DECLUTTER YOUR FUTURE — MAP YOUR DATA

While “spring cleaning” often entails clearing and re-organizing personal clutter, we often stop short of forming a larger organizational strategy that could prevent future clutter. You can pursue this greater potential at work by “mapping” your data, which summarizes the various stages of your data’s lifecycles and the resulting stewardship requirements. This map allows you to better assess what you have, where it should be kept, and the processes required to handle it, thereby encouraging more consistent organization and privacy.

The following steps can help you to begin your map. First, inventory your data sets: create a confidential (securely-stored) list of all data sets that you possess, whether on paper (“hard copy”) or electronically (“soft copy”). Next, using a simple grid or format of your choice, chart the lifecycle stages and associated requirements for each data set.

Data lifecycle components:

A. Classification and roles:
• How is this data classified, and what are the governing statutes and/or University policies?
• Who are the ultimate stewards of this data, and who are its managers and custodians?

B. Access and security:
• Who has access and under what terms?
• How and where is the data physically and/or technologically secured?
• How is it administratively secured and what are the guiding procedures and training?
• Are there any agreements with external parties to access or use this data, such as vendors who provide resources such as survey tools or statistical assessments?

C. Transmission and portability:
• What is your secure process for sharing or transmitting this data? Encrypted email?
A shared information repository like Hawk Drive or group drive in Central File Storage?
• Is portability limited by agreement or by export controls?

D. Storage and disposal:
• Is the data stored in a secure, accessible and University-recommended back-up, system to allow for post-disaster recovery?
• Is the data's retention and disposal aligned with your unit’s retention schedule and/or the University Record Retention Schedule?
• Are paper records securely locked during retention and cross-shredded for disposal?
• Are your deletion practices consistent with KU’s Electronic Data Disposal Procedure?

While simple, this exercise in “mental defragmenting” can offer added clarity about your role and responsibilities. Remember that KU offers many tools to assist you, such as email or whole disk encryption, Hawk Drive, and Central File Storage.

As always, please contact us in the Privacy Office with any questions.

Ramon Llull, Arbor Moralis (Moral Tree), from Arbor X scientiae [sic] venerabilis et caelitus illuminati Patris Raymundi Lullii [The Tree of Science of the August and Heavenly Illuminated Father Ramon Llull].1515. Kenneth Spencer Research Library, the University of Kansas.