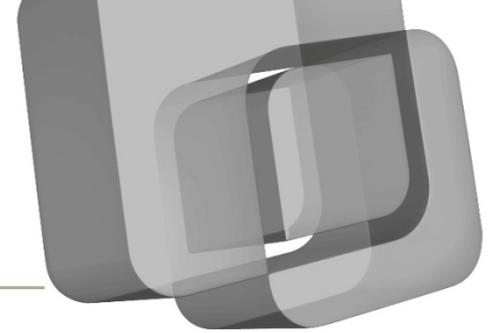# Murray Business Solutions

Client Discussion Paper

Paperless Considerations

With the move to a near paperless system for our internal compiling work and a longer term strategy of being entirely paperless, coupled with some clients expressing an interest in wanting to know where to start should they desire to make the move, it was suggested that we put down some thoughts that clients could use as a starting point for making the transition. It's a big area with a multitude of ways for dealing with every aspect of it, so the following considerations are really a starting point to get you thinking based on the experience we've had to date. If you have any questions or ideas that you would like to discuss, don't hesitate to contact me so we can assist you with the exciting transition to an environmentally friendly business.

What to store?

- Invoices you raise should be printed to PDF
    - Some PDF software enables you to insert a background to give it a more professional look. For example, we have our letterhead in PDF form which goes behind the text within our PDF invoices.
    - It's a great idea also to password and lock the invoice before emailing it to clients to prevent tampering with down the line.
- Bills
- Capital / Plant Purchases:
    - Scan to PDF things like your original invoice along with the contract for financing.
- Contracts

How & Where to store?

- Given the increased information load, it becomes paramount that you've a logical naming convention and directory structure to enable you to easily store, retrieve and archive information as required. The system we've evolved over the years, adapted for a general business could be as follows:
    - <Yearly file> - for information that can be archived each year. You'd have further directories underneath to further breakdown information as required.
    - <Permanent file> - for information that really needs to be kept either indefinitely, or over multiple years.
- For example:
    - 2011
        - Archive – for old permanent information not needed anymore
        - Invoices – for invoices raised and sent to clients
        - Bills – For all bills due and paid. You may want to separate folders as follows:
            - Outstanding
            - Paid
        - Computer File – for your MYOB / QB / Phoenix data file
            - Backup – sub-folder for keeping backups
        - Correspondence
            - Accountants
            - Insurance

- Legal
  - ATO & BAS Documentation
  - Permanent
    - Share Purchases
    - Capital Purchases & Associated Documents
    - Employees (plus folder per employee)
- Once you have a directory structure system sorted out on your computer, you now need to identify how best to name documents to make them easy to find. This comes down to what is most logical for you, as you can name them so they sort chronologically, or by area / provider. Since we've already got a folder collating information on a yearly basis, I would propose you'd name documents as follows:
  - Bills –
    - Origin – 5 West Terrace – July to Sept.PDF
    - Revenue SA – Payroll Tax – July to Sept.PDF
  - Invoices –
    - Invoice # 0599 – A & S Jones – 25072011.PDF OR
    - Jones, A & S – Invoice #0599 – 25072011.PDF
      (Depending on how you want the folder to sort)
  - Capital Purchases –
    - Share Purchase – BHP – 25072011.PDF
    - Plant Purchase – JD 5200 Header – 25072011.PDF (includes invoice, contracts etc)

Other pertinent matters:

- You need to ensure you've a PDF printer installed on your system to enable you to print straight to PDF. We personally use Adobe Acrobat Pro, as this provides a printer driver and an ability to edit / annotate PDF's. It also is able to de-skew documents and identify text for ease of highlighting.
- Your backup systems becoming increasingly important as you put more faith in your electronic systems. Ensure you take a regular backup of your most important information to an external hard-drive which you can take offsite, should you have a disaster at home that destroys your original information (eg. Theft; Fire; Virus; Hardware failure).
- When scanning documents in, you can often select between different options. The options selected will dictate readability and size of the file:
  - Full colour – is the biggest file and the most readable
  - Gray-scale – is just as readable as colour but a lot smaller in size – best compromise
  - Black & white – This is the smallest and hardest to read – essentially will look like a fax.
- Use a tool like Adobe Acrobat to collate information about the same matter into the one PDF file. For example, the above example for Capital Purchases could have the original invoice and all associated contract documents collated together in one PDF.