



South East Water Smooths Their Record Management Flow

OpenText Application Governance & Archiving for Microsoft® SharePoint®

Industry

Water supply and sewerage services

Customer



Business Challenges

- Splintered document library
- Inefficient document retention and disposal policies
- Several different documentation processes

Business Solution

- OpenText Application Governance & Archiving for Microsoft® SharePoint® (formerly Content Lifecycle Management (CLM) Services for Microsoft SharePoint)
- OpenText ECM Suite

Business System Integration

- Microsoft Sharepoint

Business Benefits

- Secure document library
- Improved document search
- Ability to standardise documentation procedures
- Safety from litigation

Providing a basic necessity such as water for as many as 600,000 people requires organised documentation and efficient workflow in a company. Customers are not likely to be tolerant of mistakes that involve them losing something as important as water service. South East Water (SEW), a Victorian Government-owned provider of water and related services, knew they needed to integrate digital records into a single system. Records can be on file at a utility such as SEW for as long as a century, and being able to quickly access the most current version reduces human error and allows for standardised processes for many business tasks.

Background

SEW had accumulated nine million electronic records in its OpenText Enterprise Content Management (ECM) system, few of which were managed and archived according to a document lifecycle policy. While they had been using an OpenText ECM system since 1997, not all of the records were searchable in the ECM system. SEW then began to use Microsoft® SharePoint® in 2003 for other documents, and to facilitate content management and collaboration. With two different systems in place, employees had to perform several searches and would often run into version control and duplication issues when documents had been placed in both systems. Because documents were often found in both systems without proper details on which was the most current version, SEW faced the problem of having important changes to a document deleted by an employee who was not aware that it was the most up-to-date version. Furthermore, not all of the information in the Microsoft SharePoint system was compliant with the Victorian Electronic Records Strategy (VERs) that was introduced at the turn of the century. SEW wanted to have standard processes in place for employees to access records and update versions and to ensure that all of their important documents were going to be consistently organised while being fully compliant with government regulations.

Finding the right tool

SEW deployed OpenText Application Governance & Archiving for Microsoft SharePoint (formerly Content Lifecycle Management (CLM) Services for Microsoft SharePoint) to ensure content created in SharePoint is centrally managed in accordance with regulatory requirements. By managing information in one location, SEW can control the document lifecycle. Records management classifications can be applied to documents automatically, as they are archived in the OpenText Records Management repository, or interactively by users with a single click from the SharePoint interface.

SharePoint offers the ideal user experience while Application Governance & Archiving for Microsoft SharePoint, together with OpenText ECM Suite, provides SEW with a central





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IT Systems Analyst, South East Water

records management and archival system to manage business content for its compliance, litigation, and regulatory requirements.

With the integrated OpenText and Microsoft solution, content flows back and forth between SharePoint and OpenText. As far as the end user is concerned, all they ever see is the SharePoint interface. All of their user authentications and their rights and privileges are governed by SharePoint. SEW can write retention rules within Application Governance & Archiving for Microsoft SharePoint, and if a document meets certain criteria, it is automatically migrated into the OpenText repository, at which point Records Management establishes a separate set of rules for who can do what with those documents. SEW's engineering and project teams were already very familiar with both the SharePoint environment and ECM Suite and the fact that this change was transparent to them precluded any work being slowed or stopped. The OpenText solution also offers sophisticated audit and tracking options. These audit and tracking options are beneficial in the case of litigation being brought against SEW. Key documents can easily be located and then analysed to find the crucial version as well as the individuals who made the changes. This important version can then be backed up to ensure that it will be available as evidence.

Changing the environment to match the system

SEW also conducted a great deal of research on how to change their workflows and processes to adapt to the new centralised Content Lifecycle Management (CLM) system. This began with key stakeholders getting behind the new CLM vision and adopting a staggered rollout with management support to reduce organisational resistance to this initiative. New policies were created to encourage and guide staff to take advantage of the new functionality that the system afforded while following the new processes. Benedict Chiu, IT Systems Analyst and OpenText technical lead at South East Water, comments, “The holy grail for many organisations is to understand and

maximise the value of their content. This deployment takes us one step closer to achieving that. The OpenText module is seamless and straightforward to use, but it's also important to remember that policy must drive the tool.”

The impact of the changes

The most major change for SEW is that staff can now perform one search, using the SharePoint interface, that will sift through all nine million documents in the system and bring up what they need without the doubt that it may not be the correct version or that it will not be in the repository at all. SEW can now implement a consistent retention and disposal policy for all of their documents without having to accommodate two separate systems. Marcus Darbyshire, Chief Information Officer of South East Water, says, “The benefit of this deployment is the peace of mind that it offers around document lifecycle management. As a water provider, our assets can live for 100 years or more. Applying the OpenText records management capabilities to SharePoint means we now have the security of knowing that our information is not being deleted before its time. It is properly managed and can be easily found.”

Down the line

With OpenText Application Governance & Archiving for Microsoft SharePoint, South East Water can begin to maximise the power of the information in their long history of documents. This information will help ensure that business practises that have made SEW a successful company will continue to be maintained, as well as protect them from any litigation that may occur in the future. They can also collaborate on all of their documents to best leverage the skills of their employees by using the tools that SharePoint provides and OpenText powers. The easy customisation also available in the solution allows for any future additions to the ECM system to be added and integrated without interrupting the normal stream of their business.

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