



CASE STUDY

FTI Technology Helps Global Electronics Corporation Establish Records Retention Program in Response to Government Monitorship

The U.S. division of a global electronics manufacturer was under regulatory orders to establish a records retention schedule and policy in order to bring its operations in compliance with a government monitorship.

SITUATION

Outside counsel engaged FTI's Information Governance, Privacy & Security team to drive the effort and implement a focused retention schedule as well as a policy that would direct retention for all records and information across the client's U.S. operations. While the client lacked a formal information governance program, the company did have a detailed records classification table, comprised of over 300 unique record types with 40 percent assigned a permanent retention. This gave the team a place to start, but also introduced challenges as the records were disjointed from certain business units and not inclusive of the full records landscape across the organization. Streamlining the classification system would require identifying the key stakeholders across 18 business functions and obtaining time and insights from them to create a fulsome picture of records each department dealt with in day-to-day operations. Further complicating the effort was a change in client's project leadership just as the initiative was gaining momentum. This resulted in delays and process adjustments as a new project manager was transitioned to the team.

OUR ROLE

Starting with existing classifications, documentation, policies and organizational charts as guides, FTI began digging into the client's records universe. At the outset, the team discovered the client had issued a permanent designation to a large volume of document types. Through extensive legal research, leveraging a citation research tool, they determined which regulatory requirements applied to the existing record types, and parsed out records that were subject to regulatory retention obligations versus business retention requirements. These insights informed a preliminary records series and categorization of the client's record types under a new set of categories.

The team then met with stakeholders across the business to vet and validate the record series—feedback was analyzed against the team's research and outside counsel's guidance on regulatory obligations, to further streamline classifications. Informed retention period distinctions were set and confirmed across business units to establish a schedule rooted in business need and obligation, rather than on disparate opinions across numerous teams.

Throughout the project, FTI partnered closely with outside counsel. We led the retention research and stakeholder interviews, and facilitated project management, leaning on counsel to advise on legal and regulatory issues. This partnership enabled the implementation of a holistic information governance project for the client, while ensuring all requirements, including those of the existing monitorship, were met.

The client is now pursuing additional information governance work with FTI to expand the revised records retention practices for its global operations, and revise outdated legal hold processes.

OUR IMPACT



FTI finalized a new information and records management policy for the client that encompassed governance for all information in the company and a sustainable, compliant records retention schedule that enabled ongoing fulfillment of legal and regulatory obligations.



The records retention schedule provided significant reduction of the record types requiring permanent retention, compared to the client's original information classification table.



Hands-on work with more than 40 business stakeholders reduced the records categories from 300 plus disjointed records types, to 60 "big-bucket" records categories that shifted away from a permanent retention mentality to an average retention of six to 10 years and were aligned with the entire organization. Each category was vetted and issued an information owner, to make ongoing compliance with the retention schedule more manageable for each business unit.

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