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Better Together: Creating a Content Solution Ecosystem that Truly Delivers Results

Many enterprises have realized a return on investment when implementing specific, stand-alone content management solutions. Fair enough. However, a modern enterprise-wide, end-to-end content solution platform – which combines a variety of technologies to help businesses more strategically meet a myriad of challenges – can enable organizations to significantly change how they do business and multiply their ROI.

The problem: Most content management efforts fall far short of this ideal. Consider the following: About 39% of organizations have a formal content management system today, while 23% of organizations are considering creating such a system. Many organizations share their content in informally (38%) or in collaborative share sites (24%). What's more, just 18% of an organizations content is accessible to analytics applications, which means it's not available for data-driven decision making.[1]

Undergoing a digital transformation and building a "best-in-class" content solution, however, requires "organizations to tailor flexible components to meet their specific business requirements," said Wayne Monk, Senior Vice President, Global Alliances and Channel Sales at ASG Technologies. "To do this,

[1] "Information Management Systems," Forbes Insights, 2018

businesses need experienced, savvy people who've dealt with not just the data repository, not just the workflow, not just the capture, not just the federation but also understand the whole picture and know how all these components interact."

In essence, successfully bringing these components together requires developing and implementing a comprehensive plan to use an ecosystem of solutions – a tall order that often stymies in-house information technology leaders and staff. To succeed, businesses need to tap into the services of a capable partner such as Zia Consulting, a Boulder, Colorado-based firm that has significant experience developing and implementing end-to-end content solutions.

"Businesses can get ROI out of capture, out of repositories, out of workflow and out of data prep. When working with a partner, organizations not only realize the ROI that individual technologies bring, they can multiply the ROI by experiencing consolidation, federation and rationalization – and workflow and productivity gains. And, by getting content management integrated into users' experiences, organizations can gain more efficiencies and an even higher rate of return," Monk said.

Putting the pieces together

Partners typically have the experience and wherewithal to know that developing and implementing an optimal content solution is not a plug-and-play proposition. Indeed, creating an end-to-end solution requires going far beyond simply implementing various pieces of software and waiting to reap the benefits, according to Mike Mahon, CEO of Zia Consulting.

"Many organizations do a great job of implementing a particular piece of software, running it and maintaining it but that doesn't always address the users' needs," Mahon said. "Projects fail because organizations often fail to get people, processes and technology to work together. Frequently these organizations rebuild with the same processes that they've used for the past 20 to 25 years. They don't change anything. So, they have new technology, but the people and processes remain the same. When you ignore how people actually work and use information, these projects typically fail."

When creating a content solution plan, it's important to consider the specific goals of each organization. "We look at their three to five-year plan and the business goals they are trying to achieve. We don't want to overthink it, but we have to turn over enough rocks to really see what a company is looking to do. We understand their broad business objectives, any ROI requirements as well as anything that is going on with their existing people, processes, technologies and security, and come up with a project plan," Mahon said.

RESULTS DELIVERED

$8M in estimated savings annually

$22M in cashflow improvements by reducing write-offs

80,000 invoices shift from manual to automated processing

100% compliance in core banking system data avoided penalties

During this discovery stage, it's important to ask questions such as: Does the organization have a need to consolidate systems as a result of a merger or acquisition? Is the business dealing with new compliance or regulatory requirements? Are users demanding more functionality?

It's also important to understand exactly how staff members are actually working with content – storing, searching or copying it to other systems and collaborating on edits or approvals between organizations. With an understanding of business drivers and user requirements, it is possible to understand where content is currently stored and how the organization can more optimally store and manage content in the new system.

This overall plan enables a best-in-class approach that ensures that organizations will select and implement the solutions that most effectively support overall business goals. "We figure out the best systems that will work well together and help businesses stitch together the hybrid or cloud architecture that fits their business now and gives them a place to scale from," Mahon said. By doing this, organizations can create an ecosystem that includes a content management

and policy system such as ASG Technologies Mobius, which enables users the flexibility to easily access content of any kind from any device and provides granular policy management for all content, analytics, storage and archiving, applications and output management solutions.

Achieve the Freedom You Need

Content Solutions are increasingly moving toward cloud delivery. Research confirms that 67% of businesses are looking at the cloud to extend their content solutions and provide device-agnostic access to employees. Over half of current users see cloud as a way to improve collaboration. ASG's Mobius helps enterprises take advantage of cloud and hybrid environments to achieve agile business processes and workflow flexibility.

Cloud content solutions can be deployed to capture process-driven content on premises, or in hybrid environments. This freedom allows enterprises to manage content for regulatory compliance while offering the benefits of cloud. In addition, the flexible deployment of cloud delivery gives IT administrators the freedom to design a hybrid content environment. Content Solutions like Mobius seamlessly integrate on-premises and cloud repositories for maximum flexibility, easier IT management and lower costs.

When building this ecosystem, however, organizations need to adopt a methodical approach. To start, businesses should consolidate and digitize content. "If you have systems that have not been updated or maintained for 10 to 15 years and are not mission critical, those are great candidates to consolidate. It's not scary. They are good systems to do a proof of concept with," Mahon said. This trial run, for example, might involve taking some of the content, putting it in the cloud in a searchable format, federating it – and then running analytics on it. Once systems are digitized, it's important to automate business processes and integrate data across platforms.

By taking this methodical approach, organizations can build the optimal hybrid, cloud-based content solution that enables them to not only access data but support sophisticated collaboration.

"We are seeing customers that generate manufacturing materials, for example, by collaborating with partners. So, their partners actually work with their data. Not only do they need to share data with partners but they collaborate with that data," Mahon said. As such, the ECM has to account for the complexity involved with sharing intellectual property, maintenance or auditing records with outside partners.

In addition, best-in-class content solutions need to provide a satisfying user experience via federation, or by adhering to standards that enable disparate systems to communicate with one another. "People don't want the 'swivel chair' or the 'stare and compare,' where they're looking at multiple screens. Having that consistent digital experience across mediums and across data centers and applications is really critical," Mahon said.

This approach has empowered a variety of businesses to more strategically meet business goals. For example, a healthcare company experienced estimated savings of about $8 million per year and improved cash flow of about $22 million by reducing write-offs associated with customer short payments and non-payments; a U.S. university that processes 80,000 invoices each month shifted accounts payable staff members' role from one of data entry to validation; and a German bank achieved compliance for all data and documents in their core banking environment without incurring any costly penalties. Indeed, such returns clearly illustrate that it is more than worthwhile to leverage the services of an experienced partner to develop and implement a hybrid, cloud-based content ecosystem that includes a variety of solutions.

About ASG Technologies

ASG Technologies Group, Inc. provides global organizations with a modern approach to Digital Transformation to succeed in the Information Economy. ASG is the only solutions provider for both Information Management and IT Systems. ASG's Information Management solutions enable companies to find, understand, govern and deliver information of any kind, from any source — whether structured or unstructured — through its lifecycle from capture to analysis to consumption. The IT Systems Management solutions empower companies to support traditional and modern digital initiatives, operate their IT infrastructure more efficiently and effectively and reduce the cost of managing and running their internal IT systems landscape. ASG is proud to serve more than 3,000 customers worldwide in 60 countries and in top vertical markets including Healthcare, Financial Services, Insurance and Government. For more information, visit **ASG.com** or connect with us on **LinkedIn**, **Twitter** and **Facebook**.

About Zia Consulting

Zia Consulting delivers enterprise content management (ECM) and intelligent document capture solutions addressing the needs of enterprises to better manage, process, and secure documents. Offerings tackle key issues of ECM user adoption and cost reduction through document automation and a desire for ECM and capture modernization including the cloud. Our vertical accelerators for insurance, mortgage, accounts payable, and more are utilized by some of the world's largest enterprises to deliver rapid ROI and enhanced governance.