

# TRIM foundation for e-centric business at the British Library



## Facts about the British Library:

The collection includes 150 million items, in most known languages

3 million new items are incorporated every year

Over 16,000 people use the collections each day

They operate the world's largest document delivery service providing some 4 million items a year to customers all over the world

Six million searches are generated by the British Library online catalogue each year



**TOWER**  
SOFTWARE

## Overview:

In May 2001, the Estates Directorate of the British Library (BL) sought an Electronic Document and Records Management system to improve its operational efficiency. In keeping with the e-Government targets of 2004 and 2005, the Library also wanted to make progress with its planned transformation into an 'e-centric' organisation. Electronic Document and Records Management (EDRM) was chosen as the technology to underpin this target.

The Estates Directorate is responsible for maintaining the fabric of all buildings owned by the BL. The Directorate also manages the supply of services to these buildings, such as catering, security and cleaning. Following a competitive tender, the TRIM solution was selected and by December 2001 rollout had commenced. Today, 80 employees from the Estates division, based at St. Pancras, use TRIM to manage their electronic and paper documents and records. Since TRIM was implemented over ten thousand documents have been captured, a third of which are e-mail. The remainder are in Word or Excel format with a number of graphics files (including some CAD files) and PowerPoint presentations. The management of these documents is achieved using a functional records plan that can be easily expanded to accommodate areas of the Library not yet ready for inclusion.

## The Culture

The Estates Directorate was an obvious first candidate for the introduction of EDRM, as they had already embarked on data sharing projects in the early 1990's. A culture of collaborative working had been established - for example, shared folders were widely in use and some informal classifications had been defined to describe these folders. The Directorate was also responsible for managing some of the Library's largest contracts with third parties, which carried a high value to the Library. Perhaps the greatest role for EDRM lay in its ability to show evidence of the Library's due diligence in the area of security for both the public and its vast array of collections.

## Technical Environment

The Estates Directorate run the corporate standard software applications which include MS Office 97 (Word Excel PowerPoint Access); Microsoft Outlook 2000 and Microsoft Internet Explorer version 5.0 running on NetWare and Windows NT Servers. The RDBMS for all enterprise applications (including TRIM) is currently ORACLE, although a transfer to SQL Server is being considered. The 80 users who access TRIM are mostly based in the St Pancras building in London, with a small number based on the Boston Spa site in Yorkshire. The Library's WAN infrastructure is fairly advanced and based on Asynchronous Transfer Mode technology, with high-speed links between London and Boston Spa.



## Business drivers

There were two main business drivers. Firstly the Library sought a system that enabled the storage and retrieval of documents of all kinds as authentic records of the Library's business transactions; a system that satisfied the requirements of evidentiary value as well as supporting the retention of records as part of the Library's duties under the Public Records Act. The Library wanted the implementation of TRIM to act as a pilot for EDRM with a view to extending the implementation to the rest of the organisation.

Second, within the Estates Directorate itself, there was a need to improve the safety and security of the public, the building and its contents and also to facilitate compliance with the Data Protection Act (DP), Freedom of Information Act (Fol) and the Modernising Government Target of 2004.

## The Evaluation & Selection Process



The British Library's Project Team consisted of the Planning and IT Services Manager, the Electronic Records Manager and a Project Manager together with business representatives from within and outside the Estates Directorate. The Project Team decided to go to the market for software but not for services and to procure the system via the Government IT Catalogue of (GCat). GCat was seen as the quickest way to procure a system and the Directorate wanted to specify that only PRO approved vendors could supply.

The Project team identified from the PRO list of approved systems (which then numbered about 12 products) those products that met the following three criteria:

1. A records management 'thoroughbred' product as distinct from systems that had "bolted-on" RM features;
2. A product capable of being implemented incrementally as opposed to the big bang enterprise approach;
3. A product that included workflow capability. At this stage the precise workflow requirements of the Estates Directorate had not been mapped out.

Three vendors were short-listed, Hummingbird, Objective and TOWER Software. The evaluation involved a product demonstration and client site visits and, after the product demonstration, the shortlist was reduced to two. A member of the Project Team visited Australia to examine the implementation experiences of other organisations. She returned with plans and useful guidelines from organisations with successful EDRM implementations.

TRIM from TOWER Software was finally chosen as the preferred solution for the British Library. It was chosen as it represented the most competitive on price, it was the least complicated to implement, and it offered the least risk. Since the Library had chosen to implement, train and undertake the necessary change management issues, ease of implementation was an important criterion. The overall project came in well within the allocated budget.



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## Implementation & Rollout

An Implementation team was appointed comprising a Programme Manager, Project Manager and the Electronic Records Manager. Prior to rollout a number of events took place. The Library employed a consultant to consolidate naming conventions and to produce a single thesaurus. A configuration workshop was run by TOWER Software to construct a prototype database for the Implementation Team to work with. TOWER trained the Administrators of the system using the prototype database and the first group of users. The user training session was scripted so that the Library could conduct the rest of the user training.

The users were divided into eight groups of approximately 10 users each, and the software was rolled out to a new group every two weeks, starting in December 2001 and finishing in early May 2002. Follow-up support was offered by way of the internal help desk within the Library.

A few difficulties were encountered in implementation and rollout:

- There were some incompatibility issues between TRIM and one version of the Directorate's anti-virus software.
- E-mail management was challenging. The Estates Directorate had never used a tool for e-mail management before and there was a lack of clear guidelines of what to capture, what constituted a record.
- The development of a corporate file plan and thesaurus was time consuming. The project team commented that people within the Estates Directorate wanted the plan to exactly replicate their physical filing cabinets. They did not appreciate at first that the TRIM EDRM application provides a system based upon logical constructs and intuitive search methods rather than relying upon a knowledge of the physical layout and structure of filing cabinets.



## Lessons Learned and future work

With regard to the implementation process, the Programme Manager would have liked to have set up a "model office" prior to rollout so that a few nominated users could have validated the way the system was set up. This would have enabled more people look at the file plan, thesaurus and the configuration of TRIM and to simulate some user scenarios. He also wishes that they had spent more time on e-mail policy and management to assist user understanding.

## Business benefits

The Library has just received the go ahead to build a £10 million extension to the Library from January 2003 called "The Centre for Conservation." The Programme Manager explains that although it is hard to quantify the benefits of EDRM based on previous experience, he is certain that without TRIM the management of the briefing, procurement and approvals documentation for this kind of project would be very labour intensive.

A further positive effect has been the creation of the Corporate Information Management Unit. Following fifteen months of lobbying, the Executive has approved funding for a unit that manages information at a corporate level. The FoI, Data Protection and Modernising Government initiatives all fall under the responsibility of this new unit. EDRM is essential for meeting these responsibilities. What will drive the eventual rollout of EDRM will be the pursuance of compliance with e-Government targets of 2004, and with FoI and Data Protection legislation.

## About TOWER Software:

TOWER Software, a leading enterprise content management (ECM) provider, delivers electronic document and records management (EDRM) solutions. TOWER Software's award-winning solutions empower organizations to manage and secure their vital information assets. The TRIM Context® solution is a single, integrated platform that manages business information throughout its complete lifecycle. By relying on its proven domain expertise, strong strategic partnerships, and powerful solutions, TOWER Software enables organizations to improve the accuracy of information on which business decisions are made; maximize efficiency by finding business critical information more quickly and easily; and achieve and maintain standards compliance across industries, resulting in sustained competitive advantage. TOWER Software is a privately held company with operations in North America, Europe and Asia-Pacific. For more information, visit [www.towersoft.com](http://www.towersoft.com).

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