Why Document Storage Isn't Enough

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There comes a time in any business where documents become too overwhelming to the point where filing cabinets and manual labor becomes unmanageable. When you need a solution, one of your first online searches might be “document storage.” Document storage solutions are valuable in some situations; however, it usually is only

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half of what you really need when it comes to efficiently storing and finding your documents.

The main reason someone looks for a document storage solution is because the search for documents in cluttered cabinets is not only unmanageable but also takes a toll on their business productivity. If that sounds like the issue your business is dealing with then document storage isn't going to cut it.

Understanding The Difference

In order to understand why document storage might not be the right fit we first must understand the difference between document storage and document management. Although they do have some similarities, there are many differences. Document storage is right for some, but isn't always right for everyone.

Document Storage

Document storage, particularly online document storage, is just that. Documents are stored in a digital format, making them accessible from an organization's storage system. Document storage keeps your documents stored to allow for easy access.

Document Management

Document management, often referred to as a Document Management System (DMS), is software that manages and tracks your electronic documents, images, audio files, videos, etc. DMS holds capabilities similar to document storage but allows for the implementation of indexing, automation, document scanning, integrations, and workflow solutions. These tools are easily tailored to each organization's unique needs. Yes, document storage is a part of

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a DMS, however, its main purpose is to simplify business processes, like document accessibility and distribution.

The Main Difference

The main difference between document storage and document management is that the core function of document storage is to archive your documents digitally, while document management's core function is to digitally capture, organize, automate, and manage documents within your business process.

Why Isn't It Cutting It?

Document storage can be the right solution for companies that need to free up file cabinet space and rarely need to retrieve what is archived. However, if your company needs to subsequently retrieve and view documents (perhaps for customer service), or move them through your organization following established business rules and practices (perhaps to approve invoices or other processing), then a document management system is your answer.

Customization

Each business has its own, unique document management processes. In order to have that unique process recreated to help efficiently move these documents to where they need to go you need features in a system that will allow for that. Document storage systems do not have the features needed to properly move, approve, and efficiently search your documents. For example, say you have a process where before a contract is sent to a client it must go through a review process. In order for that process to be seamless and get to the client in a timely manner you need a system that can streamline that process. Document storage alone can't do that for you. You would

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have to manually pass along the document to each department, which can take time and opens the door for human error.

Security

Security is a necessity when it comes to documents. Especially if your business has legal obligations that need to be met when it comes to the security of your documents. Document storage solutions do have security options.

Other systems, such as a DMS, will offer much more robust security options depending on your business needs. For example, say your business needs to keep an audit trail in order to stay compliant. Most document storage systems don't have the capability to create those required document audit trails. If your business has high security requirements for your documents, or has variable security requirements based on document type or the department in which they are used, or even who can access a document, a document management system is exactly what you need to remain compliant.

Document Control

Document control is also a crucial part of any document management process. You need to make sure that all documents are created, reviewed, distributed, and destroyed in an organized and verified manner that reflects your document management process. Document storage solutions don't usually have the features and capabilities of ensuring that documents follow a specific document control process. Relying on your employees to ensure that they follow the correct process can become extremely messy and allow for multiple human errors. It can also lead to people having duplicate versions of the same documents. This will bring you back to your original problem of having no document organizational system.

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What's Next?

The main thing you want to think about when deciding if a document storage solution is right for your business is, "Do you just need storage?" If you are looking for a place to archive your documents in a digital format then possibly document storage is the right solution for you. However, if you got to the end of this blog and realized that you need more out of your system, contact us today and we'd be happy to answer any questions or help you with a custom document management solution! .

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