

Figure 2 Information Seeking Behavior of ERMS Users

1 Start Search

a ERMS users search the system for the following reasons: 1) They have a task to do and require information from the ERMS to complete the task; 2) They need to action a task by responding to action items via the ERM workflow; or 3) They require information in the ERMS as reference materials or to recollect what was communicated or performed previously on the same or similar subject matter. Hence, when STARTING a search, there is an AWARENESS of what ERMS users are searching for. They are aware of metadata associated with the search. Users make their decision on what search strategy to employ based on whether they AUTHORED or FILED the item, or KNOW WHERE the item is stored in the ERMS. If users AUTHORED, FILED or are AWARE where the items is filed they tend to NAVIGATE to the folder or item. Users also consider if they have conducted the search previously and if they have SAVED these searches into their FAVORITES SHORTCUTS.

2 Formulate Search Strategy

b ERMS users can formulate more than one search strategy. ERMS users exhibit 3 methods of formulating a search strategy: 1) If they have not conducted the search previously, they will use a METADATA search based on knowledge of what they are looking for, using the search engine. The choice of metadata field: to search by varies depending on what information is being searched for and the level of AWARENESS the user has of the information being searched for. Using the CONTENT SEARCH is the last option used. If users have saved the search criteria before, they will either 2) RETRIEVE the search from their SHORTCUT; or 3) RECALL where the document is filed and NAVIGATE/BROWSE through the CLASSIFICATION SCHEMA.

3 Execute Search

c EXECUTE search based on search strategy.

4 Process and Evaluate Search Results

d Users review the search results by BROWSING the DOCUMENT TITLE/PARENT FOLDERS OF DOCUMENTS, DATE, and/or DOCUMENT/FILE NUMBERS to make their selection.

e Whilst BROWSING, users will ASSESS the search results based on the search criteria in Step 2 to see if it resembles what they are searching for.

f If NO, then they will continue BROWSING through the remaining results.

g If they have not found what they are searching for or if there are too many search results, users will decide to continue with their search using REFINED search criteria. Users tend to REFINE their search by FILTERING, SORTING or changing the selection of metadata fields, and also by varying the search criteria terms used in the metadata fields. If NAVIGATION is used, they will decide to NAVIGATE using different keywords via the Classification Schema.

5 Access Search Results

h If there is a match, users will LAUNCH documents that match their search criteria. Depending on the design and functionality of the ERMS, some users do step 5 before step 6.

6 Decision Making about Search Results

i If users are able to LAUNCH the document they will SCAN through the LAUNCHED document and VERIFY its contents. A few users do step 6 before step 5, as their ERMS enables SCANNING of the document via a Viewer at the bottom of the search results window.

j The actions of LAUNCHING, SCANNING and VERIFYING the document enable users to CONFIRM that have found the document they are searching for.

7 End Search

k If the users have found the document, this will CLOSE their search. Otherwise, users will decide to STOP the search after spending 10-30 minutes of searching. Nearly all users stated that the importance of the information being searched determines whether time affects their searching or not. Users will seek assistance from their colleagues, Records Section or the HelpDesk. If promising leads are obtained from these sources, users will return to the ERMS and RETRY FORMULATING SEARCH STRATEGY.

