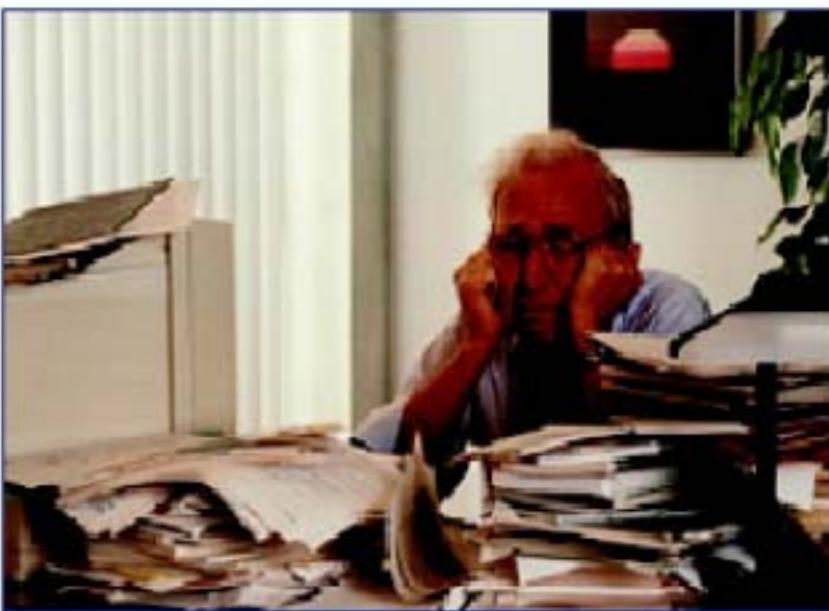


The intelligence and know-how of our companies is determined by two basic elements, the knowledge of our personnel and the information available to them. However the information within our companies is most often not readily available to the employees and thus effecting the overall functioning of our companies. We maintain our own "personal" archives that we only have access to and the company corporate archives. Both have taken a large number of man-hours to create and contain a vast amount of important information. However both archives are not easily accessible. How often have you sent a secretary to find a specific document and he returns empty handed? Especially when you know the document should be there, because you retrieved it last week. What it most often boils down to is that we have to rely on the knowledge of our employees for our supply of information.

Although we employ "competent" people to help keep our companies running, the productivity per individual is not maximized. With the current economic climate we are reducing overheads, which often results in the reduction of headcounts. Not only does this result in having to accomplish more work with fewer resources, but also we are getting rid of valuable information sources. To compensate for this reduction in resources we have to rely more on Information Technology (IT). However most IT solutions are used to generate, distribute or manage electronic information only. Think of the obvious software packages like Word processors, Spreadsheets, Accounting and Human Resources packages. Although these packages have been developed to help generate electronic reports or documents (Invoices, contracts, purchase orders, etc), the final output remains the same; paper. So the reality is that a lot of our information is still stored, distributed and managed in a paper format. As you can well imagine managing paper documents is a very laborious undertaking, which is a contradiction to our company goals.

The software industry of course has not been sleeping and there are many companies now developing software packages enabling you to digitize (document imaging) and manage your paper documents. A typical solution for document imaging and archiving in an existing network would consist of a document scanner, PC, software and in some cases additional storage hardware. Implementing these kinds of solutions have proven to reduce workloads, reduce overheads and

Controlling and Managing your Paper Monster



Familiar Picture?

increase company efficiency. Documents are no longer lost, employees can find the documents they are looking for and more importantly use this information to support their business processes. It is always very tempting to buy something that can offer cost savings; therefore it is extremely important that you select the right product to be installed by the right company.

PICKFORDS
Records Management

If a proper document imaging, archiving, retrieval system has been installed then it is only a matter of process to make information available electronically. But quite often the problem does not end here. Once the paper documents have been processed and made available to our employees we still need to keep the documents. This does not apply to all types of documents, but documents like applications, contracts and project documentation do. In order for us to store these documents we invest large amounts in filing cabinets and other paper storage devices. And once again the issue of physically managing paper crops up and keeps us from focusing on our core business. The obvious solution to this problem is to have a third party take care of this paper storage and