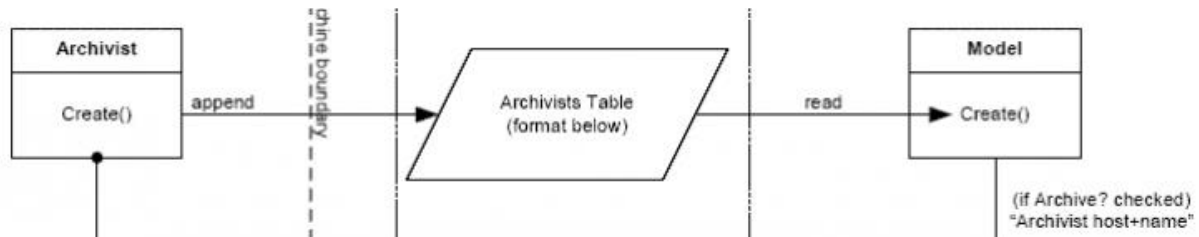


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### A tale of two ERMS specifications

December 13, 2008 · [1 Comment](#)

To open the final day of the DLM Forum 2008, [Dr. Ulrich Kampffmeyer](#) delivered a provocative presentation entitled *Breaking the barriers of traditional records management*. In this talk Dr. Kampffmeyer spoke of the need to move beyond antiquated ways of thinking about records and records management and engage the technological and cultural revolutions introduced by web 2.0.

Records managers, whom Dr. Kampffmeyer qualified as largely “digital immigrants” have fundamentally different ways of thinking about information than their users. While records managers love complex metadata, faceted search, hierarchical tree and folder structures, and controlled vocabularies, their “digital native” users love plain text searching, uncomplicated metadata, folksonomies, and “sexy interfaces.”

Dr. Kampffmeyer insisted that evolving to meet the needs of such users did not mean abandoning the fundamental notion that “records” are more than just “information objects.” Records have specific attributes and values and records management systems must have structures that effectively maintain these attributes. Dr. Kampffmeyer proposed that, rather than discard current metadata and information lifecycle models, records management should expand on enterprise content management model largely developed and favored by the IT industry.

This, he said, is what [MoReq2](#) does. With MoReq2, “everything is in its place” to guide the creation ERM systems that combine a complex structure with good software and ergonomic interfaces. These systems would promote good records management practices while conforming to current user demands for usability. Dr. Kampffmeyer proposed therefore that the DLM invest in completing the information lifecycle model of MoReq2 by integrating archival principles and processes. He proposed beginning scoping on MoReq3 2010, and insisted this standard should be disseminated widely, especially amongst private sector actors.

The questions raised in response to Dr. Kampffmeyer’s presentation were as provocative as the talk itself. Evelyn Wareham (Archives New Zealand) wondered how specifically Dr. Kampffmeyer proposed to encourage dialog between Records Managers (and archivists) whom he deemed “digital immigrants” and web 2.0 users who are, by and large “digital natives.” The question underlined doubts that MoReq2 (or any standard for that matter) could serve as the silver bullet, the tool able to bring the records management field forward.

Marc Fresko (Serco Consulting) asked “what is so special about Europe?” He pushed the group to articulate why Europe (and thus the DLM forum) was really the proper body to produce a worldwide standard for RM and wondered if the Forum should continue to expend limited energy and resources on developing standards that did not integrate Australia, New Zealand, North America, etc. Evelyn Wareham added that in conjunction with efforts to develop standards for electronic records management, New Zealand and Australia have made efforts to influence IT vendors and developers as well. They have found that engaging these companies in discussion by saying “here is our problem” has been more effective than presenting them with a specification and demanding that they comply.

As Evelyn Wareham pointed out, the funding and structure provided by the European Union is an important source of support for standards development on a European scale—funding that simply does not exist on an international level. But how to assure that European standards truly are reflective of the international scene? Dr. Kampffmeyer suggested that MoReq2 would become an international standard because it is free and it is the best. But whether this opinion is held by all members of the DLM forum and the entirety of the Records Management profession remains to be seen. As

another question from a representative of the European Commission pointed out, the measures currently in place to measure the success of MoReq2 (counting documents distributed) are insufficient. There is a need to develop a structured impact assessment before assertions can be made about its success on an international level.

The questions raised by Dr. Kampffmeyer's presentation and especially those regarding the appropriate bodies for producing international standards spoke directly to the work of the [International Council on Archives](#). Is not the ICA precisely the body where leaders in the field from all continents should come together to develop an information model that is applicable internationally, that treats creation, ingest, records management, archival arrangement, and preservation as stages in a whole?

The ICA recently published its own [Principles and Functional Requirements for Records in Electronic Office Environments](#). This set of specifications was developed by institutions from Australia, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Malaysia, Scotland, South Africa, Sweden, France, the United States, and the Cayman Islands. The document is currently before the ISO TC 46 SC 11 on Archives and Records Management for review.

According to Hans Hofman (Data Archiving and Networked Services, National Archives of the Netherlands) who sits on [ISO TC46/SC11](#), the ICA Principles and Functional Requirements are interesting because they are both international and forward-looking. They were developed by a group of experts from Europe, Australasia, North America and beyond, and incorporate business applications in their scope. Mr. Hofman saw the ICA Principles and Functional Requirements as a promising starting point for moving beyond EDRM systems and integrating the web environment and service-oriented architectures.

The ICA Principles and Functional Requirements for Records in Electronic Office Environments, like all ICA projects, is a result of the volunteer efforts of ICA members. For lack of funding, professionals in the ICA network lend their expertise to collaborative projects like those organized through the ICA's Committee on Standards and Best Practices and the Electronic Records and Automation Priority Area. They recognize that these efforts, though wholly based on the good will of those who participate, are necessary to develop standards that are truly international.

The existence of both MoReq2 and the ICA Principles and Functional Requirements speak to the need for what Hubert Szlaszewski of the European Commission called in his concluding remarks "mechanisms of solidarity" and the need for a stronger professional lobby for archivists and records managers. They address the needs for new models for information lifecycles and metadata that take into account the changing information landscapes. So how to coordinate these two documents, and the efforts of the two bodies that produced them? Do they exist in contradiction, or in mutual awareness as DLM president Toivo Jullinen said they should? And how should archivists and records managers make use of multiple channels of communication (as Seamus Ross advocated in his summarizing remarks) while maintaining a unified voice for the profession?

**Categories:** [Uncategorized](#)

**1 response so far** ↓



• [Ulrich Kampffmeyer](#) // [December 18, 2008 at 4:03 pm](#)

The presentation "Breaking the Barriers of Traditional Records Management" is available as Powerpoint (automated .pps)

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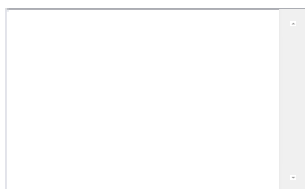
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