



# Content Services and the Death of ECM

What does it mean?



## A Briefing

## Content Services – What's in it For Me?

## The Trouble with ECM

One of the biggest challenges with traditional, legacy ECM (Enterprise Content Management) definitions is that the ideal of a perfect solution has long been defined as a single, centralized platform to manage all information throughout the enterprise. This has proven to be a goal that is impossible to achieve. The central platform has never been particularly successful or realistic, and has left gaps in meeting all of the organization's information management needs. In a recent survey, twenty-two percent of the AIIM community considered their overall ECM initiatives to be stalled, and often, businesses are littered with abandoned data silos.\* These silos are often the leftovers after costly migrations from an underperforming ECM system to a new one (fifty-percent of those polled have three or more ECM systems, and 22% have five or more).

## Where Do Content Services Fit In?

Content Services are an alternative strategy to provide a more practical solution to achieve the benefits promised by the original vision of ECM: to intelligently capture information and deliver it to the right people at the right time in the right format; while ensuring compliance and creating process and cost efficiencies.



It's not necessarily about new software, new platforms, or new systems. A Content Services strategy is based on integrations and bringing together architectural support of multiple on-premises and potentially, cloud-based document and information stores. It's a multi-repository approach to manage content regardless of its source repository and provide federated functions like enterprise search to create agile, cost effective solutions.

\* AllIM 2018 Survey: Intelligent Information Management

# Moving Forward?

## What is a Legacy ECM Application?

Legacy ECM applications are those that have generally been in place for many years; often a decade or two. These applications were initially developed for use on mainframe computing platforms (although they might have been ported to distributed systems) and are rigid and inflexible in their processes. As a result, they typically require significant amounts of hardware, complicated software organization, a great deal of administrative overhead, an inflexible user interface, and substantial maintenance and support costs.

## If it Ain't Broke — Why Fix it?

Although the legacy system may serve the original design purpose well – requirements change. The rigid design of legacy ECM systems may not be flexible enough to support new business processes and objectives, and changing these systems to accommodate the requirements of delivering multiple content types to the right people using a variety of delivery methods, is too expensive.

## Why Should my Organization Change?

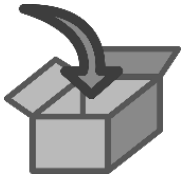
With content residing in multiple silos (repositories) and customers requiring delivery of information through a combination of print, email, web browser, text message, and other emerging channels – content needs to be extracted from many sources, consolidated, and transformed into the proper format for distribution.



*In this mobile, connected world where everything is electronic and the speed of business is constantly accelerating, content services enable organizations to keep pace.*

## Which Applications?

All the content that needs to be stored, managed, and distributed is created by applications. The originating applications and the impact they have on the user community are the main considerations when moving from ECM to Content Services. Can a better user experience be created? Applications and processes that are a good fit for the use of Content Services have one or more of the following traits:



Applications that continue to load new content into repositories. The primary purpose is to provide current transactional information to both internal and external users.



Applications that create data and documents that have regulatory retention requirements that must be kept and made available to legal and government authorities.



Any application or system that creates repository bound documents that should be available at the customer request.



For government entities, any repository that stores documents that can be requested through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).



Any repository that contains private, personal customer information that must be “sanitized” and transformed to a state where it can be legally distributed. This may involve removal or redaction of certain personal, private information, such as account or social security numbers.

## Getting Started

A detailed analysis of where the most positive impact can be made is an absolute necessity.



## Questions to Consider

1. Are documents and the data within them required by both internal and external users?
2. Is there more than one application's data required for one or more use cases?
3. Does document-based information need to be distributed to a 3rd party?
4. Can the information distribution process be made self-service with the appropriate technology?
5. Is there now, or will there be future security, privacy, and governance requirements?
6. Are there multiple repositories (silos) that would benefit from a federated search?

## Determine the Business Impact and the Expected Value

Any time there is change to an existing process, there is an impact on the day-to-day business operation. Care must be taken to ensure that the expected value from the change justifies the impact to the business. Therefore, it is beneficial to work with document and specific application SMEs to determine how users interact with documents and the applications that create and use them. The goal is to identify those document repositories that are most frequently used and, with the introduction of Content Services, can have the most positive impact on the business.

## Implementation

Implementing a Content Services methodology for delivering information and documents to a varied group of both internal and external users, requires a different approach than the traditional IT project. It may not be necessary to provision and deploy new servers and systems. In fact, one of the key benefits of the Content Services approach is to augment existing systems and “breath new life” into the existing legacy systems that, in reality, do a very good job of storage and preservation, but fail at delivery of the information in today’s multi-channel distribution requirements. Some points to consider when getting started include:

1. Determine the makeup of the user community. Is it primarily internal or external? How much of the external user community are customers, business partners or vendors as frequency and type of access will be different?
2. Establish which use cases could benefit from a federated, multi-repository search.
3. Determine which labor-intensive use cases could be migrated to a customer, self-service approach.
4. Consider those applications and documents that have known compliance impacts such as HIPAA, CFR Part II, SEC 17a-f, GDPR
5. Ascertain which applications and repositories will require accessibility for the blind and vision-impaired due to regulation and legal requirements.
6. Assess the resources involved in management, support and administration of the current systems.
7. Survey the current technology infrastructure to establish potential hardware and software requirements.



The objective is to completely understand the makeup of the varied document creation, management, storage and distribution landscape and use that knowledge to design consolidation and distribution strategies that use content services methods to leverage existing repositories.



## Why Should I Care?

Adopting a Content Services approach to delivering documents and document-based information from existing repositories has the potential to increase customer and business partner satisfaction, streamline internal processing, and reduce administrative and maintenance costs. Additionally, it allows organizations to establish a path to the future by eliminating dependency on legacy systems and implementing a modern technology approach.

### The Big Question – Is It Worth It?

CrawfordTech is offering a FREE, half-day portfolio analysis designed to identify potential benefits your organization might be able to achieve by adopting a content services approach to document-based information distribution and delivery.

CrawfordTech's collections of products, tools, and services will give you the ability to leverage your investment in legacy applications to deliver information to the right people at the right time in the right format, while ensuring compliance and creating process and cost efficiencies.

- Assemble and securely deliver disparate content from different repositories in one package to both internal and external requesters
- Federate search and retrieval from multiple content repositories
- Transform stored content for multi-channel delivery without programming or re-composition of content
- Automatically choose the right delivery format based on user preference

**The Analysis is Free – The Advantages Could be Outstanding**

Contact us to begin:  
[sales@crawfordtech.com](mailto:sales@crawfordtech.com)

# Crawford Technologies

Crawford Technologies develops software and solutions to help enterprises optimize and improve the secure and accessible delivery, storage and presentment of their customer communications.

With over 1,800 customers on six continents, Crawfordtech solutions and know-how enable the largest banks, insurers, healthcare providers, utilities and print services companies to use their existing technologies, documents and data in new ways. We help them navigate the challenges in leveraging legacy applications in the platforms and applications of the future.

CrawfordTech's products, services and domain expertise reside at the nexus of content, data, and output management and are essential components of our customers' digital transformation, output management and document accessibility strategies.

