Information Classification:
First Step to Effective Information Security

Sylvia C. Diaz, MS, MBA, CIPP/US
Associate Director, Information Governance
Biogen Idec
A little bit about me

Sylvia C. Diaz, MS, MBA, CIPP/US
Associate Director, Information Governance

Vast experience in information governance in the Pharmaceutical and Biotech industries.

Currently at Biogen Idec I am providing oversight for the transformation of the Information Governance function by evolving information management practices, implementing information classification and developing an enterprise content and information governance strategy.

@ sylvia.diaz@biogenidec.com
Who Is Biogen Idec?

- Founded in 1978
- Leaders in MS Research
- One of the world’s leading biotechnology companies
- Headquartered in Cambridge, MA
• Our Information Classification initiative

• A proactive approach to understanding our data

• The journey to identify, classify and secure sensitive information

• Lessons learned
Top Reasons for Information Classification

1. User engagement and raise awareness that information has value
2. Security awareness and proper handling
3. Information protection and data loss prevention
4. Compliance with laws and regulations
Information Classification Initiative - Why?

Information Classification is foundational to protecting our information assets
Developed Information Classification Schema*

Business Objectives
- Confidentiality
- Integrity
- Availability

Impact Scale
- Low
- Moderate
- High

Implementation
- Policy
- Process
- Automation

*Source: Gartner (December 2011)

• Keep it simple
• No more than 3 – 4 levels
• Provide examples
Our Classification Journey – The Policy

Developed Information Classification Policy

- It is short
- Handling guidelines
- Non-prescriptive
- No reference to technology, departments & data types
- Establish responsibilities:
  - Employee (creator, receiver and user of the information)
  - Departments
  - Management
Our Classification Journey – The Tool

- Policy does not work alone
- Can’t rely on users to classify manually
- Maintain current business process
- Easy to configure and deploy
- High impact, low effort
- Reach different platforms
- Classify multitude of file formats
Our Classification Journey – The Tool

Data Classification Across the Enterprise

- Message Classification for Microsoft Outlook
- Classification for Microsoft Office
- Classification for Desktop
- Message Classification for Microsoft OWA
Our Classification Journey – The Tool

Go for Flexibility!

- One click classification
- Easy to configure and deploy
- Maintain current business processes
- Based on user roles, departments, etc.

- Apply flexibility in policy creation
- Persistent metadata
- Bulk classification
- Interface with DLP tools
Our Outcome

- Cultivate an information protection culture
- Prompt users to stop, think and identify
- Instill the business value of information

- Confidently share sensitive information
- Enhance data loss prevention (DLP)
- Implement data governance policies
Lessons Learned

- Communication and training are key!
- Engage employees and management.
- Classification policy needs to be in place.
- Emphasize the “Why” behind the policy.
- Keep classification schema simple.
- Flexible tool.
Thank You!