

Case study

## Industry

Information technology

## Challenge

A complex data landscape needed a tailored archive and retention process

## Solution

Iron Mountain Information Governance Advisory Services and Iron Mountain InSight® with an integration to Policy Center

## Value

- > Gained 70X efficiency overall
- > Improved efficiency by 60% in assessing data retention rules
- > Achieved audit and AI readiness



# Streamlining data complexity to achieve audit and AI readiness

Kyndryl gets data audit-ready worldwide, increases efficiencies 70X, transforms data management, and concurrently creates AI-ready data

Kyndryl's purpose is to “help the world’s leading companies disruption-proof operations and support customers.” However, after divesting from IBM, Kyndryl faced the customer-like challenge of operating within a complex data landscape. At the same time, Paul Morton, Associate Director of Data Governance at Kyndryl, was tasked to put an archive and retention process in place—within nine months.

Beyond the divestiture and new process, other complexities loomed. Kyndryl operates in over 70 countries, mandating that it manage hundreds of diverse, country-specific regulatory requirements for data retention. To deploy an effective archive and retention process and achieve audit readiness, Kyndryl needed to resolve three major challenges:

- > Handle a **mix of legacy and new systems** across business functions: over 1,800 applications in over 50 data centers globally

that had to be reduced, simplified, and streamlined.

- > Resolve **murky record ownership issues** between Kyndryl and IBM: 1 million contact records and 300,000 direct customer records required attention.
- > **Navigate complexity** and an **ambiguous data strategy**: Heterogeneous systems, platforms, data, and applications and **hundreds of country-specific data retention rules** comprised a complicated information technology (IT) environment.

“Kyndryl tackled multiple, large-scale issues simultaneously to implement an effective archive and retention process for audit readiness. The double benefit was this approach also made Kyndryl AI-ready. After the initial project preparation and Iron Mountain’s help, the archive and retention process was operational in six months,” Morton shared.

## Wrestling the challenges

In pursuit of audit readiness, the Kyndryl IT team decided to take a process-led approach. First, the team identified the specific business processes that IT needed to support. Then, the team focused on the platforms that could support those business processes. Those priority platforms were used as the litmus test to streamline application development; for example, a new application wasn't needed if the same or similar capability existed on a current platform.

The team also mandated the new archive and retention process provide transparency in data governance and leverage a single source of truth. Disparate data sets and formats had to be combined in a single platform to simplify data access, increase usability, and future-proof the business.

Kyndryl's criteria for a partner and platform selection included three key characteristics:

1. A turnkey solution from a single vendor that is also configurable to Kyndryl's needs
2. An industry-recognized leader
3. A trusted ally to Kyndryl's business partners

Kyndryl chose to partner with Iron Mountain. In addition to meeting their requirements, Morton knew Iron Mountain had the expertise they needed in both information governance and the document types they handled,

as Kyndryl already stored physical information with Iron Mountain.

## Getting data ready

Led by Morton, the Kyndryl IT team worked with their internal business team partners and Iron Mountain to develop a set of rules, or governance, for storing data. Specific criteria were articulated for active or hot data used every day, passive or warm data for ready offline access, and archive or cold data to be kept for legal reasons only, not as a backup source.

"Our archive rules are important for retrievability and legality of the data itself. Carrying data too long is as much of a liability as not carrying it at all," says Morton. "Initially, the general data retention rule set included 400 different rules that were written in legal speak, making it difficult for people to know which rules applied. We worked with Iron Mountain's Information Governance Advisory Services team to reduce the global rule sets to 93 vastly simplified rules, that now govern Kyndryl's data archives. Currently, we estimate it is 60% more efficient to assess data retention rules today than in the past. More importantly, we have confidence in the reference data".

Kyndryl further distilled the rules into the most vital components, making them more understandable and usable. Each rule was defined by the data object, the minimum and maximum retention requirement, the year, the country, and the data format.

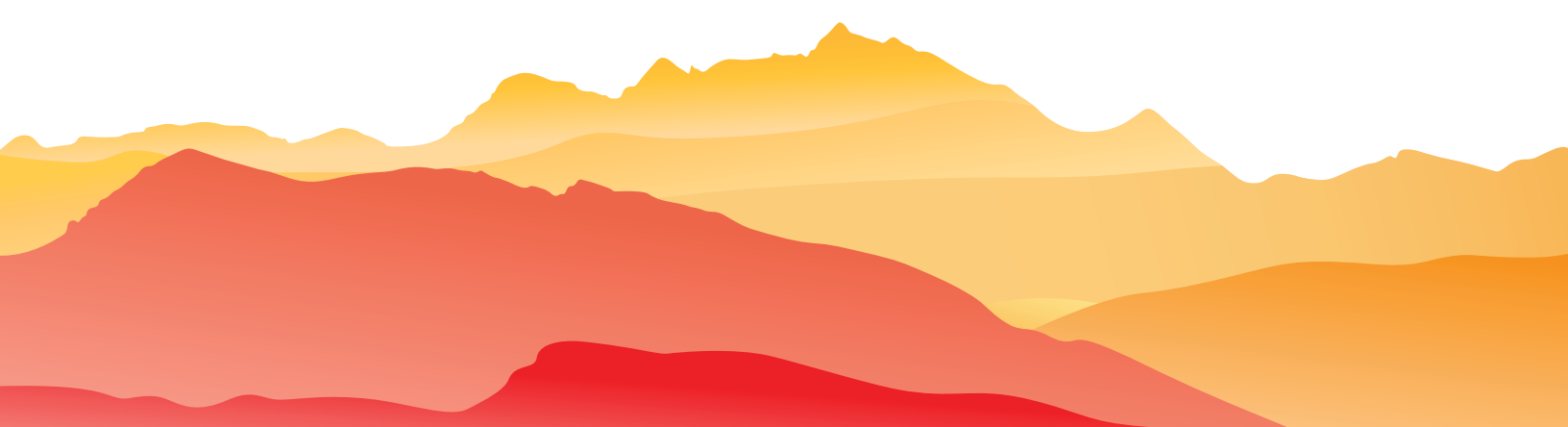
Security is paramount to Kyndryl, and they wanted to maintain control and life cycle of their data. Iron Mountain worked with Kyndryl to take their records stored in their instances of AWS, Microsoft Azure, and elsewhere and made them available to view and manage in Iron Mountain InSight®, our content services platform. Kyndryl can systematically apply retention rules to their information in InSight through an integration with Policy Center, Iron Mountain's cloud-based retention and privacy policy management platform that supports over 60 countries.

## Gaining AI readiness

One of Kyndryl's most transformational outcomes of the archive and retention process was the dual benefit of achieving AI-ready data. That's because the journey to AI readiness consists of effective information management plus strong records compliance practices.

In addition to clear data governance, Kyndryl also adopted a solid data cataloging approach to fortify information management. Using InSight, data is classified, tagged with metadata, and organized for management, accessibility, and usability across the organization. Because finding data is always challenging, Kyndryl crowdsources terms used by business units when searching for data. Kyndryl can now manage and use all the data from the catalog and all metadata from the archive.

"Kyndryl also achieved AI readiness. Since we know what data we have and



what format it's in, we've achieved data consistency and established standards. To do this, Kyndryl built out two data catalogs. One contains information about the data, and the other contains information about where the data is located. As a result, Kyndryl's data is now both audit-ready and AI-ready," commented Morton.

## Generating outcomes

Kyndryl's IT focus is to support business units and advance business outcomes. Implementing the archive and retention process while also enabling AI readiness was a success on both counts. The business units have improved access to usable data, accelerating intelligent decision-making for better business results.

Overall, this project made Kyndryl 70X more efficient, simplified rule understanding, enhanced data management, lowered the cost of managing compliance rules while improving compliance, and established AI readiness. "Outcomes like these are transformational for Kyndryl. We've established the foundation for a stronger, smarter, more scalable future," stated Morton.

Looking to [get your data AI-ready](#)? Contact [Iron Mountain](#) to discuss your specific needs.

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### About Iron Mountain

Iron Mountain Incorporated (NYSE: IRM), founded in 1951, is the global leader for storage and information management services. Trusted by more than 220,000 organizations around the world, and with a real estate network of more than 85 million square feet across more than 1,400 facilities in over 50 countries, Iron Mountain stores and protects billions of information assets, including critical business information, highly sensitive data, and cultural and historical artifacts. Providing solutions that include secure storage, information management, digital transformation, secure destruction, as well as data centers, art storage and logistics, and cloud services, Iron Mountain helps organizations to lower cost and risk, comply with regulations, recover from disaster, and enable a more digital way of working. Visit [www.ironmountain.com](https://www.ironmountain.com) for more information.

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