Exploring Legacy Document Management Systems to Increase Access to Project Data

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Objectives
The current Electronic Data Management System (EDMS) makes it difficult to efficiently access information in critical time frames. This project explored ways to allow Environmental Support and Services staff the ability to efficiently access documents with necessary historic information while leveraging existing data classification methods and the capabilities of EDMS.

Methods
My research was led by my outlined objectives and involved collecting information from company websites and reviews of the products. While programs, like Templafy and Docuware, offered easy document access and sharing features, they lacked the capabilities to develop references for the documents. Some systems had aspects that would aid in document organization but were not applicable to my goals, such as being able to access the database on a mobile device. The element of accessibility was also vital, as many systems required restrictive licensing and costs. Overall, my methods of research consisted of comparing available data management systems to find one that would best meet my project needs.

Results
After researching data management systems, Endnote met all the requirements and was already pre-licensed with the lab. I proceeded to develop the digital libraries utilizing documents present in both EDMS and in paper format.

EndNote
Advanced filtering capabilities allow enhanced search functions to return most relevant correspondence
Develops a bibliography of select documents for reporting
Sharing features that encourage and support joint participation

Significance
This data management system will allow technical staff to better identify documents that are needed for ES&S projects or inquiries. Each document is organized into specific groups either by facility or the nature of the pdf and has a customized type that streamlines the information for referencing. Instead of only offering APA or MLA format, Endnote also allows for custom output styles for the bibliography to be created so that referencing only takes a click to add to your report in the specific format your company requires. Organizing data on Endnote will cut down on time spent filtering through EDMS and creating individual references.