



Is ECM Really Past Its Sell By Date?

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Biography

David Jones, a former AIIM analyst, is now Director of product management at fast-growing Content Services firm Nuxeo (www.nuxeo.com), a provider of enterprise content management, Content Services and digital asset management solutions for large firms.

With more than 20 years' experience in the emerging technologies space across multiple industries including big data, analytics, cloud and enterprise content management, David is responsible for developing the global go-to-market strategy and execution plan for Nuxeo's modern enterprise Content Services Platform and helping develop the roadmap for future platform applications and content-driven solutions.

Prior to joining Nuxeo David was a Global Market Analyst and VP of European Operations with the Association of Intelligent Information Management (AIIM). His experience also includes roles in Product and Marketing Management with Konica Minolta and Hyland, and as CEO and Founder of xDM Software.

With roles that span from product marketing to analyst to developer to business development, David has a holistic understanding of the challenges of stakeholders from every facet of the organisation. He is passionate about delivering modern, future-forward technologies and solutions that truly make a difference to organizations, employees and customers.

Keywords Content services platform (CSP), Enterprise content management (ECM), Data silos,
Paper type Opinion

Abstract

Last year Gartner slapped an 'obsolete' sticker on ECM and introduced the term 'content services'. One year on, Nuxeo's Director of Product Marketing, David Jones, looks at how this decision has panned out.

Introduction

Enterprise Content Management (ECM) goes back nearly two decades, and during that time it has been the go-to toolbox for managing an organization's documents and other unstructured content.

Even if ECM didn't always reach its potential in managing an array of content capabilities developed to capture, organize, archive, and deliver data across organizations, it has at least delivered the concept of content management, and many organizations bought into it – both figuratively and literally.

However, ECM failed to deliver on its one big promise – to serve as a one-stop solution for all an organization's content management requirements. This has resulted in duplicated, disconnected solutions that have created data silos, which defeated the objective of a shared data system with a single, digital version of the truth.



Technology and Innovation

Organizations are transforming. They are disrupting and being disrupted everywhere, and the way in which they manage their information and content is a prime place for disruption.

Content services, which spans a host of technologies from enterprise file synchronization and sharing (EFSS tools) to migration services, as well as traditional document management, represents the evolution of ECM.

The concept of moving away from the outdated 'centralized content repository' is becoming more of a reality for many organizations, although this change in thinking has made it difficult for many legacy ECM providers who have found it difficult to adapt their systems to modern business practices. This has led to a new breed of vendors and solutions entering the market – with approaches that are new, relevant and business-focused above all else.

Change is good

Gartner sees the transformation from ECM to content services as a move away from the notion of the management of content where too much is centered on 'the repository as a solution'. Instead it is about how content is actually used inside and outside the organization to collaborate, innovate, and gain valuable business insight.

While content services utilizes a mix of strategies and integrated technologies to maximize operations by way of content, ECM fundamentally tries to do this via a single system. In a business environment that is increasingly cloud and mobile-centric, collaboration rather than isolation has become a business differentiator, and the fundamental principles of content services are in harmony with this concept.

This doesn't mean you have to get rid of existing systems and content repositories. A Content Services Platform (CSP) can efficiently manage information sitting in diverse and distributed systems. CSPs are repository neutral – serving as the connective tissue that can link together other existing systems and content repositories, serving as a central hub for accessing the single version of truth across the organization while also delivering content in context and simplifying core business processes.

Digital transformation driving the shift from ECM to Content Services

This shift in thinking should come as no surprise to ECM buyers. Digital transformation has turned what businesses, customers, and information workers expect from enterprise systems on its head. Today an information management system must be intuitive, scalable, flexible, and seamlessly connected to other business systems.

With new technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), performance analytics, and machine learning coming down the pipe, organizations are looking for the most effective ways to get the most out of their increasingly valuable data. Looking at these disruptive changes, one can see why ECM has in many ways reached the end of its road. But we all know that in reality change takes time.



In conclusion

Organizations have invested heavily in ECM, so throwing the baby out with the bathwater is not a viable option – they need a work-round plan in the short term. A CSP approach that integrates legacy applications with the new platform, cloud, and mobile is a prudent way forward. One that sees ECM systems of the past being used as a foundational part of an infrastructure designed for the future. This is a disruptive yet sensible option for any CIO looking to drive their organization forward.