



Demand The Best



Professional Records & Information Services Management



*A guide to help select an Offsite
Information Management Company*

TO ASSIST YOU

PRISM International, the not-for-profit trade association for the information management industry, has prepared this guide to assist you in finding the Offsite information management company that best meets your specific need. The guide helps you examine key factors in your decision-making process, highlighting important issues and recommending questions you may want to ask when considering an offsite information management company.

PRISM International is committed to assuring quality across the industry, however, does not advocate specific standards, regarding information management, nor require its members to provide specific services. The Association does recommend using a PRISM International member for your company's information management needs, and encourages you to take the time to tour the company's facility.

Please note that this guide is meant to be just that-a guide. There is no "right" way to select the best company for your information management needs, but there is a more informed way. Once you have assessed your company's needs, use this guide to assist in the selection of the appropriate offsite information management company.

PRISM International is confident you will find this guide helpful when making your decision to go offsite. The thousands of businesses that have chosen this option know that going offsite makes good business sense. We look forward to having you join the many satisfied clients of our industry.

Because information is vital to the livelihood of your business, it is essential that you make the most knowledgeable decision possible when selecting an offsite information management company. After all, they will become an important business partner.

SELECTING THE RIGHT COMPANY

COMPANY PROFILE

What is the company's mission? How does that mission compare with the goals and needs of your company?

How long has the company been in the business of information management?

In what key ways does the company differentiate itself from its competitors?

Will the company provide appropriate information to establish its financial stability? Yes No

Will the company provide references? Yes No

Is the company an active member of PRISM International? Yes No



KEY

- E Excellent
- G Good
- A Average
- P Poor
- N/A = Not Applicable

RATING METHOD

Please circle one only.

KEEPING YOUR INFORMATION SAFE

GENERAL SECURITY

24-hour monitored security	E	G	A	P	N/A
Authorized access to the facility	E	G	A	P	N/A
In-house security training and procedures	E	G	A	P	N/A
Monitored vault entry	E	G	A	P	N/A
Secure loading and unloading area	E	G	A	P	N/A
Authorization procedures meet our requirements	E	G	A	P	N/A
Does the company conduct a daily security check?	Yes	No			
Are security systems inspected and tested regularly?	Yes	No			

Comments: _____

DISASTER PREVENTION/PLANNING

Adequate smoke detection systems	E	G	A	P	N/A
Adequate fire detection systems	E	G	A	P	N/A
Adequate fire suppression systems	E	G	A	P	N/A
A no-smoking policy	E	G	A	P	N/A
A regularly maintained and tested internal disaster plan	E	G	A	P	N/A

Are fire prevention and alarm systems regularly inspected and tested?

Yes No

Is the alarm system activated by line tampering or disruption?

Yes No

Comments: _____



FACILITY

Desirable location	E	G	A	P	N/A
Built to earthquake code and/or other construction standards	E	G	A	P	N/A
Back-up power systems	E	G	A	P	N/A
Proper insurance coverage in the event of a disaster	E	G	A	P	N/A
Is the facility a stand-alone building?	Yes	No			
Is the facility located in a multi-tenant building?	Yes	No			
Are there other businesses near this facility that could be potentially hazardous?	Yes	No			

The primary job of an off-site information management company is to ensure your information is there when you need it. Companies are responsible for protecting your information from disaster, environmental damage and theft.

When evaluating an offsite information management company, pay close attention to the company's disaster plan, security systems and fire prevention measures. Also consider the location of the facility, how the company selects and trains its employees, and whether or not controls are in place to adequately protect the information.

Does it engage in any other business at its facilities (moving and storage, public warehousing, etc.)?	Yes	No
Is the facility located in a non-flood prone area?	Yes	No
Comments:	_____	

COURIER VEHICLES

Vehicles are designed for safe media transport	E	G	A	P	N/A
Vehicles are climate controlled	E	G	A	P	N/A
Vehicles have appropriate security	E	G	A	P	N/A
Vehicles are secured while at a delivery/pick-up site	E	G	A	P	N/A
Vehicles undergo preventative maintenance	E	G	A	P	N/A
Vehicles are equipped with appropriate two-way communications (cellular phones, pagers, etc.)	E	G	A	P	N/A
Are vehicles equipped with a fire extinguisher?	Yes	No			
Comments:	_____				

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Clear and acceptable business contract	E	G	A	P	N/A
Shipping and receiving records signed and maintained for future reference	E	G	A	P	N/A
Comprehensive employee screening process	E	G	A	P	N/A
Substance abuse policy (initial and ongoing)	E	G	A	P	N/A
Employees/drivers are provided with uniforms and identification cards	E	G	A	P	N/A



Employees are required to sign a confidentiality agreement	E	G	A	P	N/A
Ongoing employee education	E	G	A	P	N/A
After-hours personnel trained to handle client emergencies/requests	E	G	A	P	N/A
Comments:	_____				

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SELECTING THE SERVICES YOU NEED

STORAGE CAPABILITIES

Audio and video tapes	E	G	A	P	N/A
Computer media	E	G	A	P	N/A
Hardcopy records	E	G	A	P	N/A
Micrographics	E	G	A	P	N/A
X-Rays	E	G	A	P	N/A
Other	E	G	A	P	N/A
Adequate space to meet current needs	E	G	A	P	N/A
Adequate space to meet future needs	E	G	A	P	N/A
Temperature and humidity controlled environment for:					
Hardcopy records	E	G	A	P	N/A
Media vault	E	G	A	P	N/A
Is the racking and shelving specifically designed for information management?	Yes		No		
Does the media vault have an auxiliary power backup?	Yes		No		
Comments:	_____				

A wide variety of services are available from a professional information management company, ranging from the offsite storage and management of paper and computer media to imaging services.

CUSTOMER SERVICES

24-hour customer access	E	G	A	P	N/A
Barcode tracking	E	G	A	P	N/A
Client procedures and/or training	E	G	A	P	N/A
Client review rooms	E	G	A	P	N/A
Computer reports available	E	G	A	P	N/A
Confidential destruction services:					
Hard copy	E	G	A	P	N/A
Media	E	G	A	P	N/A
Contingency planning	E	G	A	P	N/A



Courier service:					
Company staffed	E	G	A	P	N/A
Outside vendor	E	G	A	P	N/A
Emergency service only	E	G	A	P	N/A
Comments:	_____				

Some companies provide all of these services, while others offer specialized services. In either case, most industry professionals can help you develop an appropriate strategy for managing your company's information.

Departmental billing	E	G	A	P	N/A
Disaster recovery services	E	G	A	P	N/A
E-mail transmission	E	G	A	P	N/A
Emergency pick-up and delivery	E	G	A	P	N/A
Facility management/ Outsourcing services	E	G	A	P	N/A
Fax transmission	E	G	A	P	N/A
Index and inventory services	E	G	A	P	N/A
Information management consulting	E	G	A	P	N/A
Microfilming/Imaging services	E	G	A	P	N/A
Phone reference	E	G	A	P	N/A
Remote (online) access	E	G	A	P	N/A
Retention schedule monitoring	E	G	A	P	N/A
Retrieval and refile services	E	G	A	P	N/A
Are storage containers readily available?		Yes		No	
Are computer media transfer cases available?		Yes		No	
Is a statement of service and prices available?		Yes		No	
Is client records/information management software available?		Yes		No	
Comments:	_____				



Overall Rating E G A P

Comments: _____

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PRISM INTERNATIONAL CODE OF ETHICS

As a member firm of PRISM International, we recognize our commitment to a philosophy of professionalism to our clients, fellow members and the public. Our commitment to each of these is:

TO OUR CUSTOMERS, WE WILL

Clearly identify the terms of our storage and service agreements and fulfill them in good faith. Provide appropriate security for the information resources entrusted to us by our clients. Consistently stress the importance of quality performance and confidentiality in rendering our services. Pledge to keep our property physically sound and use such controls and procedures as are necessary to fulfill our responsibilities.

TO OUR FELLOW MEMBERS, WE WILL

Recognize the high sense of responsibility and ethical conduct that must be demonstrated in caring for the information resources of our clients. Work to further the professional image of the information management industry.

TO OUR PUBLIC, WE WILL

Pledge our firm to be a good corporate citizen, fulfilling responsibilities to the communities in which we serve. Continuously increase our knowledge of developments impacting the information management industry. Educate others about information management issues. We subscribe to this Code of Ethics as a condition of our membership in PRISM International.

When evaluating an offsite information management company, it's important to identify the storage and service capabilities available and match those against the specific needs of your company. Find out if the level of service you can expect is fully described in writing and if it is flexible enough to meet your needs as they change.



OUR MISSION

The mission of PRISM International is to serve our members by promoting professionalism through education, networking and advocacy.

DEMAND THE BEST

Helps you examine key factors. Highlights important issues. Recommends questions to ask. Encourages you to take the time.

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This publication provided courtesy of:

Document Management Archives
(360) 501-5047

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