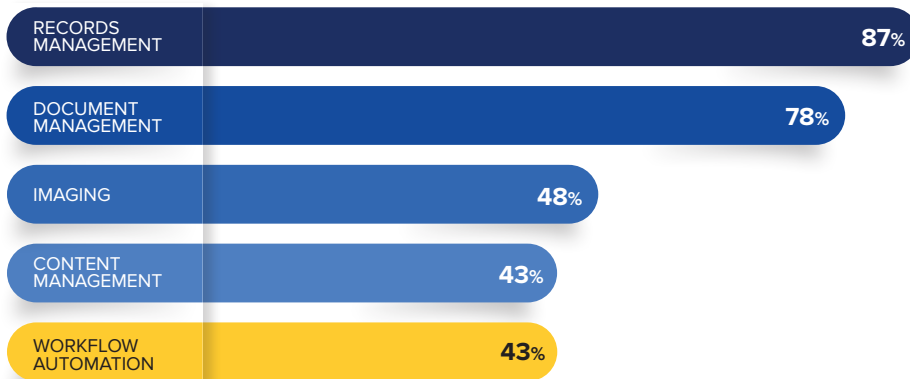
## What are the most important considerations when choosing a document management solution?



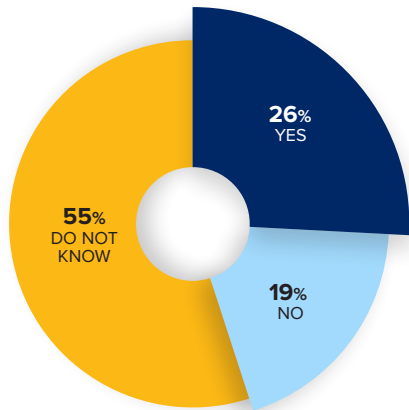
# Moving Forward

While 68 percent of respondents are already modernizing their approach to document management, 15 percent have plans to do so in the future. Of those who plan to implement a new document solution, records management (87%) and document management (78%) are the most sought-after applications. Additionally, approximately 25 percent of all respondents identified a plan to automate business processes within the next year. Agencies hope to automate processes such as travel claims and reimbursement, on-boarding and staff training, license and permit management, health care enrollment and compliance, tax audits, and judicial records and case management.

## Which type of solution do you plan to implement in the next 12 to 18 months?



Do you plan to automate any processes within the next year?



## Conclusion

It's clear government needs a more efficient and cost-effective way to manage paper documents and records — and many agencies are proactively seeking a solution. Document management solutions that meet the unique security, ease of use and integration needs of government can help agencies quickly find and share critical data, automate processes, and save time and money.

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