

Office Document Sprawl

Are you suffering from office document sprawl? Not sure?

Here's a look at the condition.

What is Office Document Sprawl?

Office Document Sprawl, in simple terms, is uncontrolled growth that may have significant negative consequences on business and the community. For example, these negative consequences can (i) incur excessive operational costs that impact profit, (ii) create extensive environmental damage that impact ecosystems and brand reputation and (iii) generate workload-related stress and productivity blockages that limit human potential. These (and other examples of) negative consequences reduce an organization's ability to maintain a sustainable competitive edge.



At a Corporate level, according to ALL Associates Group, **Office Document Sprawl** can be said to occur (or have a propensity to occur) when the following four pre-conditional questions are 'positive':

1. Is the volume of paper-based office documents rising per knowledge-worker?
2. Is the volume of electronic office documents rising per knowledge-worker?
3. Is the combined financial cost of paper and electronic office documents rising per knowledge-worker?
4. Is the overall number of knowledge-workers in the workforce rising?

At the US level, the answer to all of these four pre-conditional questions is – YES.

What we can learn from the issues of Urban Sprawl

Urban Sprawl, in simple terms, is uncontrolled growth that may have significant negative consequences. For example, Urban Sprawl is creating significant economic and environmental risks, as well as new societal pressures at both local and national levels. These issues are being debated in community, State and Federal forums to find practical ways to create sustainable urban growth.

At a metropolitan scale, according to The Environmental Protection Agency, Urban Sprawl may be said to occur when the rate at which land is converted to non-agricultural or non-natural uses exceeds the rate of population growth. For example, Greater Cleveland's population dropped by 11 percent from 1970-90 while land in residential, commercial, and industrial uses increased by 33 percent. This pattern of development is occurring in major metropolitan areas across America.

For the majority of commercial and public organizations the answer is also – YES.

This 'positive' affirmation of significant levels of **Office Document Sprawl** in the US is now being addressed by the STAR Project. The detailed assessment data, measurements metrics and tools needed to 'regain control' will be published as part of the STAR Project Final Report and 'mastered' in Group Workshops with ALL Associates Group, The Natural Step and The Jensen Group.

Can we really do something about Office Document Sprawl?

If every US knowledge-worker produced just one less page a day, the annual result would be (i) a reduction of 26 billion pieces of paper, (ii) a saving of \$1,82 billion in paper, supplies and equipment costs and (iii) 3.12 million trees would still be growing.

"If one piece of paper can do that", says Jim Hurst, Chairman of ALL Associates Group, "then I'm totally convinced we can control office document sprawl and turn it into a competitive and sustainable business advantage".

STAR Project

For more information on the Sustainability Team for Action and Return (STAR) Project visit:

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