



Can Office 365 be used as a compliant records management system?

Office 365 & SharePoint Online records management limitations.

As Microsoft continues to introduce records management features in Office 365, as part of their higher level licensing, our team is often asked whether the functionality satisfies Australian legislative standards, or whether a traditional eDRMS is still required.

We've collated a list of reasons why Office 365 does not satisfy legislative requirements, highlighting the areas where it falls short of Australian recordkeeping standards. We have also drawn attention to some limitations in functionality that present administrative challenges.

Where the compliance gaps exist.



Inability to manage paper files.

Office 365 provides no functionality to manage paper/physical records and does not allow users to create hybrid files. Users are also unable to link paper files and electronic content for disposal, instead requiring manual identification which can be easily forgotten.



Labels can take seven days to apply.

Depending on the size and complexity of the repository, it can take up to seven days for a Label to be applied. If content is deleted within that time, the information will be lost without an audit trail.



History is deleted with a Record.

Office 365 does not retain metadata once an item is deleted, and therefore does not leave a defensible deletion trail or any record at all.



Users can delete Records.

SharePoint user permission functionality does not have the complexity required to prevent users from deleting Records without significantly limiting operations and collaboration.



Inability to modify Records.

After content is classified as a Record, it can no longer be modified or collaborated on.

Where the system presents other limitations.



Not available for on-premises users.

The Records and Compliance functionality is only available through SharePoint Online and Office 365; on-premises customers do not have access.



Advanced functionality requires the highest E5 license.

An E5 license is required to utilise the advanced eDiscovery and Data Governance features.



Requires manual identification.

When a Label is applied at the Library level, all content added to the Library will inherit the Library retention Label. Content that requires a different retention Label has to be manually applied at the document level.



Label limitations.

Only one Label can be applied to an item at any given time. It's not possible to apply a retention and sensitivity Label to an item at the same time.



Our services.

- eDRMS implementation, configuration, integration
- RecordPoint, Content Manager (TRIM) and SharePoint training
- Records management as a service
- Content Manager support packages
- Content and data migration
- Strategic records and information management advisory services
- Application development
- Recruitment of records and information management professionals and technical staff
- Providers of EzeScan, OnePlaceMail, inMailX

