

AN INTRODUCTION FOR RECORDS AND INFORMATION MANAGERS



RECORDS MANAGEMENT USING MICROSOFT OFFICE  
SHAREPOINT SERVER – GIMMAL WHITE PAPER

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## **A Brief History of Records Management**

The practice of records management has been around since Egyptians first applied dyed gum and beeswax to papyrus. For centuries, the fundamentals of records management were the same. Someone documented a transaction on some sort of physical material. If the document needed to be maintained because it was historically significant or had evidentiary importance, someone stored the document for a set amount of time or, possibly, decided to keep it indefinitely. These physical records were typically stored in a secure facility and managed through their lifecycle.

The dawn of the Age of Electronically Stored Information changed everything. Now the vast majority of documents are 'born' digital, and many will go through their entire lifecycle – creation, distribution, utilization, retention, storage, retrieval, preservation, and final disposition – without ever being printed or otherwise output to some physical media.

As early as 1981, software companies began creating document imaging and document management applications that allowed information workers to create, manage and distribute electronic documents throughout their organization. At about the same time, a number of companies created records management applications that enabled organizations to capture documents created in document management applications and manage them from a centralized management framework pursuant to business, legal, and regulatory requirements.

Over time, the creators of the document management applications realized they could not manage documents across the enterprise without including records management functionality. Soon the largest document management application vendors were buying the smaller records management applications vendors and integrating their records management features into the core product code.

A few stand-alone records management solutions still exist in the market place today, but as time goes on, it is anticipated that these applications will continue to decline in number either through acquisition or obsolescence.

## **Microsoft Document Management**

In 2001, Microsoft entered the document management market with the release of SharePoint Team Services (STS). STS provided limited document management functionality, as well as some collaboration and portal features, but no records management functionality. Due to these limitations, STS was generally not well received.

In 2003, Microsoft released a new version of Office (Office 2003) with an upgraded version of STS which it renamed Windows SharePoint Services (WSS). Due to market demands at the time, the upgrades to WSS were focused primarily on the portal features of SharePoint and less on document management. Records management was still not addressed in WSS, though many records management application

vendors offered integrations that allowed organizations to use WSS as a front-end user interface and kept the vendor's records repository to store and manage the records on the back end.

The very public document and records management scandals involving companies like Enron and Arthur Andersen resulted in the Sarbanes-Oxley Act and convinced Microsoft to once again refocus SharePoint's functionality toward more robust document management features and provide some basic records management functionality as well.

In 2007, Microsoft released Office 2007 with two new versions of SharePoint, Windows SharePoint Server 3.0 (WSS 3.0) and Microsoft Office SharePoint Server (MOSS) 2007.

WSS 3.0 is a free version of SharePoint. It provides limited document management, collaboration and portal functionality and should be perfectly suitable for small organizations that do not need to build large, enterprise-wide applications. WSS 3.0 does not provide out-of-the-box records management functionality.

MOSS 2007 is an upgraded component of Office 2007. MOSS 2007 provides many more Enterprise Content Management (ECM) features than WSS 3.0 and is a more scalable. MOSS 2007 is also the first version of SharePoint to include out-of-the-box records management functionality.

## **What is SharePoint?**

At its core, SharePoint is a web-based portal providing enterprise collaboration and document management functionality. To be clear, SharePoint is not so much an application as it is a platform. End users can use the tools provided in SharePoint to customize shared workspaces and documents, as well as develop specialized applications such as wikis and blogs.

SharePoint functionality is exposed through web parts, which are an integrated set of ASP .NET controls that allow end users to modify SharePoint's web pages directly from a browser. Web parts can be created to modify the content, appearance and behavior of SharePoint web pages.

## **SharePoint and Records Management**

Until recently, any organization using SharePoint for document management was required to use a third-party records management application integration to manage their records. Using these third-party integrations, organizations are able to create documents in SharePoint and make them widely available for other users for collaboration.

At any point in the lifecycle of these documents, the users are able to declare them records. Typically, this is done one of two ways. The end user can manually declare the document a record by right-clicking on it and selecting an option to send it to the third-party records repository. Or the record declaration takes place as part of an automated process and is completely transparent to the solution's end users.

With the release of MOSS 2007, SharePoint now provides out-of-the-box records management functionality that includes a template for creating a unique records repository site called the Records Center.

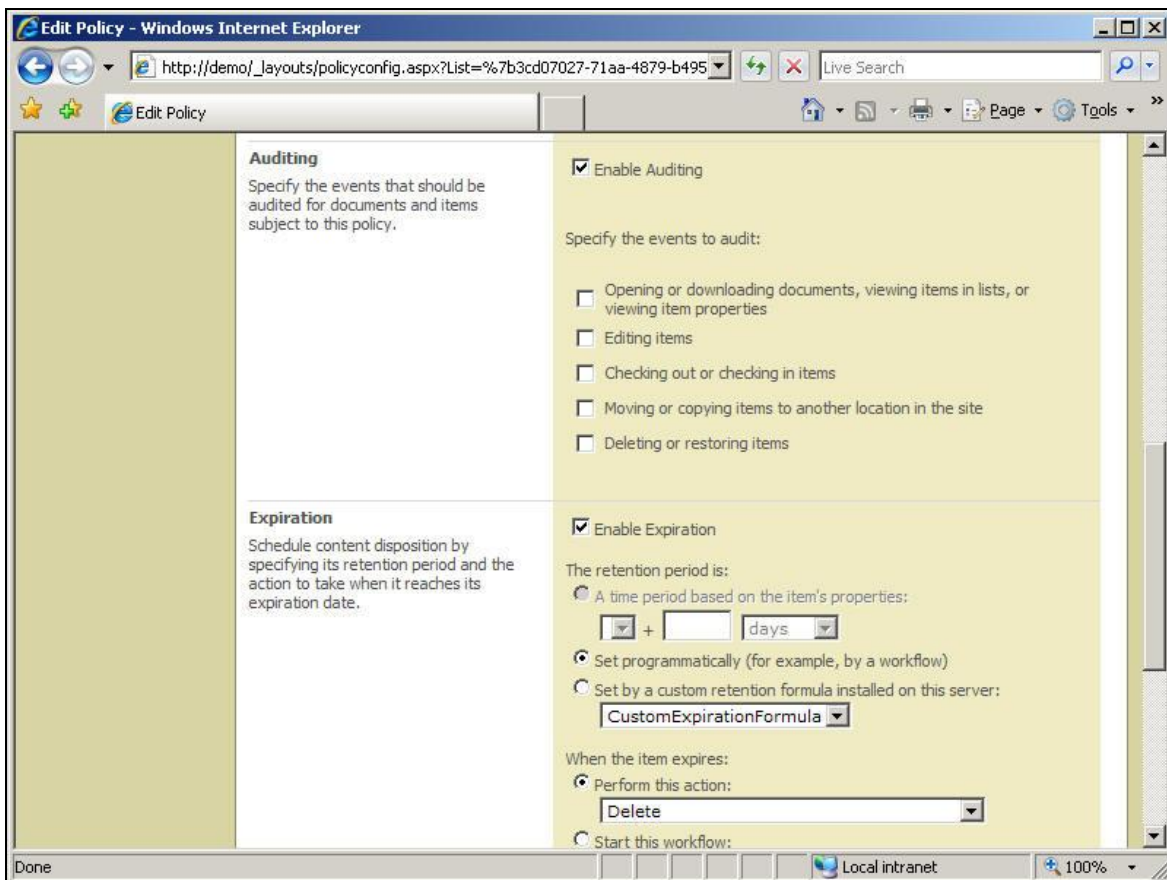
## MOSS 2007 Records Center

The MOSS 2007 Records Center template provides some rudimentary records management functionality that allows organizations to manage documents as “official records” to be retained in accordance with an organization’s retention policy. When installed, the Records Center becomes the central point for all records management processes.

The Records Center includes the following records management features:

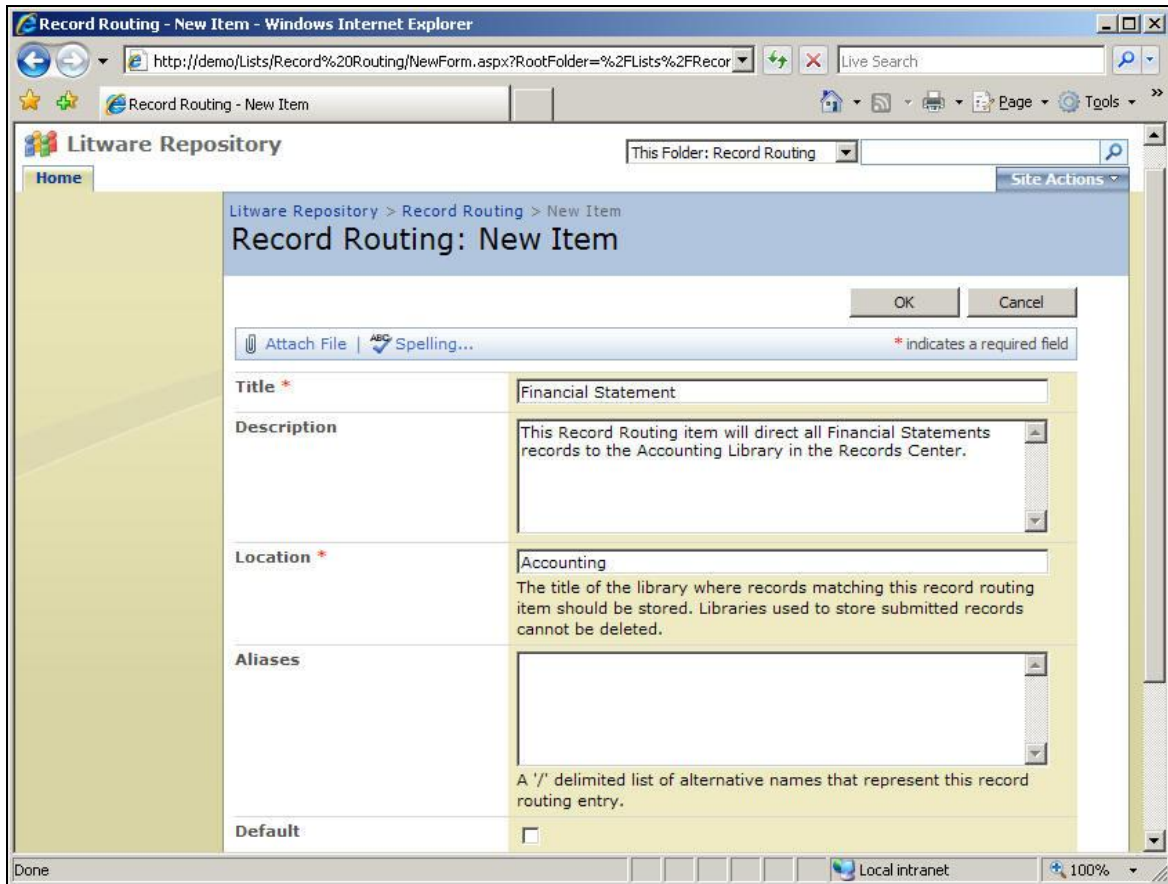
*Content Types* – Content Types are a new feature added to MOSS 2007. They are predefined document templates that provide the end user with the appropriate metadata for the type of document the end user is creating.

*Information Management Policies* – The Records Center provides an organization’s Records Administrator with the ability to create policies that can be applied to records storage locations or content types. These policies can be set to enforce labeling and auditing of records, as well as records disposition.



## Settings Information Policy in MOSS 2007 Records Center for Auditing and Expiration

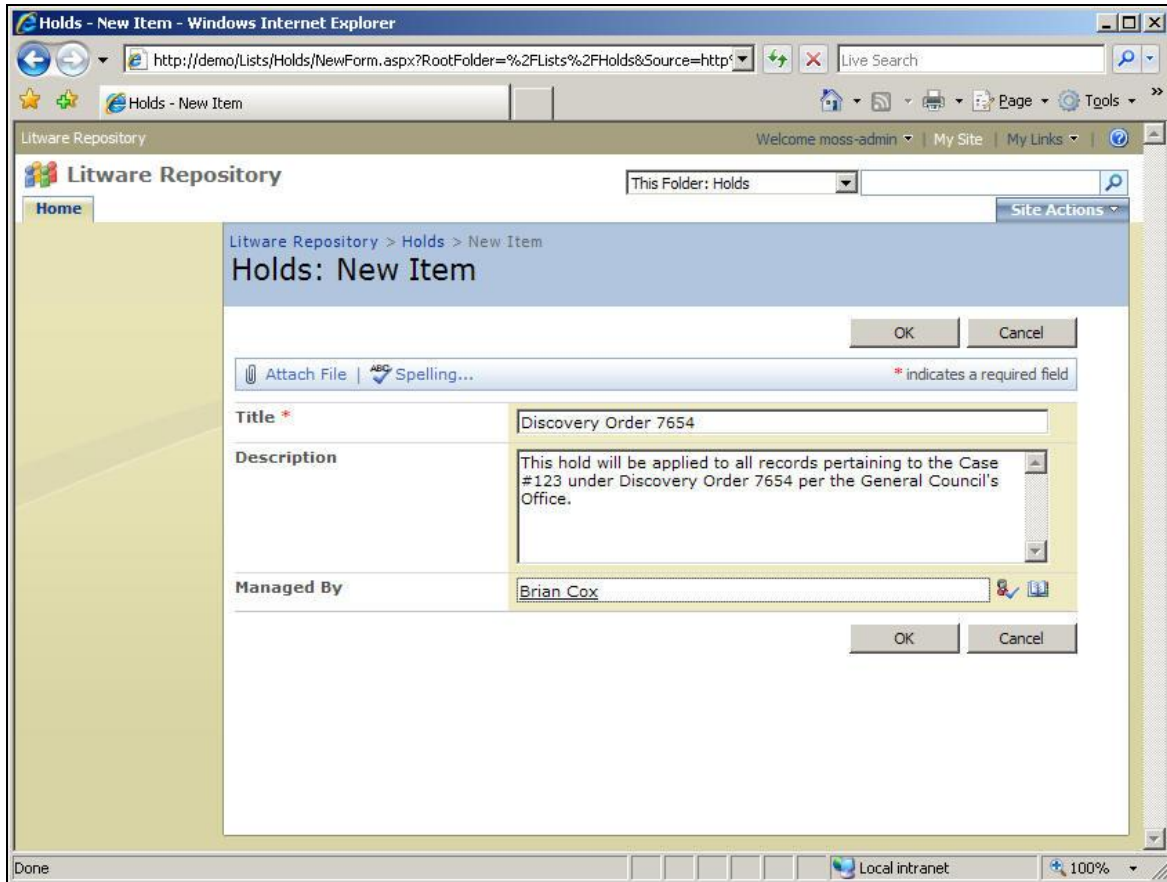
*Records Routing* – Because training end users to properly classify records can be difficult, the Records Center can be configured to classify records automatically based on the record’s content type. This, for example, would allow an end user to send a document with a content type of ‘Financial Statement’ to the ‘Accounting’ records library in the Records Center without having to manually navigate the Records Center libraries and folders.



**Creating a Record Routing Table Entry**

*Litigation Holds* – A ‘hold’ on a record suspends destruction practices and procedures as necessary to comply with preservation obligations related to actual or reasonably anticipated litigation, governmental investigation, or audit. (It should be noted that holds only suspend the expiration of records in the records repository; they do not prevent someone from deleting records manually.)

The MOSS 2007 Records Center provides a Hold feature that allows for the creation of a Hold item and the application of that Hold item on any record in the repository.



**Creating a Hold in the MOSS 2007 Records Center**

The Records Center provides an excellent set of core records management features, but the standard MOSS 2007 Records Center does not have the records management features that a true enterprise solution would require. Some of the functionality missing includes:

- A multilevel, hierarchical file plan
- Metadata propagation
- Event-based retention scheduling
- Vital records review processing
- Record relationships
- Transfer disposition
- Multiphase disposition processing
- Electronically stored records destruction processing
- Comprehensive email records management

There are a few other omissions in the MOSS 2007 Records Center feature set that limit its records management functionality. However, for a small to mid-level organization looking to manage a limited set of documents as records, it provides an acceptable solution.

## **The DoD 5015.2 Records Management Application Standard**

During the early 1990's a number of Gulf War veterans developed an ailment that would later be called Gulf War Syndrome (GWS). This mysterious illness baffled military doctors. Several physicians investigating the illness suggested to the US military that it might help if the military examine the electronically stored records of GWS sufferers to determine if there were any unique commonalities between the locations and duties assigned to the patients as they served in the war. Unfortunately, when the military searched for the patients' records, they were unable to find records for many of those suffering from GWS and the few records they did find were in such disarray that they were virtually unusable.

This experience taught the US military that it had an urgent need for a way to benchmark its electronically stored records management applications. As a result, the [DoD 5015.2-STD 'Design Criteria Standard for Electronic Records Management Applications'](#) (DoD 5015.2) was created. Version 1 of the Standard was released in late 1997 and was quickly [endorsed by the National Archives and Records Administration](#) for use in civilian agencies. Within a short period of time, non-government U.S. organizations began to rely on the DoD 5015.2 Standard when evaluating records management applications. They were soon followed by non-U.S. government and commercial organizations. By the March 2000 release of Version 2 of the standard, it had become the de facto global standard for electronic records management applications.

To be clear, the DoD 5015.2 is a *functional* standard. (This distinguishes it from the [ISO 15489](#), which is the international standard for records management practices, and is a *process* standard.) The DoD 5015.2 is a comprehensive set of functional records management requirements that must be included in an application in order to pass certification.

The DoD [Joint Interoperability Test Command](#) (JITC) administers all DoD 5015.2 certification testing. The testing procedure ensures that the application software is able to perform all the functional requirements listed in the Standard. The current version of the Standard ([DoD 5015.2-STD Version 3](#)) has about 250 unique functional requirements. During testing, compliance to each of these requirements is demonstrated. Failure to comply with even one of the requirements in the Standard results in complete failure and denial of certification.

It should be noted that a DoD 5015.2 certified records management application can still be implemented in a manner that is not compliant with the standard. An example of this occurs when the organization implements the application to manage their records, but maintains their records in a repository different from the one used in testing.

## **The DoD 5015.2 Resource Kit for SharePoint Server 2007**

As mentioned earlier, Microsoft has made a strategic decision to position SharePoint as an acceptable Enterprise Content Management (ECM) solution. And since any true ECM solution requires a records management component, they added some records management functionality to MOSS 2007 with the Records Center.

The records management features in the Records Center offer enough functionality to manage small records repositories. For true enterprise-wide records management, Microsoft realized that the Records Center would require far more RM functionality than it provided out-of-the-box. So in late 2006 Microsoft teamed with a partner company and created enhancements to the Records Center that added functionality that met all the requirements of the DoD 5015.2 standard.

In May 2007, the enhanced MOSS 2007 Records Center was tested by JITC and [awarded certification](#). In February 2008, Microsoft released the enhanced Records Center as the [DoD 5015.2 Resource Kit for SharePoint Server 2007](#).

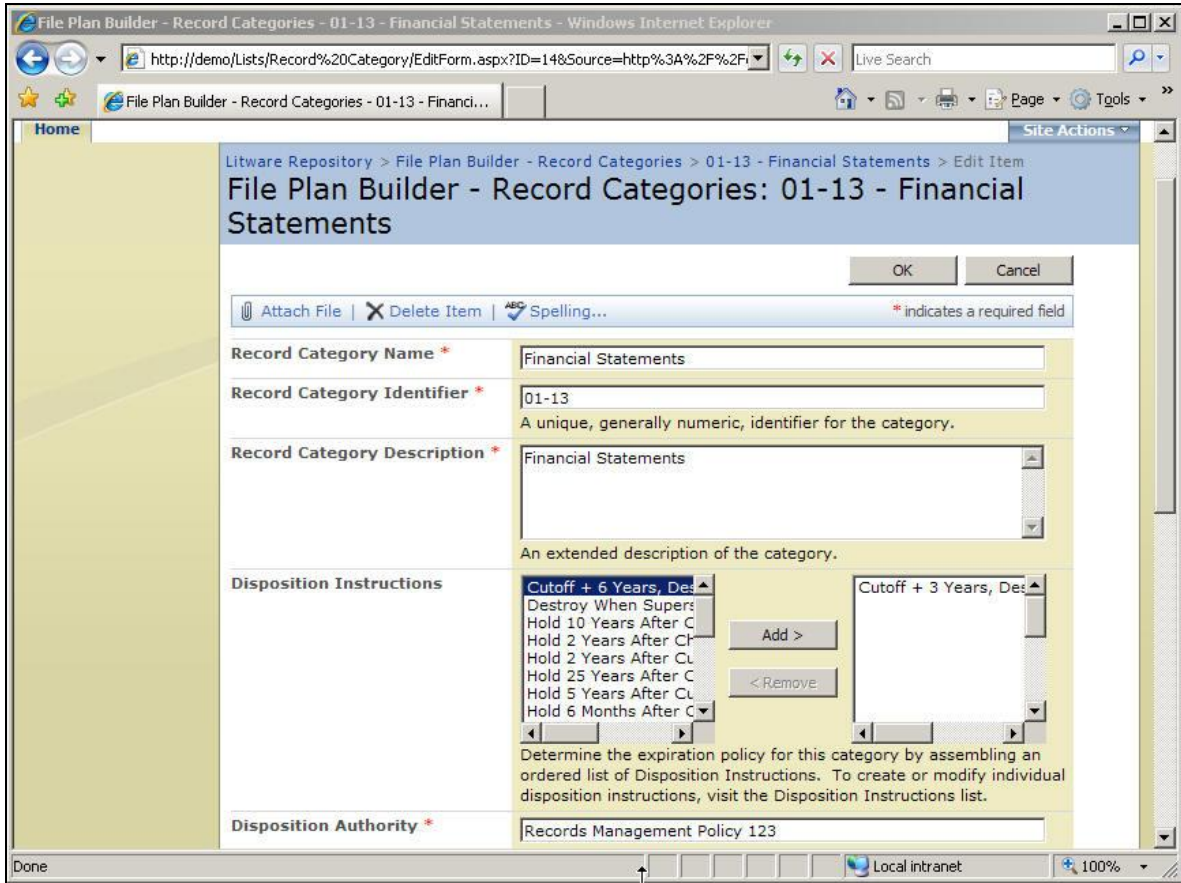
The DoD 5015.2 Resource Kit can be downloaded from the [Microsoft Download Center](#). The Resource Kit is only provided for evaluation purposes. Once the Resource Kit is evaluated, Microsoft recommends engaging a qualified partner to help with implementation.

## **Records Management Features of the DoD 5015.2 Resource Kit for MOSS 2007**

The DoD 5015.2 Resource Kit provides MOSS 2007 with much more comprehensive records management functionality than the features included in the standard Records Center. Some of the additional features in the Resource Kit include the following:

*File Plan Creation* – The DoD 5015.2 Resource Kit enables system administrators to create a file plan structure within the Records Center. The file plan consists of the primary level, called Categories, and the secondary level, called Folders. This file plan structure mirrors the one used in the DoD 5015.2 Test

Procedures. Records can be declared at both the category and folder levels. The retention applied to the records is inherited from the parent category.



### MOSS 2007 DoD 5015.2 Resource Kit Category Metadata – Part 1

The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "File Plan Builder - Record Categories - 01-13 - Financial Statements - Windows Internet Explorer". The address bar shows a URL: "http://demo/Lists/Record%20Category/EditForm.aspx?ID=148Source=http%3A%2F%2F...". The page contains a form with the following fields:

- Disposition Authority \***: Text input field containing "Records Management Policy 123". Description: "A citation of the legal authority that empowers the disposition of records in this category."
- Permanent Record Indicator \***: Radio button group with "Yes" and "No" options. "No" is selected. Description: "Determines if records in this category can ever expire."
- Vital Record Indicator \***: Radio button group with "Yes" and "No" options. "No" is selected. Description: "If set to yes, items in this category will undergo a periodic review."
- Vital Review Period**: Dropdown menu set to "(None)". Description: "The review period for vital records in this category. \* If Vital Record Indicator is set to 'Yes', then Vital Review Period is required."
- Last Reviewed Date**: Text input field containing "11/13/2007". Description: "The date that the record was last reviewed by the vital review process."
- Vital Record Reviewer**: User selection field. Description: "Select only one user or group to review this item, if applicable. This option is required if Vital Record Indicator is checked. Select only one user or group to review this item, if applicable. This option is required if Vital Record Indicator is checked."
- Cutoff Instruction**: Dropdown menu set to "(None)". Description: "Select an instruction from the Cutoff Instructions list. To ensure that this category is not cut off, select None."

At the bottom of the form, it says: "Created at 11/13/2007 1:29 PM by Pavel Berka" and "Last modified at 11/13/2007 1:29 PM by Pavel Berka". There are "OK" and "Cancel" buttons. The browser status bar shows "Local intranet" and "100%".

## MOSS 2007 DoD 5015.2 Resource Kit Category Metadata – Part 2

*Metadata Propagation* - Metadata values assigned to the categories and folders in the DoD 5015.2 Resource Kit file plan can be inherited by the records they contain. For instance, one of the metadata properties assigned to records in the repository is the record's parent category. This inherited property allows the solution to identify where the record is classified within records reports and records search result lists.

*Record Relationships* – The DoD 5015.2 Resource Kit ships with records linking capability. Any record can be associated with any other record in the file plan. This relationship is reciprocal and is updated as records are moved or deleted. Additionally, the Resource Kit allows an administrator to create site-specific relationships that may not exist with the standard implementation. New records relationships can be either hierarchical or peer-to-peer.

<b>Date Filed</b>	5/27/2008 The date the record was submitted to the repository.
<b>Author or Originator *</b>	Pavel Berka The original author of the record.
<b>Originating Organization *</b>	Accounting The organization that created the record.
<b>Location</b>	<input type="text"/> The location where this item is stored.
<b>Last Reviewed Date</b>	<input type="text"/> The date that the record was last reviewed by the vital review process.
<b>Date Superseded</b>	<input type="text"/> 12 AM 00 The date this record is obsolete.
<b>Record Relationships</b>	<p><b>a cross reference with:</b></p> <p>45 - 2006 Financial Audit.docx (Remove)</p> <p>No copies exist.</p> <p><a href="#">Add a new relationship</a> Identifies the relationships between records.</p>
<b>Record Versions</b>	<p>This record is not a versioned record.</p> <p><a href="#">Declare as a version of existing record(s)</a> Identifies the record version relationships between records.</p>
<b>Parent Category</b>	01-07 - Banking <a href="#">Link to the Parent Category Metadata properties</a>
<b>Parent Folder</b>	<a href="#">Link to the Parent Folder Metadata properties</a>
<b>Addressee(s)</b>	<input type="text"/> The list of people who received the record, if appropriate.
<b>Other Addressee(s)</b>	None The list of people who received a copy of the record, if appropriate.

**MOSS 2007 DoD 5015.2 Resource Kit Record Metadata – Note: this record has a cross reference with another record**

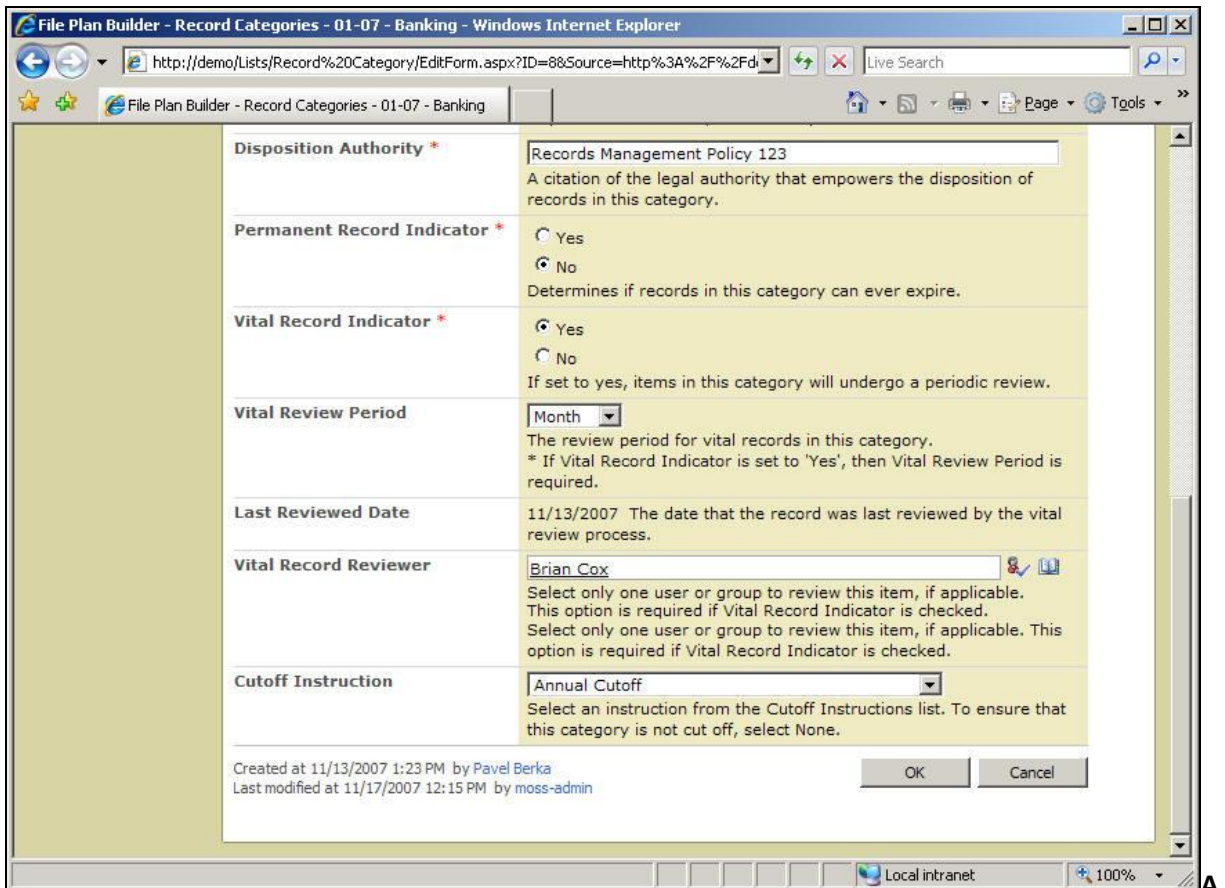
*Folder Closing* – Folders in the DoD 5015.2 Resource Kit file plan are typically used for case-based records retention, meaning all the records in the folder qualify for disposition at the same time. Case-based retention normally requires an event-driven retention period. When an event occurs starting retention on the records classified into a folder, the Resource Kit provides a feature that allows the folder to be ‘closed’ and prevents any new records from being added to it. If necessary, the folder can be reopened at anytime by a system administrator with the proper permission.

*Vital Records Review Processing* – A small percentage of records in an organization’s repository are considered ‘vital’. This means they are essential to the organization’s continuity of operations if the organization suffers a catastrophic disaster.

Most organizations want a means to periodically review their vital records to ensure they are accurate and up-to-date. The DoD 5015.2 Resource Kit provides the ability to assign a vital review process to categories and folders in the file plan.

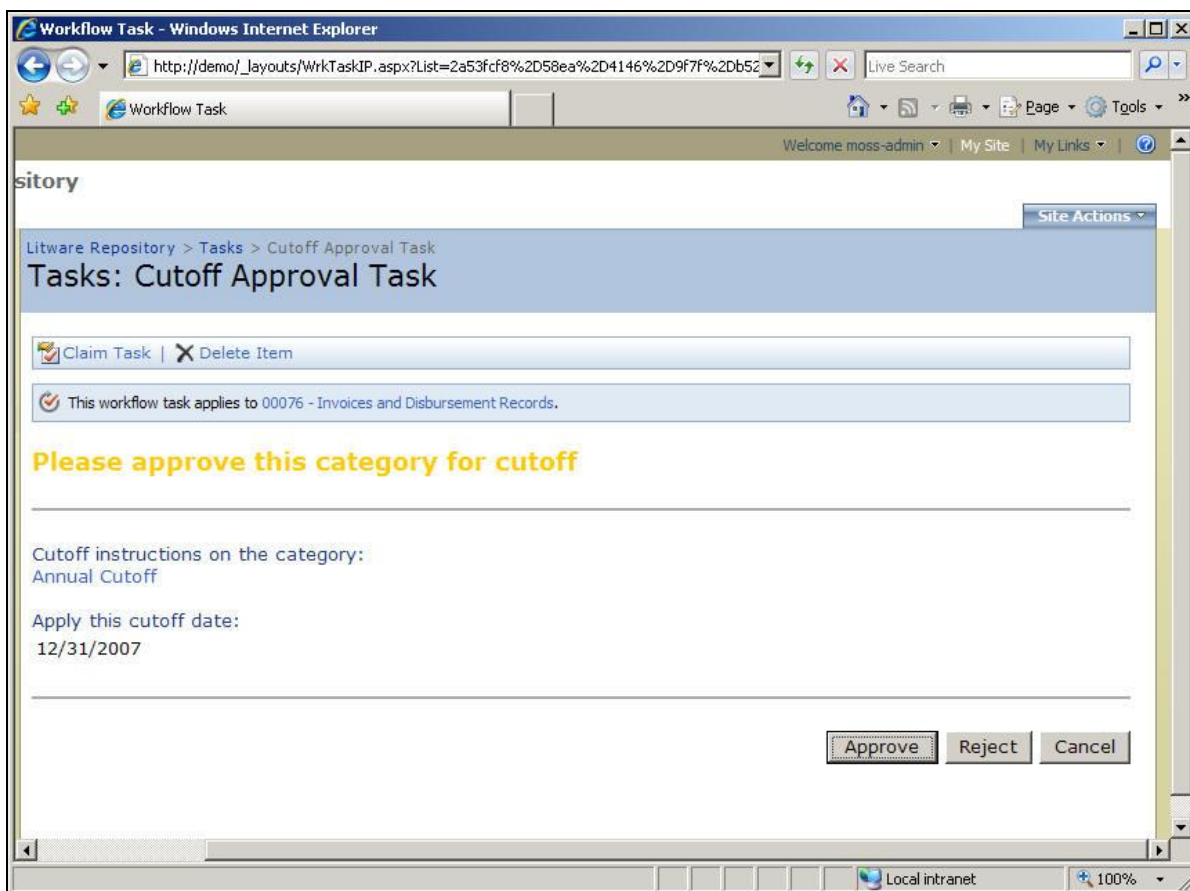
In the Resource Kit, the category or folder is designated as containing vital records and assigned a Vital Review Period (the time between each review) and a Vital Record Reviewer. The Vital Record Reviewer is a user or group of users who will receive an email notification when the records are due for review. The email has a link to the category or folder to be reviewed and a link to a workflow that the reviewer must complete as part of the review process.

Once the reviewer has examined the records and completed the workflow, the system will change the ‘Last Reviewed Date’ to the current date and the process will begin again.



**Category Assigned a Monthly Vital Review Period**

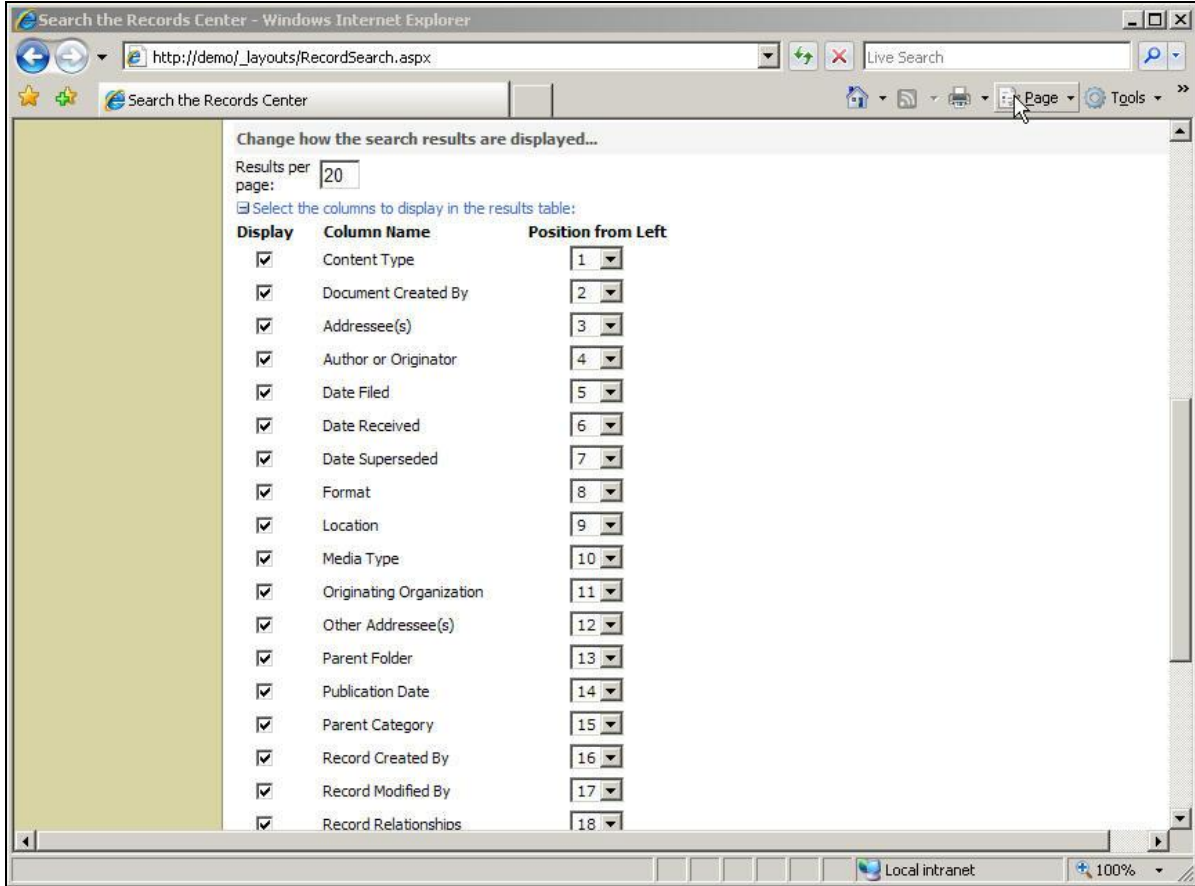
*Record Disposition Cutoff Processing* – A cutoff date is simply the date that a record’s retention period begins. This could be the day the record is declared, the day of a particular event or a calendar date, such as the end of the month. Typically, authorization is required to approve when a record or group of records is assigned a cutoff date. The DoD 5015.2 Resource Kit automates the cutoff approval process by initiating a workflow whenever a record or group of records is due to be cutoff.



### **Approval Workflow for Annual Cutoff of Records**

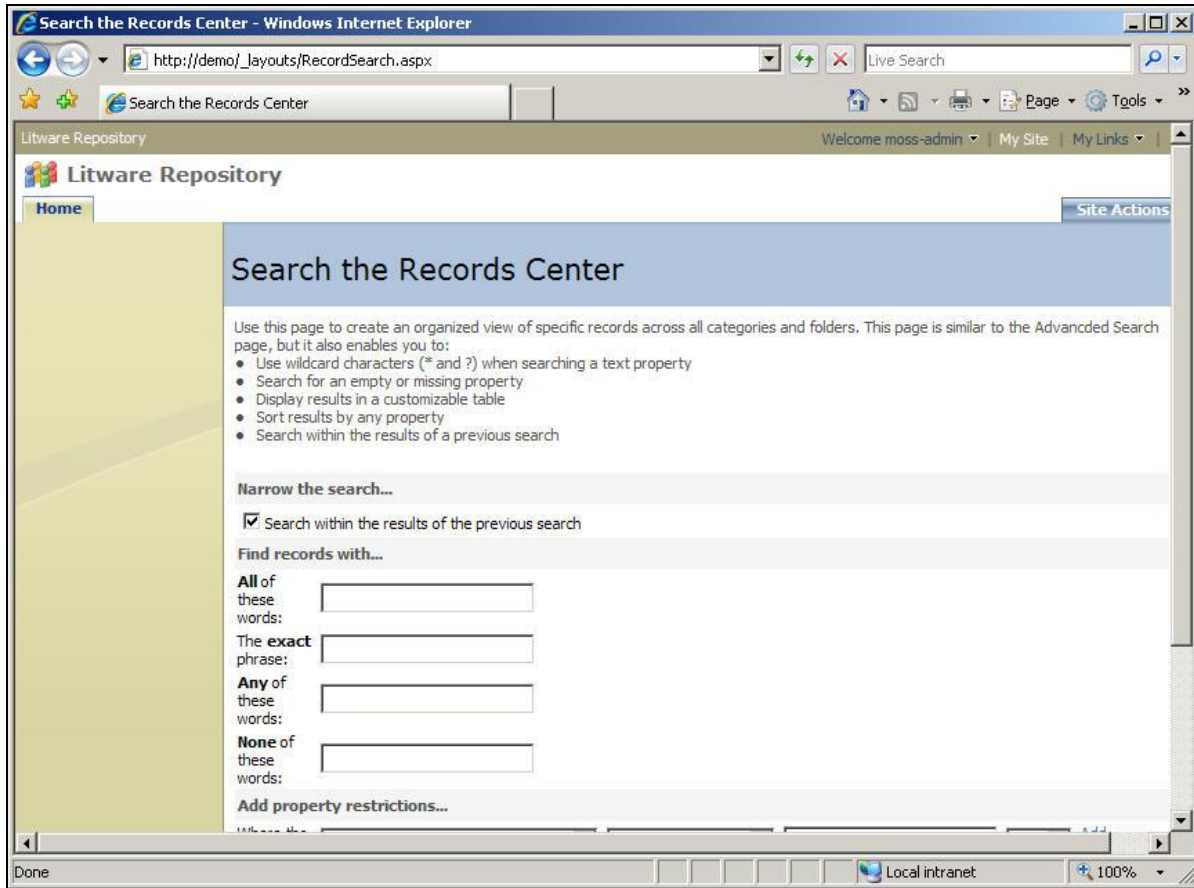
*Enhanced Disposition Processing* – The DoD 5015.2 Resource Kit adds significant disposition functionality to the Records Center. The Resource Kit automates all records disposition processing through workflows. Multi-phase retention cycles can now be applied to the same set of records. And final records disposition can now include transfers as well as destruction.

*Enhanced Records Search* – The DoD 5015.2 Resource Kit adds additional functionality to the Records Center Search page. The search page is now configurable so the default properties available for searching can be selected by the system administrator. And the columns are displayed in a search result list and the order of those columns can be configured in any order that the end users prefer.



**Setting the Display Columns and Column Position in the Enhanced Records Center Search**

The enhanced Records Center Search now includes wildcard searches and searches can be conducted on the result of previous searches.



### Searching Within Previous Search Results in the Enhanced Records Center Search

These are just a few examples of the records management features found in the DoD 5015.2 Resource Kit. There are many others, such as Supplemental Markings and Access Control Columns, which provide additional item-level security to records in the repository; and event-based retention schedule processing.

But as good as the Resource Kit is it has its fair share of challenges as well. For instance, the Resource Kit disables the 'Send to Records Center' option available in the out-of-the-box Record Center installation. The file plan does not have the usual 'tree' structure Records Managers are used to navigating in other applications. And, for all practical purposes, the file plan is limited to only two levels (category and folder).

Records retention can only be set at the category level and must be inherited by any child folders; and the email records management component, which uses Outlook managed folders, is probably too labor intensive to be considered a practical solution by most organizations.

## Conclusion

After remaining almost unchanged for thousands of years, records management has evolved dramatically over the last two decades. What had once been an almost exclusively manual process has become a predominately electronic one. And records management as a single practice has become just one component of much bigger Enterprise Content Management solutions.

Microsoft entered the Enterprise Content Management market with the release of SharePoint. Prior to 2007, an organization using SharePoint to manage its documents was required to use a third party integration to manage its records. And this may still be the best solution for large organizations. But, with the release of the MOSS 2007 Records Center, Microsoft included records management features in core SharePoint functionality.

The out-of-the-box Records Center site template provides some basic records management features, such as records declaration and expiration processing, but may only be suitable for small to mid-sized organizations with few records management requirements.

The lack of a true hierarchical file plan, event-based disposition, vital records review processing, and other records management application features may also limit the standard MOSS 2007 Records Center as the sole solution for an organization's records management requirements.

While not without its faults, the MOSS 2007 DoD 5015.2 Resource Kit significantly enhances SharePoint's records management capabilities. Multi-phase retention schedules can be set, file plans can be created and records can be managed throughout their full life cycle.

SharePoint itself has limitations that apply to all implementations. For instance, the number of users per site should not exceed 2,000 and there should not be more than 50,000 users for any site collection. There are also capacity limits for libraries, lists and workspaces. These limitations should be considered when evaluating MOSS 2007 as a potential records management solution.

Given Microsoft's efforts to include records management functionality in MOSS 2007 and their investment in DoD 5015.2 certification, it is clear that the company is committed to competing in the records management space for the long term. With that in mind, organizations may want to consider a combination of SharePoint-based records management technology that allows legacy records repositories, such as Open Text or Documentum, to continue to operate with a SharePoint user interface. At the same time, the organization can begin to manage its new records in the standard MOSS 2007 Records Center or, if requirements dictate, using the more comprehensive DoD 5015.2 Resource Kit.

All this would be with a look to the future as Microsoft begins to develop more robust records management functionality within the core MOSS 2007 application.