aiim eBook

Making Innovation Happen with Intelligent Capture

In Partnership with

IRON MOUNTAIN®

Introduction

The workplace today is demanding a different set of skills and capabilities. Now more than ever, organizations need to embrace digital disruption as a springboard for competitive advantage and adopt new ways of working that invigorate organizational performance.

Despite the driving need to digitize, the fact is that many organizations continue to struggle with manual processes and paper-bound workflow in key areas of business processes. According to our 2021 State of the Industry Report, AIIM members tell us that digitizing, automating, and integrating processes is a top information management challenge. The needed capabilities include the ability to leverage remote work as an advantage, remove the burden of paper, and drive business growth despite these challenging times.

> " Organization need to embrace disruption as a springboard for competitive advantage and adopt new ways of working that invigorate organizational performance. "

Members tell us that many activities and business processes have yet to be digitally transformed. "Our workflow is very paper-driven and our processes are manual," said one survey respondent. "We still struggle with paper and incomplete or confusing processes," said another. Some members express frustration about the lack of progress. "Our Information Management team is about four years old and we are still working with basic scanning and human indexing." And "the company has relied on paper far too much, partly because people look at content as analogous to paper." Other members question if digitization will ever become a reality. "We are in the process of automating, but many, many company records are stored in boxes and file cabinets."

Finding a Path Forward

Intelligent capture provides a path forward. The key is to regard the effort with more than a 'scan and store' approach. Sure, you can scan documents to create an image as a first step to eliminate paper; but this falls short of the full potential. Wider and more impactful opportunities exist for organizations to bridge the gap between paper and digital media, especially in traditionally paper-intensive fields such as financial services, healthcare, or government.

Intelligent capture automates the process of identifying and extracting critical information from incoming paper and electronic documents without extensive guidance from a user. Automation replaces manual input and processing, and the captured content is then stored in an organized manner complete with metadata and classification.

In addition to eliminating paper and reclaiming storage space, significant process improvements and savings can be attained with intelligent capture. During the digitization process, metadata is extracted, making it easy and efficient to search and find critical information. Data extraction strategies pull detailed data from documents and recognition technologies allow the system to read handwriting, map fields, and leverage advanced data codes and glyphs. Scanned images and the captured data are passed to content management systems while captured line item information is passed to any number of ERP or business application systems.

The benefits of intelligent capture begin with the ability to eliminate paper and gain more efficient document retrieval, but you get the added dimension of feeding vital information into a variety of enterprise content management systems and applications. This can be a formidable ingredient. With thoughtful integration, intelligent capture enables organizations to overcome several challenges caused by manual data entry, providing reduced overhead and increased efficiency. More than that, intelligent capture frees up human resources formerly used for manual data input and processing to perform other important business tasks.

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> Intelligent Capture provides a path toward meaningful innovation and improvement. The key is to regard the effort with more than a 'scan and store' approach.
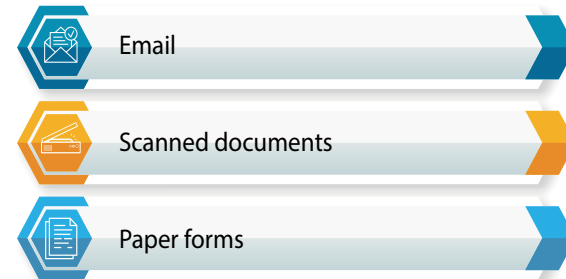> "

Making the Move to Intelligent Capture

The amount and variety of information flooding into organizations is overwhelming. One good example is in a mailroom environment where the challenges of working with paper-based information provide real barriers to the efficiency of your employees and the information security, privacy, and compliance requirements of your organization. It's impossible to innovate when paper-based mail comes and goes by the truckload and your employees struggle to manage large volumes of inbound paper mail every month. The ability to intelligently capture this information consistently and integrate it into automated business processes is essential.
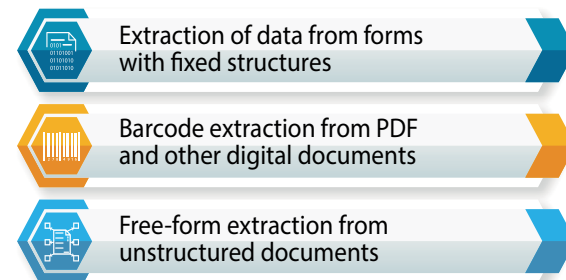
We asked AIIM members to rank their top three biggest capture challenges:

- The volume of information
- The variety of information
- Poor integration with LOB systems
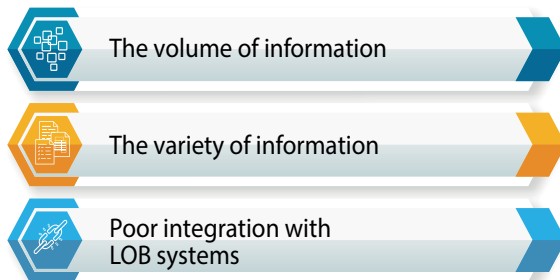
We asked respondents to rate their top three biggest capture headaches:

- Email
- Scanned documents
- Paper forms

AIIM members also ranked the top three capture capabilities they need to innovate:

- Extraction of data from forms with fixed structures
- Barcode extraction from PDF and other digital documents
- Free-form extraction from unstructured documents

The core challenge for all organizations is to move beyond a focus on scan to archive. While getting rid of the paper and/or digitizing is necessary, on its own this is no longer sufficient to truly transform business processes.

72%

For **72%** of organizations, scanning paper is still the most important part of their information capture strategy.

In the Real World

Intelligent capture may seem like a buzz-term, or something that is too conceptual to provide real world transformation, but the truth is that the techniques are at work today powering important process improvements. Consider this example:

Government agencies in the U.S. faced unprecedented challenges in 2020. One state unemployment agency found unemployment claims rose from 1,000 a day pre-pandemic to 27,000 daily claims, with exception claims rocketing to 1,500 a day. The agency's team of employees was quickly overwhelmed.

To address the rapidly rising demand the agency adopted a digital mailroom solution from Iron Mountain. The agency's mail was redirected to Iron Mountain where a team of experts leveraged optical character recognition technology to scan and index their documents, and make them fully searchable for the agency's overworked, remote employees. After reviewing each scanned document for accuracy and compliance, the claims were ingested into a secure cloud storage repository. The team then applied a metadata field for claimant's Social Security numbers so that the agency could easily identify exception claims.

Iron Mountain also worked with the agency to determine document retention and destruction requirements in order to keep storage costs down. "Some documents need to be saved for a set period of time, but not

indefinitely," said one agency official. "For other documents, after they've been digitized, the physical copy can be destroyed. This helps clear up space and save paper."
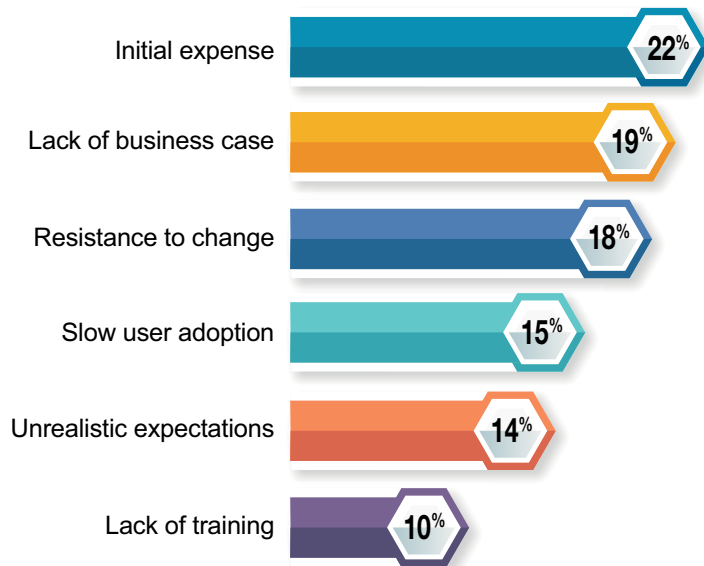
The approach allowed the state unemployment agency to search and access their paper mail from a centralized and secure location, address the new challenges encountered with work-from-home employees, and save time and resources searching for and processing claims...all while satisfying the agency's compliance and privacy requirements.

Making Change Happen

Organizations are gaining the benefits of intelligent capture by extending basic capture capabilities. As a result, they are uniquely positioned to address the problems created by information chaos – the explosion in the formats, speeds, and volumes of information entering organizations today. Many early-stage capture implementations have very successfully focused on specific departmental processes. Organizations have struggled, though, to extend these content capabilities beyond their original focus.

In our 2021 State of IIM Report, we asked AIIM members what's holding them back:

Obstacle	Percentage
Initial expense	22%
Lack of business case	19%
Resistance to change	18%
Slow user adoption	15%
Unrealistic expectations	14%
Lack of training	10%

It is interesting to note that a lack of technology or limited capabilities did not make the list of top obstacles. Indeed, AIIM members tell us that managing change and getting executive sponsorship and support for IIM initiatives are most often a bigger challenge than even the most complicated tangle of technology.

How to Overcome the Top Obstacles to Getting Intelligent Capture off the Ground

The C-Suite still needs a lot of convincing to free up enough resources for initiatives like intelligent capture. What can you do to get support? AIIM's Certified Information Professionals offer this advice for ensuring project buy-in and adoption:

- **Elevate the conversation about information value.**
  That means transitioning from viewing a record as something you just stored and archived and retained to something of value that you could utilize to extend your work processes.

- **Create an internal framework to understand and balance both risk AND value.**
  You have information everywhere. Start by assigning both risk and value metrics to each source of information, and begin by attacking information sources that are high-risk and high-value.

- **Be clear on both the "why" and the "how."**
  Educate potentially stressed individuals on why changes need to occur – how the information management solution will improve their work environment by eliminating tedious tasks to gain their support. But don't stop there. Once you have established the reason for the change, be very clear on how and when it will evolve.

- **Invest in "story-telling" and the mechanisms to tell those stories.**
  It is not enough to talk about the technical reasons why a particular change is being made or why a new system is being implemented. Think like a marketer; actively market what you are doing by painting a picture of the endgame.

- **Do change management by the drink, not through a firehose.**
  Communicate the change early, provide training opportunities, and allow time for feedback. Introduce change in small increments and be inclusive of business users who will be impacted. Break down the issue into steps/pieces and align each piece with a complete understanding of the technology.
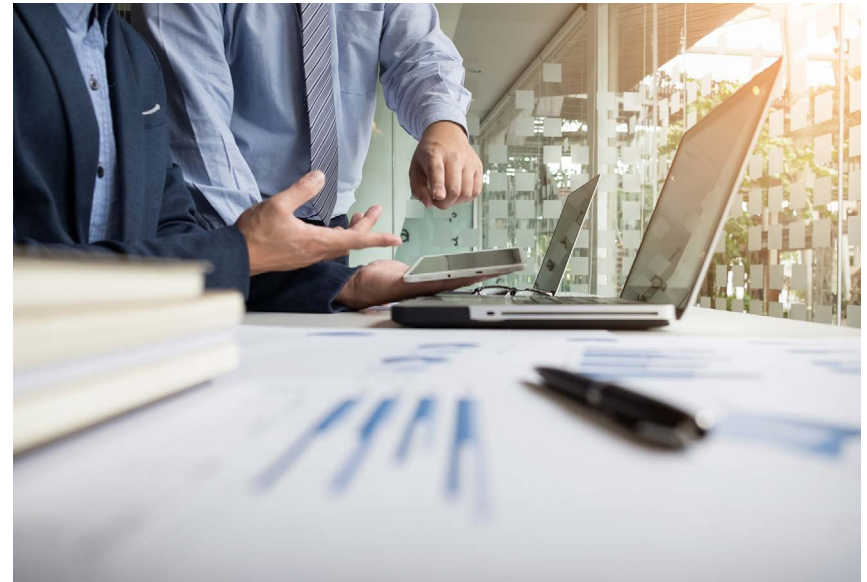
Moving Forward

Organizations must transform their business processes to remain competitive. Intelligent capture, when paired with thoughtful strategies, provides a clear roadmap. Now is the time and opportunity to spark a new generation of process improvement, innovation, and improved performance. Look for providers and professional services partners with the right mix of capability, expertise, and vision to make the most of your efforts.

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About Iron Mountain Incorporated

Iron Mountain Incorporated (NYSE: IRM), founded in 1951, is the global leader for storage and information management services. Trusted by more than 225,000 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 valued assets, including critical business information, highly sensitive data, and cultural and historical artifacts. Providing solutions that include information management, digital transformation, secure storage, secure destruction, as well as data centers, cloud services and art storage and logistics, Iron Mountain helps customers lower cost and risk, comply with regulations, recover from disaster, and enable a more digital way of working.

Learn more about Iron Mountain at
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