4 Ways to Take Control of Your Records Storage Relationship

If you're frustrated with **rising offsite storage costs**, **limited access to records**, and **ever-increasing retrieval fees**, you're not alone. Many organizations using Iron Mountain, Access, or VRC face the same challenges.

Here's how you can take back control — and reduce cost, risk, and frustration .

1 Gather the Right Documents

Start by reviewing the key documents that shape your storage relationship:

▶ **Inventory Report** – Identify what you have and how it's categorized. If you can't make a decision about a box based on its description, that's a red flag.

▶ **Rate Sheet** – Identify all costs related to storage, retrieval, and destruction. These often include a combination of charges across multiple rate codes.

▶ **Contract** – Check for minimums, term commitments, and restrictions on removal or destruction.

2 Understand the Hidden Fees

The cost to remove or destroy a box can equal several years of storage—creating a financial barrier to cleaning up your inventory.

▶ Typical removal cost: **$10–$15 per container**

▶ Many clients pay **$20–$50 per container**, making removal cost-prohibitive.

▶ Review the following rate codes related to removal and compare with others to gauge fairness:

• Regular Retrieval – Carton

• Permanent Withdrawal – Carton

• Handling Charge

• Administration Fee

• Additional Storage

• Dock Access Fee

• Outside Courier/Customer Representative Handling

3 Audit Your Inventory

Poor inventory quality leads to unnecessary storage and makes retention management difficult. Look for:

▸ **Boxes without clear descriptions** – If you don't know what's inside, you can't find files or determine retention without recalling and reviewing the box.

▸ **Boxes missing retention dates** – Without this, records may be stored far beyond their useful life, increasing cost and risk.

Recommendations

If retention can be determined from the accession date, consider destruction without recalling the box.

For unclear boxes, retrieve and index contents at the file level to enable decisions and improve long-term management.

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4 Prevent Future Cost Creep

Once your inventory is cleaned up, implement best practices to avoid ending up in the same situation again:

▶ **Automate Destruction** – Approve monthly destruction based on retention policies.

▶ **Enable Notifications** – Set up alerts when records become eligible for destruction.

▶ **Use Scan-on-Demand** – Digitize files as needed instead of paying for physical retrieval.

▶ **Standardize Indexing** – Use multiple searchable fields before storing records to prevent future cleanup costs.