



The Intersection

A Newsletter for the users of Intersect Systems Retention Schedule Manager software systems and Records Control and Management software systems

Grand Prairie, Texas

Summer 2008

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Intersect Systems Inc. is a Texas-based company located in north Texas. Intersect specializes in developing software for retention schedule development, records management, and electronic document management.

The Intersection is published periodically by Intersect Systems Inc.

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Internet-Enabled Retention Schedule Developer

Version 5.16 of the Internet-enabled edition of *Retention Schedule Developer / Manager / Researcher* (Retention DMR) from Intersect Systems is now available as an update for Intersect customers that prefer the Texas State Agency / Commercial format for records control schedules.

Retention DMR / Net includes all of the functions of the standard Retention Schedule Manager / Local Government format that is used by the majority of Intersect customers, but adds several capabilities.

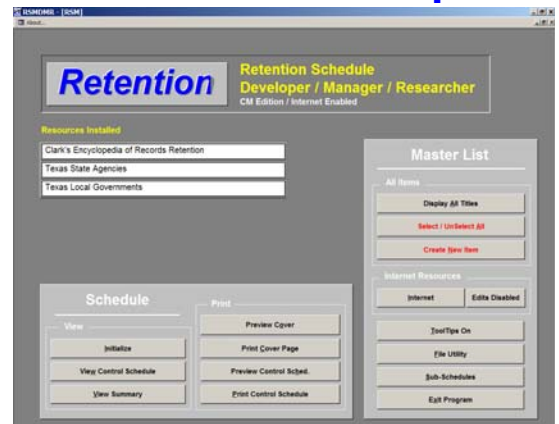
Retention DMR / Net is also available with Clark's *Encyclopedia of Records Retention* for Intersect's commercial / business customers. Clark's Encyclopedia includes over six thousand record series titles for businesses to use in developing and maintaining records control schedules.

In addition to the standard *Find* and *Next* search functions, Retention DMR / Net includes a *Query* function on the Records Series Title field — similar to the Query function in the RCAMS records database that is familiar to Intersect customers. Providing a powerful research tool, the Retention DMR Query function has multi-step capability, allowing drill-down in successive steps when researching words or phrases with the system. The most recent query step can be cancelled if desired, while preserving previous steps to that point. The results of a query can be printed for future reference.

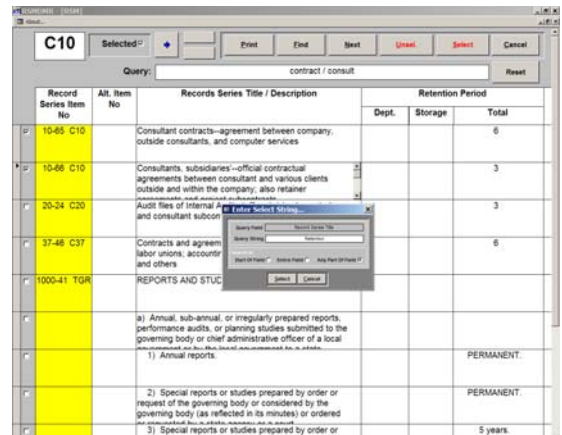
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Slow Internet Access?

Did you ever wonder why Internet access seems much slower than normal at times? In a local corporate network, slowdowns can occur when many people try to connect to the Internet at the same time, and downloads of long files can also create delays for other users. Popular web sites can respond more slowly when many users are logged on. And a virus — a malicious program distributed via the Internet — can cause infected computers to send out hundreds or thousands of



New version of Intersect's Retention Schedule Developer adds Internet access, other features



A new multi-step Query function provides a valuable research capability, allowing drill-down into over 6,000 Record Series Titles in Clark's Encyclopedia of Records Retention or installed Local Government and State Agency schedules. A Reset button cancels the most recent step if desired.

copies of itself, infecting other computers which then also send out thousands of copies of the virus, slowing the Internet down due to sheer volume. A phenomenon called information "black holes" can also create problems with Internet access. Black holes are situations where a path between two computers on the Internet does exist, but messages — a request to visit a Web site, or an outgoing e-mail message — get lost along the way. A University of Washington system named Hubble scans the

(Cont. on page 8)



Focus on:

Central Appraisal District of Johnson County Cleburne, Texas

Appraisal District Implements Intersect RCAMS System

Located in north central Texas, on the southwestern edge of the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area, Johnson County covers 740 square miles, and has a population approaching 150,000.

The city of Cleburne is the county seat of Johnson County. Originally a military bivouac area known as Camp Henderson, in 1867 the temporary facility was renamed Cleburne after General Patrick Cleburne and became the new county seat of Johnson County. The city is located fifty-five miles southwest of downtown Dallas, and twenty-nine miles south of downtown Fort Worth. Industries include packaging and fabrication, commercial printing, oilfield services, energy exploration, construction, and manufacturing. One of the five campuses of Hill College, a comprehensive community college, is located in Cleburne.

In 2007, Intersect Systems welcomed the Central Appraisal District of Johnson County as a new user of Intersect's records management software. Located in Cleburne, the Johnson County CAD was established in 1981 and currently has 40 employees.

Software installation of the Intersect Records Management System was completed in the summer of 2007, and two training sessions were subsequently conducted for selected staff members who will be maintaining the District's records control schedule and managing the records inventory.

Intersect's training program involves the use of laptop computers, each with Inter-

sect's Retention Schedule Manager (RSM) and Records Control and Management System (RCAMS) software installed. Each computer used for training includes sample Texas Local Government records retention schedules and a sample records database designed for training, allowing hands-on experience with the actual applications.

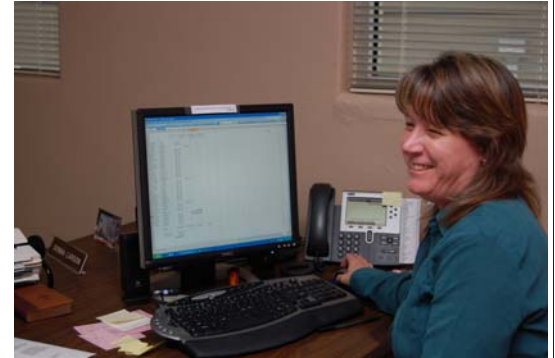
In addition to laptop computers, Intersect's training set-up includes a portable large-screen projector connected to the instructor's computer, providing easy-to-see illustrations of the various software screens and operations.

The Intersect training begins with the creation of a records control schedule using the Texas State Retention Schedules for Local Governments. The Texas schedules are provided preloaded in the Retention Schedule Manager; the user can point-and-click to select the desired schedule titles, minimizing the keyboarding required. Selected record series titles can be edited, and new record series can be created if desired.

Following creation of a sample records control schedule, each participant then loads their new schedule into the RCAMS records database on their laptop computer for use in creating and maintaining the records database.

In the next exercise, participants practice creating new records containers, selecting the appropriate record series title from the records control schedule they have just created, assigning a storage location from the system's storage location matrix, reviewing the retention period specified, and entering the new container into the records database.

Records containers can include standard records storage boxes for paper documents, file folders, and microfilm cassettes, or a directory on a network server (for electronic imaged documents).



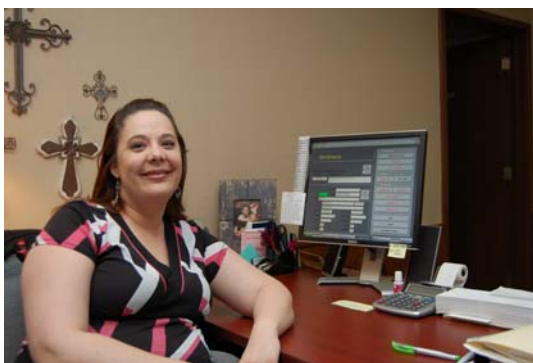
Donna Larson, Records Management Officer for Central Appraisal District of Johnson County, at computer station running Retention program.

Following the initial training session, Ms. Donna Larson, Records Management Officer for the Appraisal District, entered the District's current records control schedule into the Intersect Retention Schedule Manager. The operation involved minimal keyboarding, and the schedule will be maintained in the RSM software.

Ms. Jamie Collier then loaded the schedule into the RCAMS database system on her computer, and began to create records containers and enter them into the records database. The District maintains inactive records off site, and maintains active records in selected office locations in the central office. The RCAMS system allows as many locations as desired to be defined and maintained for records storage. Eventual disposal processing for non-permanent records is driven by the retention date specified for each container.



Intersect training class at central office of Central Appraisal District of Johnson County. From left: Jamie Collier, Donna Larson, and Vicki Lambert. Intersect Systems provides laptop computers with Intersect software and sample data for training, as well as a portable large-screen projector.



Jamie Collier is the primary user of the RCAMS records database software.



Focus On: City of Fort Worth Fort Worth, Texas

Conversion to Intersect's RCAMS SQL; Indexing Historical Documents

Founded in 1849 on the banks of the Trinity River to protect early settlers, the City of Fort Worth is today the 18th-largest city in the US, and is one of the nation's fastest growing large cities.

Named for General William Jenkins Worth, the city has become the hub of a growing, dynamic metropolitan area with over 600,000 citizens. Noted for its Cultural District with world-class museums such as the Modern, the Amon Carter, and the Kimball, and with leading companies such as Lockheed Martin, Bell Helicopter, BNSF, and Radio Shack represented in the community, Fort Worth still retains its heritage and the flavor of the Old West, preserved in the National Historic Stockyards, Sundance Square, and legends of Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid.

The City of Fort Worth's Records and Information Management Office licensed Intersect Systems' records management software, including the Retention Schedule Manager (RSM) and Records Control and Management System (RCAMS) several years ago.

In early 2007, Marty Hendrix, Fort Worth City Secretary, determined to organize and index the city's large inventory of historical documents into a computer-managed database system. These documents have historical value, in many cases are very fragile, and are classified as documents that are required by the Texas State Library and Archives to be



Deborah McFadden of the City's Records and Information Management Office updating the Control Schedule for the City Secretary's office with Retention Schedule Manager.

retained permanently by Texas Local Governments.

The logical software system to use was the Intersect records management applications which the City had licensed from Intersect, and after a review of the capabilities of the Intersect records management software in view of the project to index the historical document inventory, Ms. Hendrix, acting in concert with the City's Records Management Department, elected to proceed with the project using the Intersect system.

A plan to proceed was developed that included several steps. First, at the recommendation of the City's Information Technology Department, Ms. Hendrix decided to upgrade the Intersect software to the RCAMS SQL version, which uses Microsoft's® SQL Server® database system for central data storage and access. The upgrade was completed in late Summer 2007, with the RCAMS SQL applications being installed on nine computer stations in the City Secretary's office, as well as on all stations in the Records and Information Management Office.

The second step was training. An Intersect representative conducted two training classes in the City's facilities. The training addressed recent new features added to RCAMS, as well as RCAMS SQL-specific functions included in the software upgrade. Representatives of the Records and Information Management Office and the Information Technology Department attended the training sessions. In an unusual arrangement, seven members of the City Secretary's office attended the training sessions, in anticipation of Ms. Hendrix's plan that data entry and indexing of the historical records into the RCAMS SQL system would be a department-wide effort, with all staff participating.

The third step was to begin creating the City's Records Control Schedule using the Retention



Marty Hendrix, Fort Worth City Secretary



Doug Jones, CRM
Records Management Officer

Schedule Manager software. The first schedules to be added to the City's Control Schedule were the record series titles for the records created and maintained by the City Secretary's Office. Deborah McFadden is creating the City's Records Control Schedule.

Maintenance and updating of the Control Schedule is based on the Texas State Retention Schedules for Local Governments from the Texas State Library and Archives, Local Government Division, published in digital format by Intersect Systems. Once updated, the Control Schedule is accessed by the RCAMS records system when creating entries and assigning retention.

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City Secretary staff. Seven representatives of the City Secretary's Office participate in data entry and indexing of the City's historical records. From top left: Sylvia Glover, Marty Hendrix, Ron Gonzales; Lower left: Menique Madison, Tennie Cole, Marlena Tinker. Not shown: Allison Tidwell



Focus On: Dallas County Community College District Dallas, Texas

Conversion to RCAMS SQL and Workflow Implementation; District-wide Accession Training

Founded in 1965 by a group of visionary Dallas civic leaders for the purpose of providing convenient and affordable quality education to the Dallas community, the Dallas County Community College District today includes seven colleges that enroll more than 100,000 credit and noncredit students every semester. Four decades of growth have seen DCCCD become one of the largest higher education institutions in Texas, with an annual total operating budget for 2007-2008 of \$390 million.

In addition to the seven colleges, in 1991 the DCCCD opened the R. Jan LeCroy Center for Educational Telecommunications. Today, the LeCroy Center is one of the largest producers of distance education products in the nation.

The DCCCD Records Center, located at the District Service Center in Mesquite, is a long-term user of Intersect Systems' re-

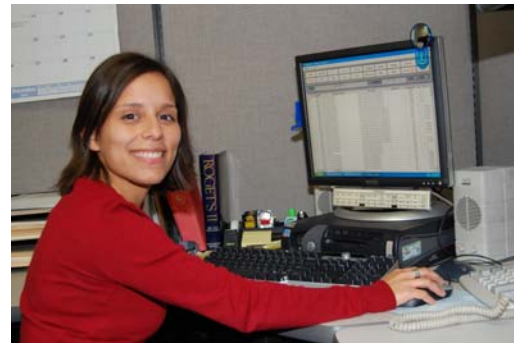
ords management software. The Intersect Retention Schedule Manager (RSM) and Records Control and Management System (RCAMS) were licensed for use by DCCCD in 1995. Intersect converted the original DCCCD records database to the Intersect RCAMS format, and following an initial testing period the District transitioned to the Intersect system, which has been used continuously by the DCCCD Records Center since.

Intersect provides users with periodic software updates under the Annual Support Program. Updates frequently include new features and functions suggested or requested by Intersect customers, and the DCCCD has been the source of a number of suggestions for additions and enhancements to the Intersect system over the years.

During early 2007, representatives of DCCCD began evaluating the future requirements of the District's records management program in view of a growing records inventory and increases in volume of records requests.

After a detailed evaluation period, including visits to other Intersect customers in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, the DCCCD made the decision to upgrade the Intersect RCAMS installation to Intersect's RCAMS SQL system, which uses the Microsoft® SQL Server® database for central data storage.

SQL Server was an important consideration for DCCCD. Each Microsoft SQL Server database has a capacity of up to 32 terabytes (32 trillion bytes) of data. However, 32 terabytes is not a limit for RCAMS SQL's total capacity, since RCAMS SQL can manage multiple SQL Server databases — Intersect RCAMS SQL users will be familiar with the point-and-click selection of databases from the RCAMS *Connect* function. Since RCAMS SQL doesn't limit the number of SQL Server databases that RCAMS SQL can manage, the only limit to capacity for



Tara Kirk, Records Management Officer for Dallas County Community College District.

any RCAMS SQL system is the capacity of the physical server(s) and of the network infrastructure. This connection feature makes RCAMS SQL capable of managing massively large collections of information in SQL databases.

Another factor in DCCCD's decision was the RCAMS Accession and Accession Monitor Workflow components. Accession is a read-only version of RCAMS SQL that installs in various departments within an organization and allows an individual in a department to view online in read-only mode the records for only that department. Once a desired container or document is located, a request function allows the person to immediately transmit a request for the record to the Records Center with a point-and click operation.

The Records Center receives the request immediately at the Accession Monitor program through the wide area network, and can process the request, which then enters the checked-out record and a due



DCCCD Records Center Staff.
From left: Diane Yates, Tara Kirk, Arcavia Tinsley, Pam Johnson, Mina Thacker, Linda Newton, and Wilma Allen.



Mina Thacker working at scanning and filming station.

date for its return into an RCAMS check-out tracking function.

RCAMS Accession also includes a transmittal function, which allows a department preparing to send records to the Records Center for storage to do the preliminary data entry for the records being transferred. A unique template feature allows any existing similar record entry in the live database to be used as a template, greatly reducing the amount of keyboarding required for data entry.

The Accession Monitor program runs at the Records Center, monitoring records requests and transmittals. When received, requests and transmittals are stored in a temporary file. After transmittals are reviewed and approved at the Records Center, they are entered into the live database. The use of the transmittal function effectively distributes the data entry function throughout the participating departments, while still allowing the Records Department to review and approve entries, assign retention periods, and assign storage spaces to processed records.

The DCCCD Records Center plans to install the Accession module throughout each of the District's seven campuses, as well as in various other DCCCD location offices, as training progresses over the next several months.

An important part of the deployment of Accession throughout DCCCD locations is training users to use the system for records requests and records transmittals.

In preparation for an extensive training program for Accession users, the District's Software Training and Support Department has been developing a hands-on training class to introduce users to the system. Beginning in May, the Software Training and Support Department will begin conducting training classes in using Accession for the various DCCCD locations. As each location is trained, the Information Technology personnel will then roll out the Accession program by installing the application on computers in departments at that location.

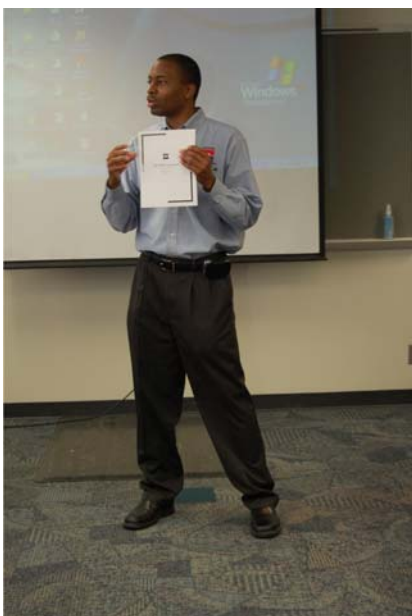
Ms. Kay Hampshire, of the DCCCD Software Training and Support Department, has developed a comprehensive seventy-page Accession instructional guide for use in the Accession training classes. The guide is extensively illustrated with screen images, and goes through a thorough step-by-step introduction to the software. Class participants will retain the guide after completing the class to use as a custom



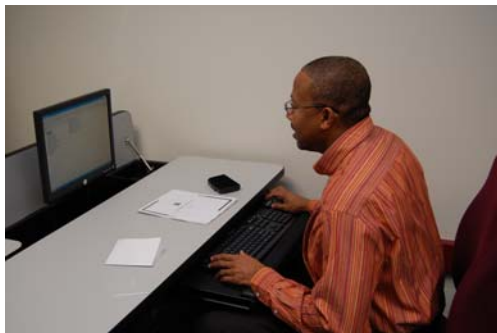
The prototype Accession User Class was conducted in the well-equipped training room at the District Service Center in Mesquite. Each computer system is on-line to the central server system, allowing participants to interact directly with a special training database that has been prepared to illustrate the various operations addressed in the class.

Accession User's Manual.

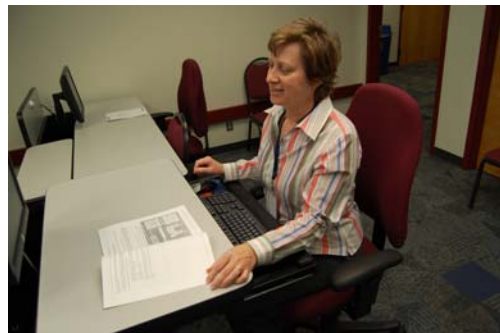
Ms. Tara Kirk, Records Management Officer for DCCCD, indicates that about thirty-five persons will be trained on Accession for each campus, leading to over two hundred trained users throughout the system when the training series is complete by the end of the year. The planned deployment of Accession to over two hundred computer stations throughout the seven campuses and other DCCCD office locations will make the DCCCD installation the largest implementation of Intersect's Accession / Accession Monitor Workflow system.



Tommy Thompson, Instructor for the DCCCD Software Training and Support Department, teaching the prototype Accession User Class in January 2008 to test the concept as well as the specially developed Accession instructional guide.



David Tyler, DCCCD Administrator for RCAMS, installing Accession on classroom station.



Kay Hampshire of Software Training and Support, preparing for prototype class.



Prototype Accession Training Class session in progress in DCCCD classroom.



Vickie Magee of the Business Affairs department at computer in training class.

Fort Worth (cont. from page 3)

The Retention Schedule Manager software includes a feature that can export .HTML files or Web Pages containing the Records Control Schedule created for a Local Government. Deborah McFadden plans to post the City's Control Schedule on the City's intranet site and public Internet sites for convenient access.



Assistant City Secretary Sylvia Glover, with folder containing 1907 contract for the first fire station built in the City.

The historical documents being entered into the RCAMS SQL system present a fascinating glimpse into the history of the City. Sylvia Glover provided two examples of the historical documents being entered into the RCAMS SQL system.

One example is a contract for a fire house or fire hall, which was constructed at the Northeast corner of Second Street and Rusk. The building was a two-story structure, and the price for the construction contract was \$11,475. The contract is dated August 6, 1907. A second example is a contract for the construction of a jail or "work house" by the Southern Structural Steel Company. The contract for the construction project was for \$8,000. The date was September 11, 1907.

The historical data entry project makes use of the Workflow components of the RCAMS System, and is an excellent example of distribution of the data entry and indexing process within an organization.



Tennie Cole, Senior Customer Service Representative, at computer running RCAMS.

Do You Have a One-Hundred-Year Records Plan?

Or a fifty-year plan? Or a ten-year plan? Perhaps a better question is, "Do you have a long-term records plan?"

Why should any organization be concerned about planning regarding records management for any period longer than the next five or ten years? And how can any plan anticipate requirements related to managing records ten, fifteen, or twenty years from now, or longer?

The Need For a Long-Term Plan

The use of computers, various software applications, and database systems for managing records has become almost universal among businesses, state agencies, and local governments since the early 1990's. The benefits of computer systems, appropriate software, and relational databases in creating and maintaining inventories of records, whether those records are on paper, on film, or are electronic documents, are compelling. Appropriate software systems make it possible to index and track records and storage locations, or reel numbers and frames on microfilm, or electronic documents on a server. These systems can not only facilitate data entry, but also make it possible to locate documents quickly, and to reliably manage documents according to retention requirements.

However, as numerous organizations have discovered, computers and software technology can be a double-edged sword. They can dramatically improve a records management operation; but they can also create major problems for an organization as computer operating systems, network systems, computer hardware, and applications software become obsolete and have to be replaced.

There is no easy way to anticipate or predict future changes that will occur in computer and software technology, particularly when looking ten or more years ahead. No one can guarantee that your current software will be compatible with, or operate on, computers and operating systems that will be used ten or more years from now. Yet, records managers are responsible for many categories of records that must be retained for ten or more years, or even permanently.

How can a long-term records plan realistically address the question of long-term management of records using computer

and software technology?

The technical name for the major problem records managers face in maintaining long-term compatibility of data systems is *Transitional Integrity*. Transitional integrity refers to the ability of data to be transferred from one data system to another while retaining all of the aspects of the data that define its functionality without compromise in the system to which it is being moved. When you consider the many person-hours involved in data entry, and in scanning and indexing records, over a period of years, imagine the problem if at some point your current records database is no longer usable due to being incompatible with new computers or new operating systems; you are suddenly faced with either no longer having useful access to the data you have entered, or re-entering and indexing years' worth of records data.

Let's look at some examples of specific problems that relate to computer systems, data, and software application incompatibility, and consider steps you can take to protect your organization against future related problems.

Recalling Past Experiences

Over a period of sixteen years in developing and supplying records management software and in converting customers' records data to Intersect's data format, we have encountered a variety of situations that illustrate transition problems.

A problem that we encounter far too often involves proprietary data formats, or proprietary databases. A proprietary database application can prevent any access to a user's data other than through the application itself. This can present a problem if, or when, the user must replace a records management application due to obsolescence, or to incompatibility with new operating systems. In order to transfer data that has been entered over several years in the old, or legacy, database to a new system, it is necessary to be able to read, and to reformat as necessary, the information in the legacy database. If passwords, structural, or format information is not available, any transition may be impossible. A second related complication can be caused by encrypted data, or by encoded data elements, for which a key or decoding

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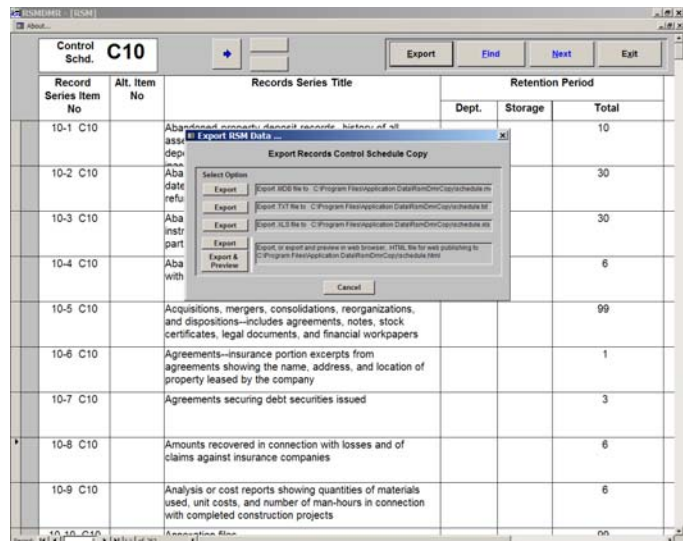
Retention (cont. from page 1)

Retention DMR provides a set of standard formatted reports for printing records control schedules that have been created. However, it is sometimes desirable to use the results of Retention DMR for further analysis and reporting. To support this, the control schedule can be exported in four different formats: an Access .mdb file, an Excel .xls file, a .txt file, or as an .html web page. Exporting an .html page is a popular way of publishing a records control schedule on an organization's Internet or intranet site for convenient reference by various departments.

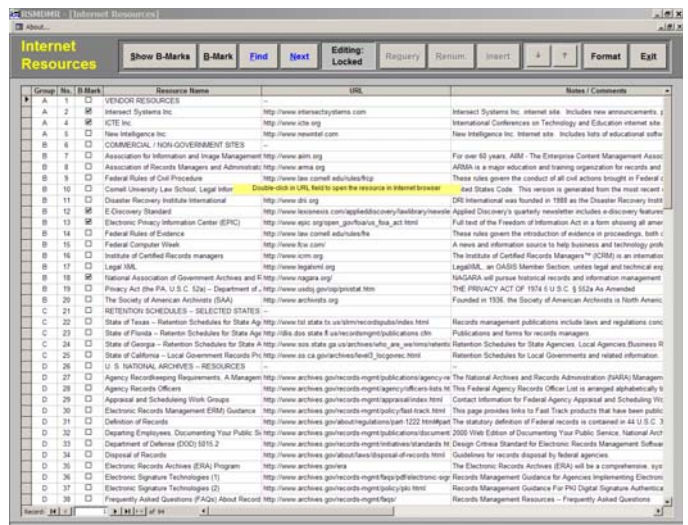
Retention DMR supports the creation of departmental schedules, or sub-schedules, from a master records control schedule — a popular capability that is also in other versions of Intersect's Retention Schedule Manager software. These departmental or sub-schedules can also be exported individually as .mdb, .xls, .txt, or .html files.

The significant feature of Retention DMR / Net is the ability to maintain an unlimited list of Internet URL resources, and to open any selected resource in a computer system's default Internet browser by double-clicking the desired URL in the list. The program comes with one hundred URL references and links already listed, and the user can edit these, adding other URL links to the list, and deleting any not desired. In addition, selected URL links can be bookmarked for convenient reference, and the URLs can be grouped by category, and ordered within a category as desired. For records managers who do extensive online research on retention requirements and related citations, Retention DMR is a valuable tool, providing both the online research capability as well as direct editing functions for the control schedule being developed or maintained.

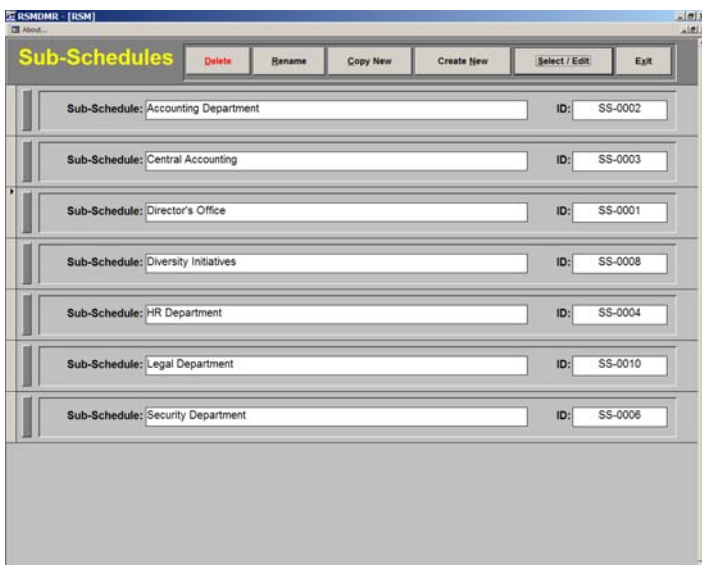
Retention DMR / Net is available to Intersect users with paid-up Annual Support Program participation as a part of the standard RSM / RCAMS license. Intersect customers using the standard version of Retention Schedule Manager can change to Retention DMR / Net at no charge if they would like to have the Internet access capability and other special features. Intersect will provide a review copy of Retention DMR / Net to any customer who would like to review the version and consider changing over. Contact Intersect Systems for more information.



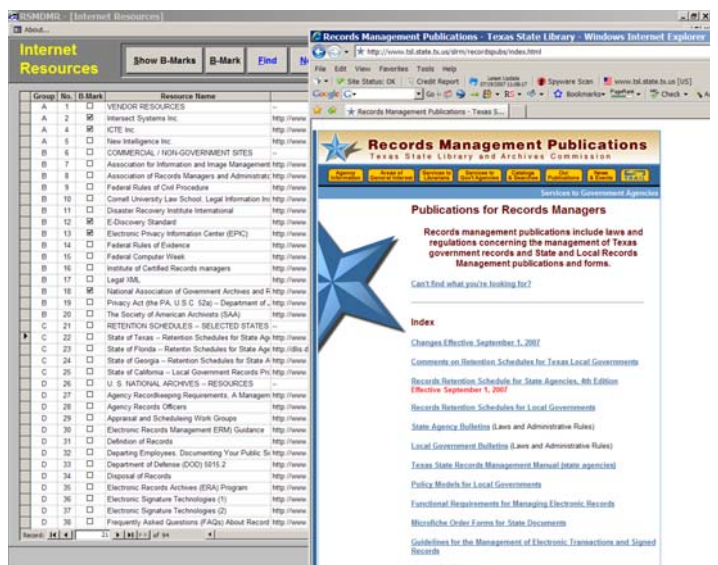
Retention DMR / Net allows the user to export the records control schedule, or any departmental or sub-schedule, as an .mdb, .xls, .txt, or .html file.



Retention DMR / Net now includes *tool tips*, or pop-up hints, that identify certain fields and functions.



Retention DMR / Net can create an unlimited number of departmental schedules, or sub-schedules, from the master control schedule.



The user can open any web site listed in the Internet resource screen by double-clicking on the link in the displayed list.

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Intersect Systems Inc. has a number of ongoing software development projects, as well as a continuing series of updates and enhancements to existing software applications. For more information on Intersect software for Retention Schedule Development and Management, or software for Records Control and Management, to discuss your software requirements, or to discuss current software development and software enhancements, contact Intersect Systems at the address, telephone number, or e-mail address listed above.

About Intersect Systems ...

Intersect Systems Inc. is a Texas corporation, founded in 1993, dedicated to the design and development of innovative computer software systems and applications for retention schedule development and management, and for records control and management, with an exclusive focus on proven approaches and user-friendly systems.

The Intersect Systems design and development team includes top-notch software professionals and consultants, as well as experienced records management professionals.

Intersect Systems develops software applications for both local governments and state agencies to help meet state requirements in maintaining records programs. Intersect also offers specialized software tools for commercial businesses, including *Clark's Encyclopedia of Records Retention*.

applications. Zen Works controls user access to certain directories by modifying directory information maintained in the Windows operating system to redirect file access. Intersect encountered this a couple of years ago with two of our customers, and we were able to identify the problem and address it with an update to our applications. However, with mission-critical applications (and records management systems, which help an organization comply with state and federal laws, are certainly mission-critical applications!), *it is essential that any LAN or WAN updates be tested with an organization's critical applications before committing to the network system updates.* Failing this, an organization may find that mission-critical applications no longer run correctly, disrupting essential business functions.

Document imaging is becoming popular as one aspect of records management. Over a short time, an aggressive scanning and indexing operation can create a data structure of thousands of imaged documents on a server system. However, we have seen two problems arise with large data files of imaged documents. First, in any transition to a new records management application, *it is essential that information about the organization and structure of the images be available, including index files.* Second, when an organization replaces network servers or a LAN or WAN system, it may be necessary to move all or some of the indexed electronic images to new locations on a server. *Your records management application must include a global editing capability that allows the file access paths to all, or portions of, indexed images to be edited or updated to accommodate relocation on any new server system.*

Home-grown records systems can also create transition problems. Excel®, while an excellent spreadsheet program, is a particularly poor choice for a records inventory system due to the difficulty in enforcing consistent data entries, and maintaining data integrity for the relational aspects of a data system. A desktop relational database such as Access® is a step closer to being satisfactory, but typical do-it-yourself records applications using Access as a bare data system almost always fail to address most of the essential operational aspects of records management. Any relational database must be driven by front-end application software that manages a wide range of the critical logical aspects of records management.

In considering a records plan, whether for ten years or one hundred years, *the one critical element of any plan is to make sure that whatever records management system you use allows easy export of your data to an external transitional format!*

Slow Internet (cont. from page 1)

Internet continuously, looking for black holes. Named after the Hubble Space Telescope, the system monitors the maze of routers and fiberglass optic cables that make up the Internet, searching continuously for problem areas. The black holes that are located are mapped on a constantly changing constellation representing the Internet's weak points. The Hubble analysis indicates that almost 10 percent of computers worldwide experience an error due to black hole problems at least once during a three-week period.

Some projects that involve communication between a large number of computers can contribute substantially to overall network traffic volumes. One interesting example is a computer program called Chinook developed at the University of Alberta in Canada. Chinook was designed to examine game-playing strategies for the game of checkers by computing and analyzing all of the 500 billion-billion board positions that are possible on the checkers game board. The massive computing requirements were distributed among over 200 computers at the University of Alberta and another university in California, linked through the Internet, and exchanging information as they worked on the problem around the clock. The data requirements were so high that for a while during the 1990s, more than 80 percent of the Internet traffic in western North America was checkers data being shipped between the two institutions.

In February of this year, three mysterious cuts in undersea cables carrying Internet traffic disrupted and delayed traffic to two continents for several days, and in recent years undersea earthquakes have also damaged Internet cables, underscoring the impact that such damage can have on Internet communications.

Records Plan (cont. from page 6)

information is not available.

Another problem that we have seen too frequently concerns compatibility with new versions of operating systems. Software that was developed for earlier versions of Windows used a 16-bit internal word length; these applications may run on Windows 2000 or XP, which have a 32-bit internal word length, but only in a compatibility mode that compromises the functionality of XP. And Windows Vista® has numerous changes that prevent many applications that are compatible with XP from installing or operating correctly on Vista. Compatibility of software applications across new or updated versions of Windows and other operating systems depends on the software developer to provide timely updates to insure compatibility. However, software companies can go out of business, or abandon current product lines, or be acquired by other companies that may not maintain or update existing applications. *Protect your organization: insure that your records system allows you to export your data, and all index files, to an external, intermediate database or file system suitable for a transition, such as .mdb, xls, txt, or hml files, any time you desire, and without depending on the developer or vendor. Be sure that you have an appropriate definition of any structural or data encoding in order to interpret data values, pointers, and field contents. And, as new versions of operating systems are announced or anticipated, make sure that you can expect compatible software updates from the software developer.*

New versions of Network Operating Systems can create problems with existing applications. An example of this is Zen Works® from Novell®, which has affected numerous software