

# CASE STUDY

## Retention Schedule Makeover

● **INDUSTRY**  
Government

● **COUNTRY**  
USA



This client's retention schedule had not been updated in 10 years. Its use was limited to physical records and it was not fit for purpose with electronic records or their new content management system. Faced with far too many entries, few people outside of the organization used it to classify records. As a State agency, they knew their schedule had to meet certain requirements, but needed help figuring out what these were and the best path to compliance. The clients objectives and concerns included:

### SERVICES DELIVERED:

- Modus™ Records Retention Schedules
- SharePoint for Records

- Ensuring that whatever approach was taken to streamline and simplify the RRS enabled them to be in compliance with applicable State records retention requirements.
- Clarifying any misunderstanding regarding the State, and its role with respect to agency/ authority records retention.
- Addressing risks associated with changes to State and Federal law, compounded by State-provided retention schedules that had not been updated in many years.

### ISSUE

**Simplify and streamline the records retention schedule while ensuring compliance with state record-keeping requirements**

- Understanding and accounting for record keeping requirements governed by authorities outside of the reach of the State (such as FEMA, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, EPA, and the Coast Guard).
- Addressing individual departments that typically do not apply retention to electronic records.

They turned to Access Sciences for a redesign of their schedule, to make it streamlined, simplified, and compliant with State rules.



## BIG BUCKETS – SIMPLE AND COMPLIANT

Our team's redesign efforts centered on finding opportunities to roll up existing record series to larger buckets while still incorporating State rules for records retention. Using Access Sciences' retention schedule database, Modus™, we were able to refresh the regulatory research and leverage what we already knew about the agency to develop an initial set of buckets. Our approach included:

- Organizing the schedule by business function to ensure stability over time.
- Using big buckets to reduce the number of record series and support the schedule's use with electronic record repositories and applications.
- Simplification of retention rules to drive user adoption and application in an electronic environment.
- Analyzing how the simplified schedule translated into information management policy settings in the client's content management system.
- Enhancing the schedule with Agency-specific record series where needed and documenting references to State requirements.
- Eliminating record types from the schedule and recommending the use of additional tools like file plans to accomplish this objective.
- Records management programs of local governments must meet three basic requirements and be approved by the State Libraries and Archives Commission (SLAC):
  1. Records Management Policy (RMP): Submit a records management policy approved by order, resolution or ordinance to implement and maintain a records management program.
  2. Records Management Officer (RMO): One person must be appointed to be responsible for the records management program.
  3. Records Control Schedule (RCS): Submit a complete list of records and the retention periods for those records; alternatively, a government may adopt SLAC local government retention schedules.
- We started with our standardized Modus™ "Starter Set" record series that leverages Access Sciences' experience across scores of clients and includes all the latest research

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## SOLUTIONS

- ✓ **Modus™ allowed our client to redesign the buckets that regulatory information composed**
  - ✓ **Access Sciences was able to condense regulatory bucks from 367 entries to 71**
  - ✓ **Redesigned search rules led to more accessible records**
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and citations. Then enhance the schedule with any Agency-specific record series.

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## BENEFITS

- ☑ Increased likelihood of successful adoption and usage of content management systems
- ☑ Easier to understand practices for classifying records
- ☑ Transparent record-keeping requirements through documented key citations
- ☑ Comprehensive and up-to-date compliance with state and federal regulatory requirements

- The first step involved a mapping and gap check of current agency record series to our standard “Starter Set” record series.
- One of our challenges was resolving cases where there was overlap or ambiguity with existing Records Series (i.e. could map to any of several starter Record Series), or where an existing Record Series mapped to multiple citation sets.
- We made reference to record-keeping requirements included in these 2 SLAC schedules using the Justification field for their Record Series in Modus, when SLAC had a longer retention requirement than the key citations in Modus or when SLAC established a legal requirement in the absence of none in Modus (things we would normally associate with only having a business requirement).

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## A SIMPLER SCHEDULE RESULTS IN EASE OF USE...

- SLAC’s Retention Schedule for Records Common to All Local Governments has 367 entries; our end result had 71.
- Our retention schedule structure achieved the big-bucket goal of support for the application of retention rules for electronic content and easier/automated classification in the content management system.
- Our retention periods were compliant with minimum mandatory retentions established by SLAC.
- Peace of mind that schedule and supporting citations are up-to-date and comprehensive for the agency’s operating and regulatory environment.
- Key citations affecting record-keeping requirements are flagged so that the agency can readily identify relevant citations.

