

## Advantages of maintaining digital records:

- **Easier information retrieval**

One of the main benefits of maintaining a digital filing system is the time and organizational resources saved by being able to easily search and access files on the computer. We will touch more on this later in the piece, but the searchability of files (some formats handle it better than other) is crucial to free up employee time and resources, allowing for a more efficient overall operational structure.

- **Cost savings from storage space**

You are limited only by the cost of virtual storage space, which can scale up in quite a cost-effective manner, in comparison to adding more physical square footage for your office or document storage facility. The growth of cloud storage solutions for enterprise level businesses in recent years has made digital record keeping an even more cost-effective option.

- **Protection against frivolous claims**

Maintaining digital records of your dealings with customers and clients can safeguard your company in the event of a dispute. For example, you may want to retrieve copies of pertinent emails years later, in which case a digital document management system is ideal. Peernet offers a number of software solutions that make an [email to PDF](#) or [email to TIFF](#) as easy as printing a document, as well as automated batch document conversion solutions.

- **Simplify your accounting**

Maintaining digital records of sales, customer information and business details can be especially efficient in conjunction with business accounting software. This can cut down on time and resources that otherwise would be put towards the actions that drive your business forward.

- **Allow for easier collaboration**

If documentation needs to be continually updated, this can be easily achieved through digital records. Ease of access opens up new collaboration opportunities, and with a solid security safety net in place, this allows for increased efficiency in maintaining the accuracy of client information.

- **Easily backup files and reduce threat of losing information**

What happens if you have physical, paper copies of all your important records, and your office faces a flood or a fire? The resulting loss of information could be devastating.

With digital records and a regular backup schedule, there's much less concern about that. There are many cloud-based backup services out there, and an IT professional in your organization can set up a regularly scheduled backing up of files so that even if something happens to your onsite digital storage, you'll still have backups that you can easily restore.

- **Reduce costs related to document distribution**

With digital records, disseminating information is as easy as clicking a button on your mouse. The old method of information distribution seems quite antiquated these days: requesting a record, printing them out, and sending them via mail incurs all sorts of costs that you can get around or altogether eliminate by moving to a digital based document management system.

## What formats are best for record keeping?

### TIFF

The **TIFF file format** is commonly used as a record keeping file format of choice for industries and institutions that require absolute confidence in the security and quality of their digital record keeping. As a format, it offers a feature set that makes it ideal for some industries. Here's why many businesses in critical industries make use of TIFF as part of their digital record keeping.

- A high-quality format that does not suffer from degradation when saving.
- Is also capable of lossy compression to reduce file sizes.
- Widespread usage, ensuring that it can be read on nearly all modern devices and operating systems.
- The ideal format for scanned documents (it was originally created for just that purpose).
- A great deal of support for file conversions.
- Being an image format by nature, document formatting is maintained from one screen to the next.
- A secure document format that cannot be embedded with malicious code or files.
- A well-established document format that will be used for many years to come.

#### Commonly used in:

- The medical industry – clinics, hospitals, patient records.
- Law offices – client records.
- Municipal offices – permits, public records, etc.
- Publishing – high-quality images ensure good quality on the printed page.

### PDF

The **PDF file format** is extremely widely used in everyday business communications. It also offers a number of features that make it ideal for record-keeping purposes, such as the following:

- Easily searchable; its mix of text and images make it a versatile file format.
- Widely used and understood; supported by every operating system used in the modern business environment.
- Centralized storage, naming conventions and rich document text allow for simple document retrieval.
- Relatively small file size keeps storage costs down while maintaining good quality document copies.
- Password-protection built into the format to ensure documents are only read by the intended recipients.
- Like TIFF, document formatting is always maintained from one computer or device to the next, giving it a huge advantage over popular office document formats such as Microsoft Word.
- Like TIFF, it's a well-established document format that will be used for many years to come.

#### Commonly used in:

- Organizations that require a good level of searchability within the actual documents;
- Retail – bill of sales
- A wide range of businesses across many industries.