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IBM has Watson, We have IRMA



If I'm asked about what is the most important aspect of Asset Management, my first response is always people and relationships.

However, there really is a key point to getting it all right, and that is: ensuring data integrity by having one spot, place, location, both physical and virtual be the ultimate Asset Record. We call this practice "owning the system of record". It's important to note that this is not a spreadsheet, software program, or your friendly IT guy that alone can ever do this properly. It's really more of a mindset, system, and methodology that must permeate across organizational lines... And once again, it loops back to people who care, processes that work, and people who care deeply that the processes are working!

Let me explain further:

At WBM, in order to get the 'system of record' correct, we grew and evolved a process over many years of working hand-in-hand with our clients and methodically and diligently created an Asset Management discipline that became the backbone of many of our client offerings. Our people took a 'motherly' approach to managing assets and became relentless in their pursuit of ensuring that our client's assets were always where they were supposed to be, and reporting the correct data. Indeed, the [Asset Management](#) methodology that we created really is analogous to the way a mother may worry about her children, young and old, throughout the course of their lives. So much so,

that my team carries it as a badge of honour to be called the 'nagging mothers' of our organization!! It is a source of pride for our team because we don't rest until we know all of the "children" (assets) in our "family" (fleets) are fully accounted for before we go to bed for the night!

This motherly practice at WBM has evolved to the point where we've put a face and name to this system and mindset, and her name is IRMA: IRMA is an acronym, a form, a process, a habit, and a methodology all rolled into one! In my opinion, she's really the secret sauce in ensuring everything in a client engagement goes smoothly and the integrity of our data is unquestioned.

While IRMA may be the motherly mindset, we are fully cognizant that it "takes a village" to raise a child properly, and the rest of our organization (including our clients form this village. And where IRMA is the nagging mother ensuring that the child is resting in its proper place, the "nutrition" (call it toner or "medicine" (call it service that it may need on an ongoing basis is fulfilled by other teams in our village.

As an example, without people who care, and processes in place such as IRMA, things such as auto-toner ordering are impossible to do correctly. Auto-toner ordering is the process by which we communicate directly with a copier in the field to understand it's supply levels and remove the burden on our clients to need to worry about ordering, stocking, and receiving toner. It's all done automatically, and it's all managed by our IRMA process. It is why our competitors struggle to do this properly, whereas, at WBM, we'll have 86% of our Managed Print Services fleet under auto-toner ordering by the end of this year. Further, maintaining a true "system of record" ensures that we get technicians to the right location at the right time, ensure that our billing systems are 100% accurate, and that we track key pieces of information to analyze the machine, fleet, and usage. Ultimately this all leads to cost savings and true governance for our clients. It goes without saying that if a particular asset is moved or changed without our knowledge, then the "auto" in auto-toner ordering breaks down, the above-mentioned efficiencies are lost, and manual intervention is required. This is the undesirable state that IRMA avoids.

So, in summary, people and process are really the "secret sauce" of doing Asset Management correctly. And, since it is our secret sauce, I'll have to let you figure out what the IRMA acronym actually stands for!



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Tammy Fleming is a Director – Asset Management and Customer Experience at WBM and is responsible for ensuring the delivery of a great customer experience at every interaction, for executing operational excellence, and for maintaining asset record details along with accurate financial billing for WBM Customers. Tammy joined WBM in 2012 and has built an asset management program driven by People, Processes and Technology that aligns her team with their Customers.

Tammy has worked for 15 plus years in the areas of customer service and policy management. She recently obtained a certification in Hardware Asset Management as recognized by the International Association of Information Technology Asset managers, Inc. Tammy has excelled as a leader in business and the community. She won the Saskatoon YWCA Women of Distinction Award for Athletics in 2013 as a result of her involvement in the sport of Triathlon and volunteer work with the Saskatoon Health Region.