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geoAMPS service helps retain, protect information

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You want your organization to remain current with the latest computer technology. In deciding on an upgrade, though, you encounter the issue of how to retain and protect one of your organization's most vital assets – information.

Collection, storage and accessibility of data have an enormous impact on your daily business. Paper and electronic documents are generated and used by workers in the field, supervisors, the accounting office and other departments, making the collective body of your organization's information critical to success.

As essential as it is, though, the information could be housed in a disorganized fashion. It might be saved in various formats, tucked away in software purchased years ago. Perhaps, due to a lack of established procedures, the data has been input inconsistently. Even more problematic is the possibility that the information is spread throughout different software systems added over time. Such issues should not prevent the organization from upgrading its technology. As part of that investment, though, the organization should consider a data migration. A data migration not only retains and protects information; it opens the opportunity to utilize information more efficiently and effectively.

A data migration involves the transfer of information from various sources into a single software solution. Through the process, errors are corrected and the data is reformatted and loaded into a centralized repository.

Understandably, you want to be assured that the migration will be completed seamlessly and without damaging the organization's original data. New technology to conduct the migration should alleviate these concerns. Properly planned and executed, the data migration improves organizational efficiency and makes employees more productive. A successful data migration helps the bottom line.

Data migrations are not without challenges, and those challenges vary from one organization to the next. The right technology can identify these issues within the organization's database and make the necessary modifications so that the data is stored centrally and consistently.

For example, one of our clients wanted to improve the efficiency of its right of way project through a data migration. The files were in a series of spreadsheets providing information on 14 projects and 5,697 tracts of land. This information was extracted from 14,575 scanned documents. The organization's existing spreadsheet system was difficult to use and lacked technical support.

Information, such as parcel owner name, corporation, address and telephone number, was inconsistent in the fields and columns of the spreadsheets. Configuring the appropriate software, doing quality checks and providing the necessary technical support were important to successful completion of the data migration. The process was planned over a two-week period and executed overnight. It successfully integrated the data into a consistent format which was easy to use. Because each organization is unique, so is each data migration. If not done properly, moving data from one format to another can damage the information. That can lead to reduced productivity and more problems for the organization. However, a provider that uses a strategic and methodical approach can complete a data migration which will benefit the organization.

Although each data migration is unique, the solution should include the following basic steps: identify the current storage environment, including known issues; create a migration plan and timeline, including success criteria that helps identify the project's end; develop and design the requirements for moving the data; create a migration architecture, addressing any security concerns surrounding protecting the data through the process; develop and test extensively, ensuring accuracy and reliability; and implement the migration through a pilot phase with an eventual roll-out into a complete migration.

A technology upgrade is not a scary thing. Neither is a data migration. Both, however, could be key to your organization's productivity and success.