

USA government has gone a step further. The Obama Administration is strongly committed to its program of Open Government, and the **NARA** (National Archives and Records Administration) has convinced all that this is not possible without a good records management program. Records management is the backbone of open government, says President Obama and the t-shirt that promotes the idea. Great!



Last May, I had the chance to see **Paul Wester**, Chief Records Officer (NARA), presenting it , and I think between the international audience, from more than 15 countries on five continents, was a feeling of healthy envy.

President Obama signed on 28 November 2011 a [Presidential Memorandum](#) for the heads of executive departments and agencies, entitled

Managing Government Records

. In a few paragraphs sets out an ambitious program to modernize the management of records, which is necessary because "the current federal records management system is based on an outdated approach involving paper and filing cabinets" . The plan, entitled "Records Management Reform", promotes a complete transition to digital environment and will have a specific budget for its implementation. And what in Europe would qualify quickly as a waste and would clearly not be feasible in our policy of cuttings in governments expenses, in the United States becomes a long-term vision to achieve more efficient management which will minimize the costs of records management in the future.

From e-government to o-government

Written by

Sunday, 17 June 2012 17:23 - Last Updated Wednesday, 14 November 2012 13:08

The plan has several steps that are being met as planned:



- The first stage, already completed, requires commitment from all federal agencies, which must appoint a responsible, and the completion of a report on records management in each of the agencies.

- In addition the views of all stakeholders have collected to complete the insider's view opening an inquiry through the Government IdeaScale. The result is available at <http://govrecordmanagement.ideascale.com/a/ideafactory.do?id=17925&mode=top&discussionFilter=active>.

Also a public meeting was held in March that it intended gathering input from the public interest community, from the vendor/IT community, and from members of the public at large.

- In July a **"Records Management Directive"** will be launches. It has been developed by the US Archivist (NARA) , the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), in coordination with the Associate Attorney General . This will detail the steps to reform and improve records management in US Federal Government.

We will have to follow closely the Directive in the [Official Records Express Blog](#) , and see if we can explain it to some of our politicians!

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