

The microfilming was done at the time the original returns were destroyed, five years after receipt. The index, on tab cards, was maintained in hard copy as long as the returns were available, and conversion to microfilm only took place when most of the reference requirements had been satisfied.

Since 1968, we have upgraded this application by the implementation of a weekly COM program, in which a merged index to all the processed returns for the current year is computer generated on magnetic tape. We convert the tapes to film and duplicates of the complete file are distributed to the operating offices of the Income Tax Division in Annapolis and Baltimore, thus we are provided prompt access to current information about income tax returns through the use of microfilm.

Since the beginning of our COM program, we have devoted considerable time to explaining the capabilities of COM to the staffs of our data processing installations and to personnel of the user agencies. Seminars and demonstrations have been conducted not only on COM and retrieval equipment, but also on the software available and the different kinds of microforms and coding techniques which can be utilized. This information is now available to State personnel along with guidelines to be followed in the State's Data Processing Standards Manual. The guidelines read as follows:

1. All computer runs requiring over one hour of print time or generating more than 1,500 pages of output in which hard copy is not required to be used outside the operating agencies, should be evaluated for the COM print option.
2. All information systems using on-line access for current information, in which the data used is not subject to dramatic and frequent inquiry, should be evaluated for COM output. Where information is of an historical nature, competitive advantages between microfilm storage and on-line residence should be explored.
3. All evaluations and equipment acquisition for COM data processing applications will be coordinated with the Records Management Division, Data Service Center and Central ADP Staff through preparation of D.P. Service Request. All applications using COM will be handled through the use of the State's COM service.

The COM program has been beneficial in developing a better understanding between data processing and records management personnel regarding the role each plays in the total records program.

The ADP manager appreciates the reduced costs and increased computer efficiency which can be achieved through the use of microfilm. He recognizes that some records problems encountered by his systems analysts can best be handled by traditional records management techniques. He also is becoming aware that he has a records management problem of his own