

ELOQUENT SYSTEMS INC

# Eloquent Records™ Planning Guide

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Volume ER1 – Getting Started



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This manual is designed to guide you in planning the implementation of the Eloquent Records™ software as well as for reviewing at any time you are ready to start using additional features. This volume of the Planning Guide describes the various options you have with the software – everything from organizing existing physical records in boxes to filing current electronic records.

# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>4</b>
Who should read this guide? .....	4
When should it be read? .....	4
Where else can I get help? .....	4
What volumes are specific to the Eloquent Records™ application? .....	4
What is this volume about? .....	5
<b>Physical &amp; Electronic .....</b>	<b>6</b>
Can I mix physical and electronic records? .....	6
What is the primary objective of the software package? .....	6
How do you find the file or document in the database? .....	6
What are the main search parameters? .....	6
Can you find an Email or SharePoint document? .....	7
Can you have other access points for searching? .....	7
<b>Electronic Records .....</b>	<b>8</b>
What electronic records are supported? .....	8
Are any media types not supported? .....	8
Will individuals know where to file their records? .....	8
Is there a security problem with everyone filing their own records? .....	8
Who creates and assigns the file folders? .....	8
Will some records get misfiled? .....	8
Will some valuable documents be missed altogether? .....	8
<b>Semi-active Physical Records .....</b>	<b>9</b>
Can the system start when boxes are received from various departments? .....	9
Can the user department enter the box information? .....	9
When the form is saved, multiple records are created – one for each folder. Each record gets the data from the prompts at the top of the form – the common area. ....	9
What if the user department does not create the box records? .....	9
Who creates the Accession record? .....	10

**Storage Management..... 11**

- Can the software manage my own records storage facility? ..... 11
- How do I link the boxes to the available spaces in the warehouse? ..... 11
- Can I manage a variety of container sizes?..... 11
- How do I link to 3<sup>rd</sup>-party storage facilities? ..... 11
- How do I communicate with the offsite facility?..... 11

**Active Physical Records..... 12**

- Does the system print labels for new physical folders? ..... 12
- What is a unique name for the folder? ..... 12
- What storage location is the folder linked to? ..... 12
- Who is the owner that the folder is linked to? ..... 12

**Classification & Retention ..... 13**

- How important is the Classification Scheme? ..... 13
- Can it be used by everyone in the organization for finding records? ..... 13
- Can anyone in the organization make new entries? ..... 13
- Who creates the new virtual file folders?..... 13
- How do individuals know where to file their own virtual records?..... 13
- Who determines the disposition date to put on the file folder record? ..... 13
- What happens when the retention rules change? ..... 13
- How do you know when it is time to destroy records? ..... 13
- Are electronic records destroyed?..... 14
- Is there an audit trail regarding the destruction?..... 14

**Migrating Legacy Data..... 14**

- Can my existing data be imported from our legacy system? ..... 14
- Will my data fit the Eloquent system? ..... 14
- Can I validate the results prior to accepting delivery? ..... 14
- Will my system be down during the process? ..... 14
- Does the system support scanning projects? ..... 14

## Introduction

### Who should read this guide?

The Planning Guide is for anyone preparing to use the Eloquent Records software. It provides a good overview of the system. You will know how to log into the system and how to organize to take advantage of the system. After logging in you can then rely on the online HELP for each item on your menu and for every entry prompt on all the Web forms. They provide the detail information.

### When should it be read?

The entire volume should be read prior to implementing the software or getting any training from Eloquent. The training is in the form of online coaching as you start to enter data. You need to have your data ready for each training session. Each training session deals with a few specific tasks, but your general knowledge of the entire system is required.

You should read specific sections again after a few months of operation – when you are ready to start implementing features that were not essential at the start. Any new employee should read the relevant volumes and sections prior to being trained.

### Where else can I get help?

You also can take advantage of the following support provided by Eloquent Systems:

- You may log in as a [Read-only User](#) to access all the same menu items, but with the safety of not having the ability to add/modify any data.
- Schedule just-in-time [remote training](#) for coaching on each new component as soon as you are ready to use it, and
- Make full use of [Hotline support](#) after the system is installed and in operation.
- A few hours of [Professional Services](#) are free for the implementation and training for each new application or module. Additional hours may be purchased for data migration or for extensive custom tailoring.

### What volumes are specific to the Eloquent Records™ application?

- Volume ER1 – Getting Started
- Volume ER2 – Classification & Retention
- Volume ER3 – Accessioning & Reporting
- Volume ER4 – Storage Management
- Volume ER5 – Tracking & Retrieval
- Volume ER6 – Filing eRecords

### What volumes apply to all WebSuite applications?

The four Eloquent WebSuite applications share much of the software. As a result the following manuals apply equally to all applications.

- Volume WS1 – Administrator Functions
- Volume WS2 – Managing Authority Files
- Volume WS3 – Structuring Data for Output
- Volume WS4 – Pointers, Hierarchies & Hyperlinks

### **What is this volume about?**

This volume gives you an overview of the out-of-the-box software. It looks at all the components and shows how they relate to each other. It covers everything from managing older physical records in boxes to filing born-digital electronic records.

## Physical & Electronic

### Can I mix physical and electronic records?

Yes, the software, to some extent, manages both the same way. Electronic records/documents are stored in virtual folders; physical records are in paper folders. In either case the software has a record to represent the folder. In some cases the software may be managing the a folder of paper when some or all of the documents in the folder are scanned and available electronically.

### What is the primary objective of the software package?

The primary objective is to simplify and speed up the process of finding documents when you need them. It empowers everyone in the organization to find the documents they need and to view them online if they are digital. If they are physical only, the database will display their exact location and provide an option to send a specific email request to the records center.

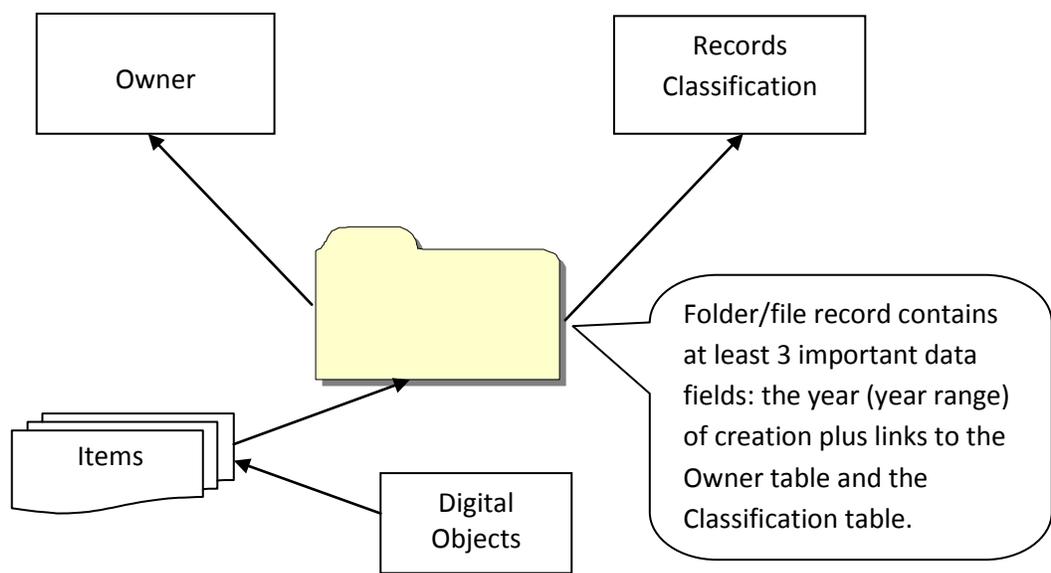
### How do you find the file or document in the database?

A search usually finds the desired folder. Electronic records/documents are listed with a hyperlink for viewing. Physical documents are usually not listed, but they could be if the detail is in the database. It does identify the container and the location of the container. Or, if the folder is still “active” it is linked to the appropriate filing cabinet.

### What are the main search parameters?

Usually, the objective is to get to the folder containing the document(s). A combination of the following search parameters will usually narrow the results to a single folder:

- The classification term
- The year of creation
- The owner



### **Can you find an Email or SharePoint document?**

Yes, because they will be filed in their appropriate “file” or “matter”.

### **Can you have other access points for searching?**

Yes, individual records may have been filed with other metadata fields such as subject and media type, or, in the case of Email, the From: and To: addresses. These additional search parameters may result in the specific document immediately. However, the 3 primary access points will find the folder and list the documents, which may be a variety of media types.

## **Electronic Records**

### **What electronic records are supported?**

The most common are those created with the MS Office software: Email from Outlook, RTF (rich text) and PDF from Word, and a variety of media types from SharePoint. Special Eloquent Add-ins are available for the MS software making it easy for everyone to file their own records. In addition, an Add-in for Windows Explorer can be used to file digital objects from anywhere on the shared drives.

### **Are any media types not supported?**

No, anything can be filed. However, the person searching for it may not have the software for rendering it. For example, a CADD drawing would require specific software at the workstation.

### **Will individuals know where to file their records?**

Yes, the Add-ins are custom tailored for each person, so they are presented with only the virtual folders familiar to them. That is all they require for filing.

### **Is there a security problem with everyone filing their own records?**

No, you need to log into the workstation with the regular Windows user name and password. If someone cannot access your Email folder, they cannot file them. The same is true when filing other electronic documents from the workstation.

### **Who creates and assigns the file folders?**

It is the Records Manager, the same as it would be for physical folders. They understand the Classification scheme so the folder will be properly linked.

### **Will some records get misfiled?**

Not likely, with the limited choice of files offered to each individual. However, the Records manager has the ability to audit the results and do further training when necessary.

### **Will some valuable documents be missed altogether?**

Just as with physical records, some may find their way into the recycle bin. However, with electronic, the IT department has utilities for archiving everything. It may be redundant and very difficult to find, but it is the last line of defense. All documents considered "records" are filed to the Eloquent system.

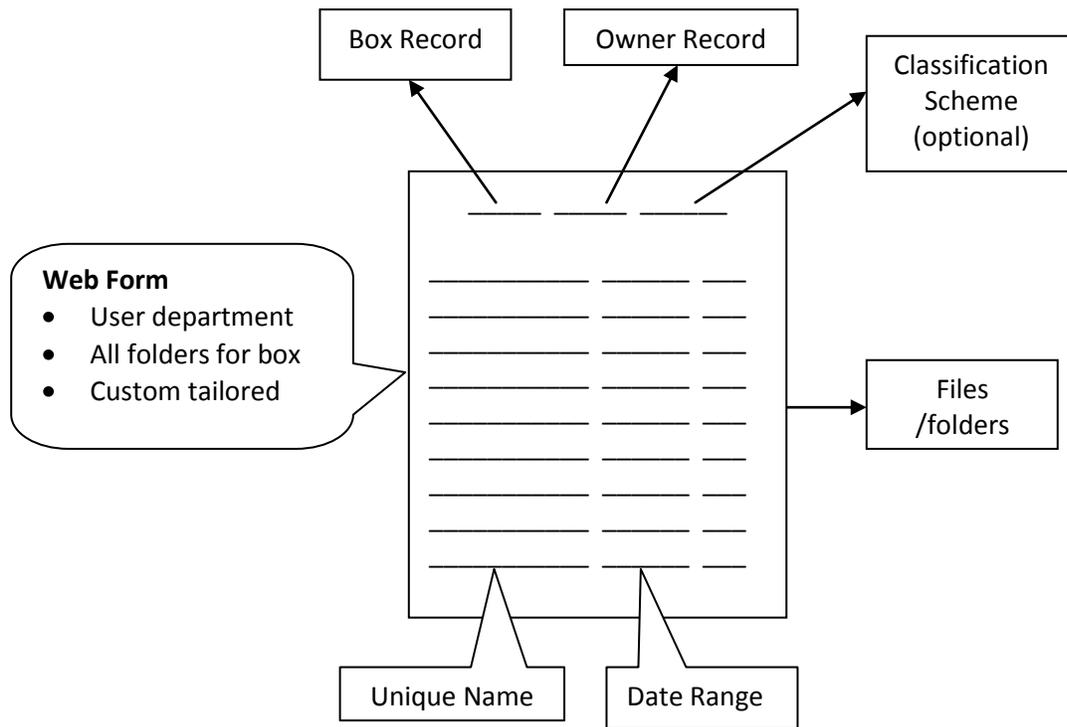
## Semi-active Physical Records

### Can the system start when boxes are received from various departments?

Yes, many Eloquent customers do not start with active records. Their system starts when folders are boxed for semi-active storage using the **Accessioning Module**.

### Can the user department enter the box information?

Yes, they can use a spreadsheet-style Web form. They complete and save one form for each box. The spreadsheet has a row for each folder, containing the unique name and a few other columns of data. They can print a report to include in each box when it is sent to the records department. The form has a prompt at the top linking to the box record, the owner and optionally to the classification scheme. The records department can easily verify and complete the Web form when the box arrives.



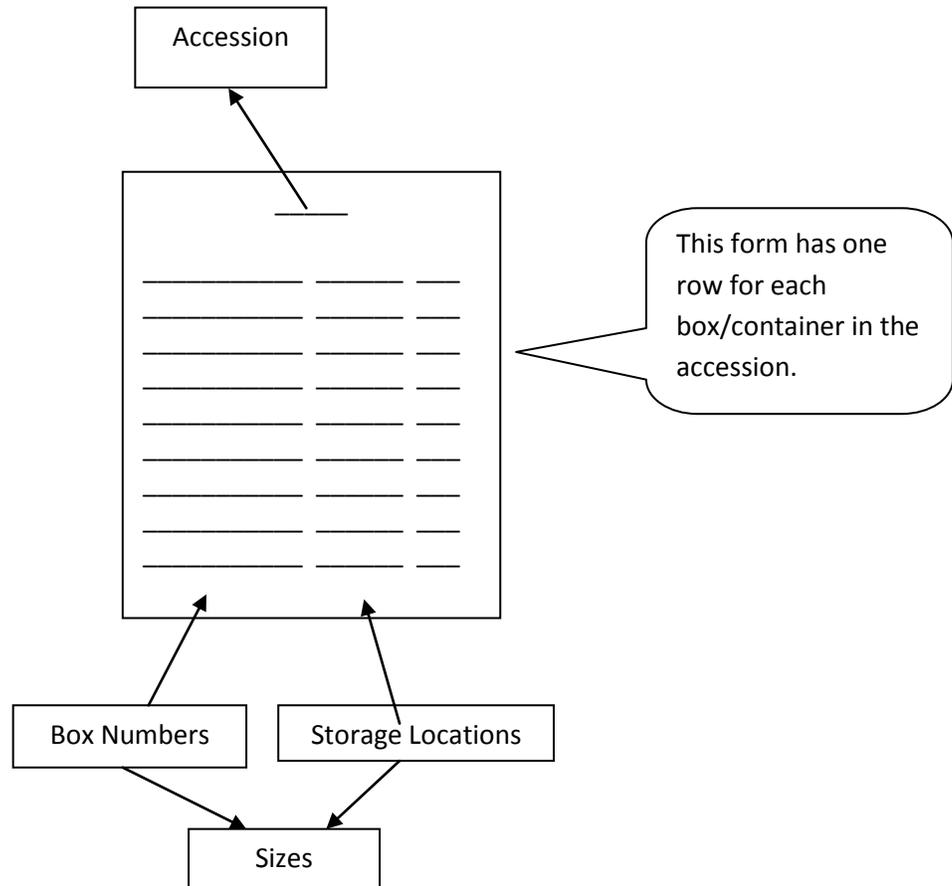
When the form is saved, multiple records are created – one for each folder. Each record gets the data from the prompts at the top of the form – the common area.

### What if the user department does not create the box records?

It can always be done by the records department using the Web form shown above and information provided by the user department. Or, they may choose to not provide information at the folder level. The system will work at the box level only.

## Who creates the Accession record?

This is done by the records department. The following schematic illustrates a spreadsheet-style Web form used to link all the boxes to the accession. The prompt at the top of the form is used to search for the accession record if it exists, or to invoke a second Web form for creating it. Each line on the following form is for a box record. There are two ways of using it: 1) to create new box records, or 2) to search and load existing box records. You use the one that is appropriate for your work flow.



One column of the spreadsheet is for storage location. A search will present a list of all the empty locations from which you tag and take the required number. They are returned to automatically populate the rows of the spreadsheet.

## Storage Management

### Can the software manage my own records storage facility?

Yes, the software has a table representing all the individual storage spaces in the warehouse. They are structured in a hierarchy: slot, bay, row, aisle, building, or whatever structure is appropriate. When new containers are ready for storage the software allocates them to available spaces and prints a shelving list in the convenient sequence. You will find more information about the **Storage Management Module** in **Volume ER4 – Storage Management**.

### How do I link the boxes to the available spaces in the warehouse?

The same spreadsheet that links boxes to the accession has a column for the storage spaces. A single search for available spaces populates the entire column. You can see the diagram on the previous page.

### Can I manage a variety of container sizes?

Yes, the containers/boxes will match the spaces designed for them. You maintain a small table of the various container sizes. Each type has the measure for cubic and linear space it occupies. That permits a variety of reports for usage statistics by accession and owner.

### How do I link to 3<sup>rd</sup>-party storage facilities?

You may require only the container number, or the name of the folder within a box. That is all the storage facility requires to find and deliver your material. You do an initial search in your Eloquent system to find the information required. The search may show that the document is electronic or in an office cabinet, not in off-site storage.

### How do I communicate with the offsite facility?

Using the **De/Accessioning Module** you record the containers (usually boxes) received from the owner departments. The boxes will be assigned numbers, and possibly barcodes. The box number will be displayed as part of the detail for any file/folder or physical document. That is usually all that is required to request it from the storage facility. When delivering a batch of new accessions to off-site storage you can include an automatically generated Excel file.

## **Active Physical Records**

### **Does the system print labels for new physical folders?**

Yes, you first create the batches of virtual folders, linking the batch to the appropriate location, owner and classification term. The name on the label is a combination of the classification hierarchy plus the unique name on the folder.

### **What is a unique name for the folder?**

It will depend on the batch. It may be months of the year or names of vendors, customers, employees, projects, or other name relevant to the type of documents stored.

### **What storage location is the folder linked to?**

It is probably a drawer or section of a drawer in a filing cabinet in the office. The location table has a hierarchical structure: building, room, cabinet, or whatever is appropriate for your organization.

### **Who is the owner that the folder is linked to?**

It is the department that is responsible for the records. The name represents the creator/collector of the records, so must remain valid and in the system as long as the record is maintained. There is a proper names authority file where, over time, relationships are established between the names: superior and subordinate bodies, successor and predecessor bodies.

## **Classification & Retention**

### **How important is the Classification Scheme?**

It is a vital component of the system. It contains the retention rules for all records as well as any legislation related to retention. It controls all filing of records as well as a final disposition.

### **Can it be used by everyone in the organization for finding records?**

Yes, a simple drill-down a tree-style hierarchy gets to the desired search term that links to all related files. Including the owner and date as search terms will narrow the results to a very few files – maybe only the desired one. An experienced person can get very precise results.

### **Can anyone in the organization make new entries?**

No, changes are seldom made to the Classification Scheme. When new virtual files are created, at the start of the year or during the year, they link to existing classification terms, not new ones. The date, owner and name of the file will make it unique.

### **Who creates the new virtual file folders?**

They are created by the Records Manager.

### **How do individuals know where to file their own virtual records?**

The Eloquent system gives every individual a unique Web form that is launched from their personal MS Outlook, Word, SharePoint or Windows Explorer. This personalized Web form offers only the few virtual folders they use – a very manageable number.

### **Who determines the disposition date to put on the file folder record?**

Nobody; it is not required. The Eloquent software used the end date on the file folder record combined with the retention duration from the Classification Scheme to calculate the disposition date on-the-fly whenever it is required.

### **What happens when the retention rules change?**

They are modified in the Classification & Retention table. That is the only place they exist. No “global changes” are required.

### **How do you know when it is time to destroy records?**

A search of the database will provide a list. The search can be restricted to owner and date range. For example, you can get a report of all files for a specific department that have passed their destruction date. A variety of report can be produced:

- An approval list for the owner,
- A container picking list for the warehouse,
- A list for retrieval from 3<sup>rd</sup>-party storage.

### **Are electronic records destroyed?**

Yes, Eloquent utilities are available for deleting the digital objects.

### **Is there an audit trail regarding the destruction?**

Yes, the virtual record – box, folder, document – is retained and is stamped with the date, method of disposition, and person authorizing the disposition.

## **Migrating Legacy Data**

### **Can my existing data be imported from our legacy system?**

Yes, Eloquent consultants have extensive experience with importing legacy data from a variety of older systems. Some projects involved very sensitive information.

### **Will my data fit the Eloquent system?**

The process usually requires some custom tailoring of the software. Data fields may have to added or removed. New reports may be created, or existing ones modified.

### **Can I validate the results prior to accepting delivery?**

Yes, the work is all done in a secure environment on the Eloquent server. You are given remote access for data validation prior to taking delivery.

### **Will my system be down during the process?**

Yes, you will be down from the time you sFTP the final cut of data to us until it is ready to use. This can be as short as one day. If down-time is an issue, we work with an initial copy for a “dry run” of the process, which you validate and approve. Then, with all the procedures in place, we do a final run with current data.

### **Does the system support scanning projects?**

Yes, Eloquent interfaces with Captive from EMC to import in batch. Some of the metadata is derived from the document and some from the specialized Web forms. It is a one-step process for the entire batch.