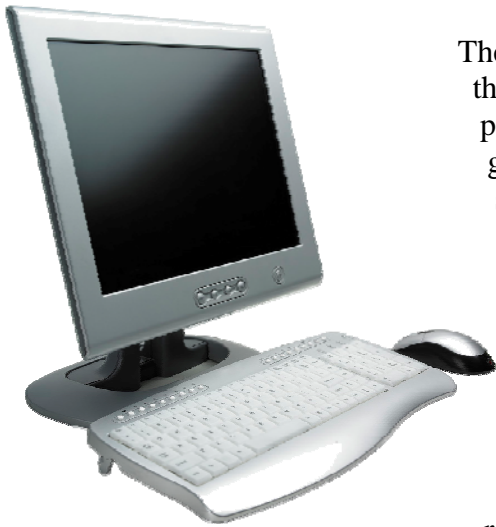


## Managing Electronic Records



The key to determining the retention of any records is in the content, rather than the medium. Electronic and paper records should be retained using the same guidelines outlined in approved records retention schedules. But when it comes to storage and final disposition the medium does come into play, especially for records with a permanent retention.

### Documenting Destruction

Just as paper documents require proof of destruction, so do electronic documents, which have become increasingly popular in litigation.

Proving that electronic documents, or any records, were disposed of legally demonstrates good faith and the fact that an organization follows its set policies. With a keystroke it is easy to delete a file from your file system, which can cause problems. Just deleting a file however does not destroy it and for this reason it is doubly important to document the disposition of electronic records. UCit has an Electronic Media Disposal Policy and a Computer Disposal Policy that need to be followed when disposing of any kind of electronic media.

### Permanent Retention of Electronic Records

Paper has a proven shelf life of hundreds of years and can be read without the aid of special equipment, so the written word endures and can be accessed for ages. Even microform, used for years as an alternative storage format to paper, can be read if necessary without equipment. But electronic records rely on the right combination of hardware, software and media for access, and with rapid advancement in technologies record formats can quickly become obsolete. Permanent or long-term retention of electronic records requires more planning that does that of paper records.

Janice Schulz, University Records Manager  
806 Blegen Library, ML 113  
[Janice.Schulz@uc.edu](mailto:Janice.Schulz@uc.edu)  
Phone: 556-1958  
Fax: 556-2113