ECM: Making Process Possible

By Tom Jenkins, Chairman and CEO, Open Text

ver the past few years, enterprise content management (ECM) has emerged as a defined enterprise software category, one that is clearly capturing more and more attention in executive suites. The fact that KMWorld is publishing this white paper about ECM best practices for the fifth year in a row is evidence that ECM is well established. As CEO of Open Text, I recently published the definitive book, "Enterprise Content Management: What You Need to Know," to help business leaders understand the scope and context of ECM and why it is important to the success of their businesses: www.opentext.com/kmworld/ecm-book. We're all familiar with the history of market consolidation and the demand for more tightly integrated enterprise applications. The new focus on corporate governance and a stricter regulatory environment has made us aware of the need to define, secure and control the process by which information is created, managed and retained within our systems.

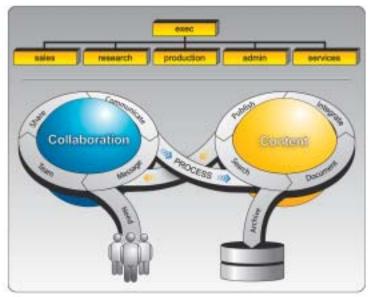
However, ECM is much more than a collection of tactical solutions to solve today's trendy business problems. It is a strategic approach, a powerful intersection of fundamental business benefits that helps organizations turn their content into competitive advantage. Let's examine these benefits to understand the true value of an ECM system.

Considering the evolution and consolidation of content technologies that have shaped and refined ECM, its value proposition is—as you might expect—compelling and powerful. ECM solutions combine people with information to make truly end-to-end processes possible, delivering improvements across the entire business and transparently managing risk while driving performance.

ECM Makes Process Possible

Everything that happens within organizations today is more or less a business process. Some processes (like hiring and ramping up a new employee) are relatively easy to structure and automate, because each instance is much like the previous. Other processes (such as bringing a new product to market) are more difficult to structure because a wide array of contributing factors make each release different. In many organizations, the way in which processes are designed to work is often far removed from the reality of how they actually function.

Like many project-management challenges, launching a new product involves complex groups of interconnected people



ECM enables key processes such as launching a new product to be managed end-to-end.



Tom Jenkins (E0

Tom Jenkins is the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Open Text, a market leader in providing enterprise content management solutions that bring together people, processes and information in global organizations. Jenkins has served in a variety of technical and managerial positions at

computer hardware and software technology intensive growth companies during his career including design engineer, sales manager, general manager, chief operating officer, president, CEO and chairman. Jenkins is the author of "Enterprise Content Management, What You Need To Know," published in October, 2004.

working independently toward a common goal. The preparation phase of the project involves tasks such as pricing, marketing and a kick-off, and demands creativity, communication and coordination. The implementation phase of the project includes tasks such as promotion, training and the launch itself, and in contrast requires structure, precision and flawless execution.

The business case for ECM begins with the fact that the traditionally independent technologies that enable these activities, like program management, team support and sales force automation, can now be combined on a secure, integrated platform. This unification enables key processes—like a product release—to be managed from beginning to end. Promotion, for example, which can span both the preparation and implementation phases of the product launch, can be closely managed in relation to other activities.

When a last-minute change in channel strategy is required, the planned promotional activities must also be changed. The dissemination of the right information to the right people at the right time is an inherent part of the change-management process. The ability to tightly manage and execute processes translates directly into shorter cycle times and reduced costs. After all, if you can avoid a print run of user manuals because a last-minute change wasn't identified and sent to the translation agency, you can see immediate and significant savings.

ECM Improves the Entire Business

What differentiates ECM from the content technologies that it eclipses is its widespread relevancy. A robust service-oriented architecture—in simplest terms, a two-tier model of foundation and application services—ensures that organizations can deploy a targeted solution now, and easily extend it to an enterprise-wide deployment later. In other words, ECM not only makes

process possible, but it makes it possible for every part of the organization.

A comprehensive ECM system comprises foundation services upon which specific application services are built. The foundation services are relevant to a wide range of business problems and include enterprise search, records management and archiving. Application services, alternatively, target a very specific business need, such as accounts payable processing, customer service optimization or employee accreditations. This two-tiered structure allows ECM to be a shared platform on the one hand and deliver targeted, customized solutions on the other. By combining the necessary application services and delivering a solution with a targeted, consistent interface, businesses can easily deploy multiple, even divergent solutions on top of a single, shared platform.

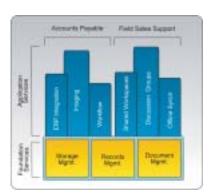
Consider the finance and marketing departments within an organization. Although tasks are very different, they share certain fundamental requirements. Both departments:

- Create and consume tremendous amounts of information;
- Require significant coordination between individuals; and
- Exercise tight control over the materials they produce.

The foundation services provide a common set of functionality to address these shared needs, such as storage management, records management and document management.

But when it comes to addressing department-specific needs, the requirements diverge sharply. The accounts-payable function requires integration with ERP systems, invoice scanning capabilities and workflow for exceptions handling. The field-sales support function in the marketing department requires shared workspaces, offline synchronization and discussion groups.

Because every ECM solution is built upon the same robust foundation services, companies may begin by deploying a specific application today—such as accounts payable processing or field sales support to meet an immediate business need. Later,



ECM makes process possible for multiple, even divergent, parts of the organization.

Real World Case Examples

BT, a UK communications solutions provider, turned to Open Text to develop an integrated communications network for every stage of product development, from discovery to post-launch evaluation. BT's ECM solution enabled the organization to capture, store and reuse its intellectual assets, and establish virtual communities for collaboration. The enhanced levels of communication throughout the organization ensured a clearly communicated company position, improved employee productivity and satisfaction, and enhanced corporate governance through increased process visibility.

Siemens AG, headquartered in Munich, Germany, with more than 400,000 employees and a presence in more than 190 countries, has one of the most geographically complex and comprehensive ECM deployments in the world. Deployed in a single department more than a decade ago, their ECM solution from Open Text now extends to partners and customers while providing streamlined processes, collaborative workspaces and shared content to eight unique business areas, including power, transportation, medical, lighting, finance and real estate and more.

Genzyme Corporation, to ensure the careful management of FDA submissions information, relies on Open Text ECM solutions to help project teams work together, manage and share information, and provide processes and controls to ensure careful management of that information. Robust document management capabilities support the company's compliance with the FDA's mandate for electronic records requirements, and has quickly become a fundamental part of the way that Genzyme does business.

they can leverage their investment in the underlying foundation services to deploy additional targeted applications and ultimately to deploy ECM enterprise-wide.

ECM Manages Risk While Driving Performance

The two-tier structure of ECM solutions provides a unique and extremely significant business benefit. Because ECM solutions are built on this robust foundation of shared services, compliance capabilities can be transparently embedded into business processes. When compliance becomes an integrated, indistinguishable part of daily operations, organizations can manage risk while driving performance. The goal of every business, after all, is not to be compliant, but to be successful.

Consider e-mail. Recent court rulings and emerging regulations demand that e-mail content be managed and retained like other corporate records. But rather than imposing changes in system behavior upon users, an ECM system can transparently insert compliance capabilities into the standard e-mail service. E-mail content is archived and managed as required, while users continue to work as they always have.

ECM accelerates the natural progression of IT from routine processes to the real world of complex, often chaotic, business operations. Without ECM, processes such as product launches and e-mail management require specialized point solutions that duplicate a

host of similar services, in a fragmented and costly system environment.

By measuring the improvements in business processes, organizations can identify the direct benefits introduced by an ECM solution. Providing better access to information enables customer support calls to be resolved immediately, eliminating the need for costly call-backs. Interconnecting project activities to streamline go-to-market activities accelerates product releases. Offloading e-mail content to cost-effective storage hardware enables organizations to reduce e-mail server investments, without sacrificing user productivity.

We believe that the next great idea, the next breakthrough, the next innovation resides with the collected knowledge of connected people. That's why we established the Open Text ECM Leadership Forum: www.opentext.com/kmworld/ecm-events. This ongoing series of events across North America gives you the opportunity to meet with our sponsors, customers and our own ECM experts, to receive your copy of "Enterprise Content Management: What You Need to Know," and learn how you can begin turning your content into competitive advantage today.

Open Text™ is a market leader providing enterprise content management (ECM) solutions that bring together people, processes and information in global organizations. Today, the company supports more than 20 million seats across 13,000 deployments in 114 countries and 12 languages worldwide. Open Text is one of KMWorld's "100 Companies that Matter in KM, 2005." To order your copy of "Enterprise Content Management: What you need to know": www.opentext.com/kmworld/ecm-book.