Don

Thank you for giving me a heads up about your blog post "An Open Letter to ARMA". In checking with our membership director 2010 was your last year as a member of ARMA International. A lot has happened in 6 years' time. As promised here is my response. Some of the information provided below is confidential and competitive in nature. I ask that you not share my response with anyone else. My response addresses your various points

*"…focused on chasing profits…"*

Profits are necessary to sustain every organization. Currently ARMA derives the majority of our revenue from membership dues. Unfortunately our membership is an aging one, and as a result a declining membership. Over the last 4-5 years we've gone from approximately 10,000 fully paid members to approximately 8500. Our average member retention is approximately 3.5 years. Yes on average a member stays around for just a little over 3 years then moves on. We're not sure why, but we are working on finding out why.

One reason this is happening is because records management professionals, like myself, no longer understand who ARMA represents. There are many organizations that represent 'information governance professionals' or 'information management professionals' or some other variation on the name. And, as I'm sure you're aware, the number of those organizations is growing steadily.

No one represents the records management professional anymore. No one. In fact, these other organizations openly mock records management as a form of information management that is no longer relevant in today's business environment. And this comes from people without any real information lifecycle management training who simply declare themselves 'information governance professionals' and no one questions their credentials.

Increasing our revenues and the attendant profits from other sources is needed to offset this decline. Profits are necessary to sustain the organization and I seriously doubt that the federal government would bail us out. So yes ARMA does chase profits like any business would for without them we would no longer exist in the long run.

*"…placating vendors…"*

As for "placating vendors" I'm not sure what you are referring to, but I would like more information if available. I can say that over the last 10 years there has been a significant consolidation of vendors who service the records and information industry. Just one example is the current merger ongoing between Iron Mountain and RECALL. Currently both vendors purchase space on the Conference Show floor, ad space in the IMJ and sponsor various other activities. If the merger is consummated ARMA will see a definite decrease in revenue since there will only be one vendor to sell to, not two.

The consolidation of the records management industry is beyond ARMA's control. And it is only beginning. If ARMA is relying on major 'records management' vendors to maintain its annual conference, the conference's future is very dim.

The relationship between ARMA and the vendors is a symbiotic one, at both the national and local levels. We need each other. Chapters greatly depend upon local vendor support for such as activities as local seminars and speakers, while the vendors rely upon members to purchase their products. ARMA works very diligently to strike a balance between the vendors and the members.

*"and following the latest fads…"*

If by fad you mean information governance ARMA has been in the lead in addressing information governance. This leadership began with the development and issuance of *The Principle* aka Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles. From the Principles we developed an Information Governance Maturity Model (http://www.arma.org/r2/generally-accepted-br-recordkeeping-principles/metrics). ARMA continues to produce materials such as standards, guidelines and best practices to support the record and information management professional in their day-to-day work. Currently we are updating the Glossary, Job Descriptions and the Competencies to take into account the changes that have taken place since they were originally published.

Yes, I am referring to 'information governance' as a fad.  Just as 'Document Management', 'Knowledge Management' and even 'Enterprise Content Management' are fads.  Records Management is the only form of information lifecycle management that has lasted through the centuries, but now I fear for it, too.

*Clearly define 'information governance' and explain how it differs from traditional records management."*

ARMA's Board of Directors redefined our mission because we realized that we were presenting information governance as something separate when it is not.

Our current vision statement reads;

> ARMA International is a lead in information governance because it is the <u>authority on records and information management (RIM).</u> Records and Information Management is broadly recognized as the foundation of effective information governance."

ARMA's mission is "to provide information professionals the resources, tools and training they need to <u>effectively manage records and information</u> within an established information governance framework." Basically you can't have an information governance program without records and information management.

The proposed new definition for information governance reads (the portions in red are new text, this has not been finalized and may not be shared);

> A strategic, cross-disciplinary framework composed of standards, processes, roles and metrics that hold organizations and individuals accountable for the proper handling of records and information. The framework helps organizations achieve business objectives, facilitates compliance with external requirements, and minimizes risk posed by sub-standard information handling practices. *Note:* Records and information management (RIM) is an essential building block of an information governance program.

Information Governance defines an organization's strategy for how it will govern their information. This strategy is defined by stakeholders such as Legal, Privacy, Information Security, IT and Records Management. Once the strategy is defined it is up to each of the above and others to develop the tactics needed to implement the strategy. Without a well-defined strategy information will be governed in a haphazard manner.

With all due respect, ███ I still don't understand why IG is different than traditional records management.  And I don't believe anyone will ever convince me otherwise.  You write in the paragraph above, 'Information Governance defines an organization's strategy for how it will govern their information.'  I can write exactly the same sentence this way, 'Records Management defines an organization's strategy for how it will manage their information.'  There is no difference.  I understand that you want me to see one, but I don't.

You asked *"Can one be an information governance professional without being trained in records management?"* The simple answer is yes. Groups like Legal, Information Security, Privacy, etc., look at information governance differently than from the way Records Management does.  An information governance professional (IGP) is a person who;

> "has the <u>strategic</u> perspective and the requisite knowledge to help an organization <u>leverage</u> information for <u>maximum value</u> while reducing the costs and mitigating the risks associated with using and governing this asset." <u>http://www.arma.org/igp-resources</u>

<span style="color:red">Legal professionals, Information Security professionals, Privacy professionals all have associations that represent them.  The only group you listed that doesn't is Records Management.</span>

Are Information Governance and Records Management two different professions? Yes and no. Information governance is part and parcel of many different professions. ARMA International recognized that one way to increase the credibility of information governance was to create a certification. This certification is the Information Governance Professional (IGP). Just about any profession can and does qualify to sit for the IGP exam. The current IGP roster contains members from Legal, IT, Records Management and a host of other professions. Many of those individuals hold other certifications as evidence by the list of associated certifications found at this link <u>http://www.arma.org/r1/professional-development/certification</u>.

*"Does a records manager work for an information governance professional or vice versa?".* Not trying to be flippant, but the answer is yes. At one time I reported directly to the Chief Privacy Officer at a previous position. Privacy is a key part of information governance, so at that time a records manager worked for an information governance professional.

<span style="color:red">Than your Chief Privacy Officer is the information governance professional and ARMA, as it currently stands, represents him or her.  Who represented you as a 'records manager'?</span>

It is not an either/or proposition i.e. you are either a records manager or an information governance professional. One can be both. Many young professionals may decide to take the IGP exam first and then take the ICRM exams. Or a seasoned CRM may decide that they want to take the IGP exam in order to gain more credibility within their organization.

I hope that this has helped clear up some of the confusion revolving around information governance and records management.

*"Develop a closer relation with the ICRM"*

ARMA and the ICRM have a very close relationship. So close is the relationship that many CRMs have served as members of ARMA's Board of Directors as well as being officers of the association. Many former ARMA Board members and officers have and do serve as Regents of the ICRM. The cross-pollination and cooperation between the two organizations couldn't be better. Each year at the annual conference ARMA meets with its affiliated groups such as the ICRM, IGP Governance Board and the Fellows to discuss our individual strategies and how we can complement each other. As for a "small booth" at the conference, well ARMA in the past has made space available free of charge in a prominent location for the ICRM. Most recently we have made them part of the ARMA booth on the showroom floor.

We (the Board) think so highly of the CRM designation that we required that ARMA's new CEO become a CRM within one year of hire. I'm pleased to report that Bob Baird (the CEO) passed all 5 exams in February and will be sitting for Part 6 in May. Bob also took and passed the IGP exam. Both credentials provide him with instant credibility. I would say that the relationship between ARMA and the ICRM is a

strong one and growing stronger. If you have any ideas on how we can grow closer and stronger please don't hesitate to let me know.

<span style="color:red">This is an excellent response. I'm glad to hear you are doing all of this. I will remove this section from the post.</span>

*"Downsizing the Organization"*

Yes, young professionals network differently from older professionals. Our Director of Membership, ███████████ recognizes this and as a result started a young professionals advisory group shortly after she came on board last fall. She uses the group to learn how we can engage with the young professionals more effectively and to make them feel more of a part of ARMA International.

Our chapters have been identified as an important part of their membership experience. We recognize that all chapters are struggling with increasing attendance at their monthly meetings, just as they struggle with finding volunteers to serve on chapter boards. It is up to each chapter to determine the number of meetings, the date and time as well as the format. Many chapters have a problem with members scattered across a wide geographical area. As a result some have pioneered the use of webcasts. ARMA HQ is working with our chapters to find solutions.

About 80% of ARMA members belong to a chapter, with about 25% belonging to more than one. Every member I've asked about how they came to ARMA tells me a story about a mentor who led them here so we value community highly. The majority of our chapters are successful and many are being creative about ways to meet the challenges they are facing in getting people together in person. They are having more virtual meetings and discussions. These early adapting chapters are paving the way for a new era of chapter membership. Of course, we have chapters that struggle and we take those situations seriously. Our regional leadership teams are our first line of defense in identifying chapters in trouble and helping to find solutions to reinvigorate them. Of utmost concern is the member's experience, so we and our team of member volunteers do all we can to exceed their expectations. Chapters are our boots on the ground and the face of ARMA to most of our members-at-large. We are committed to our chapters and the evolution they'll need to make in this changing technological world.

<span style="color:red">The only way ARMA will reverse the downward trend of new members and attract young people will be to revitalize the image of the professional records manager, make it clear to the general public that a good, qualified records manager can save an organization millions every year and must be compensated accordingly.</span>

<span style="color:red">Nothing else you do will prevent membership from dwindling down to the point that ARMA can no longer function.</span>

*"Articulate a clear and committed association position on DOD 5015.2 "*

In 2009 ARMA recognized that DOD 5015 was playing a significant role in the design and selection of EDRM systems. As we know DOD 5015 is required for DOD agencies and that NARA has recommended it for Federal agencies. DOD took the lead back in the early 90s to define the base records management functionality that a EDRMS would need. To ensure that EDRMS met the requirements DOD set up a testing/certification process for these products. In the private sector there was not an equivalent functional requirements standard. DOD 5015 lists over 100 base functions, in the private sector if a company issued a RFP for a EDRMS they would have to list out the base functions they wanted the system to have. Once DOD 5015 certification came on the scene, the private sector needed to only ask "Is your product DOD 5015 certified?" even though they might not fully know what that meant.

ARMA developed a publication titled *"Using DOD5015.2 STD Outside the Federal Sector"* "to help those outside the federal government better understand DOD 5015.2 and how it can be used for records management training and to develop or evaluate ERM system products. Is it ARMA's responsibility to from a task group to evaluate and form an opinion on DOD 5015? If it were to form such an evaluation group, then ARMA should be ready to have at hand a new functional requirements standard as a replacement as well as a certification process for products.

I remember when your blog posting was published. I would recommend relooking at that article and submitting it for publication by ARMA's *Information Management Journal.*

If ARMA were an aviation association and the government release the specification for a new plane that prevented the plane from actually flying, wouldn't ARMA be obligated to say something?  The DoD Standard is that bad and ARMA's silence on the matter is embarrassing.

In the past I've been a very vocal critic of ARMA International, but about a little over 5 years ago I decided that I could do more to help ARMA achieve its goals and objectives from the inside rather than from the outside. I decided to run for a seat on ARMA's Board of Directors. I was overwhelmed by the number of votes that I received and took seriously to heart the trust that those voters placed on me.  A trust that I would do everything to make sure ARMA is doing the right thing. At the end of my term, I had another decision to make, should I retire from the Board or take the next step and run for President-elect. A huge commitment, three years helping run an organization that I've been a member of for more than thirty years. Again I was overwhelmed by the election results. For the past two years my thoughts have been "Is ARMA heading in the right direction? Are we providing our members with the tools and knowledge to advance their careers? Are we properly promoting our Association to those outside of our profession?" For the last question I can say unequivocally yes. Earlier I mentioned how ARMA developed The Principle, well AHIMA (Association of Health Information Management Administrators" approached ARMA about how they could adapt The Principles for the Health Information Management profession. It was a successful partnership. I represented ARMA at AHIMA's 2014 conference in San Diego where they rolled out their IG program. I also sat on a panel that answered questions about information governance. In 2014 I represented ARMA at the Sedona Conference's All Voices Meeting as part of a panel discussion on information governance.

All in all the decisions to run for the Board and President-elect were well worth it. I hope that I've served the members well.

Don again thank you for giving me a heads up about your blog posting and I hope that my response has provided you with information that you may not have had at hand.

Thank you, ███ for this very thoughtful reply.  I very much appreciate the effort.

Unfortunately, I am still convinced that ARMA *must* make the changes – as horribly difficult as they may seem – that I've listed in my letter.  If these changes aren't made, there is no doubt that ARMA will simply struggle along for a few more years until it can no longer operate.  At which point it will probably merge with one or two of the 'other associations' to form some nebulous new group that will also be unable to explain who they represent.  And records managers (and the customers we serve) will undoubtedly suffer the most…

I've had a long day.  This is very tiring.  And it's my birthday.  So I'm going home to be with my family.

I will post a link to the modified open letter to the ListServ group tomorrow at 11:30 ET, but I won't mention anything about speaking with you nor will I release any of the information in this response.

Kind regards, Don