

Evides' Information Flows Smoothly Across the Enterprise with OpenText

OpenText Content Server and Application Governance & Archiving for Microsoft SharePoint provide single-instance Content Repository, Records and Document Management, Archiving, and more for SharePoint applications

Evides Waterbedrijf, a Dutch water company headquartered in Rotterdam, serves 2.5 million people and businesses in Southwest Netherlands. Evides also provides industrial water services for large industrial customers in the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, and China. The company can trace its roots to the late 19th century, providing clean drinking water to residents of Rotterdam and Zeeland, and today employs 650 staff. The company is owned by local and regional governments.

Evides has long had a strategic approach to information management, using OpenText solutions since 2001 with OpenText Content Server at the core of their strategy. Continued growth, innovation, and the need to capture, store, and make available knowledge from a range of skilled workers led Evides to re-evaluate their broader Enterprise Information Management (EIM) strategy.

"From robust record management to long-term document archival, we began a project to evaluate options for the long-term management of all our information. Eighty-three core requirements were established and research into the ideal solution began," said Gerry van Meijel, Head of Document Management Department, Evides Waterbedrijf.

The best possible solution balancing user and business requirements with long-term economics

Evides' business needs are evolving, including legal retention time periods for many document types. After finding the ideal solution that would satisfy user requests for a familiar Microsoft interface, they quickly reduced their options to just three approaches.

"Our IT department has a Microsoft-first strategy, so we looked closely at implementing only Microsoft SharePoint. Having conducted a pilot and cost analysis, this option was dismissed, falling short on areas such as records management," added Gerry van Meijel.

To meet core requirements, such as records management, SharePoint would have required between 12 and 14 additional modules or extensions. Not only would this prove cost prohibitive, but it would also expose Evides to future risk.

INDUSTRY

Utilities

CUSTOMER

Evides Waterbedrijf

CHALLENGES

- Preservation of user experience of Microsoft® Office product family while meeting Evides' functional requirements for document and records management, archiving, and more
- Need to capture, record, and provide effective search and access to knowledge from staff prior to retirement
- Legal requirements to retain documents for specified periods, providing disposition scheduling without overhead on users

SOLUTIONS

- OpenText Content Server
- OpenText Application Governance & Archiving for Microsoft® SharePoint®

BENEFITS

- Close alignment of OpenText and Microsoft solutions removing risk found with numerous, smaller vendors
- Overall and ongoing reduction in storage costs
- Robust records management in a SharePoint environment provided by OpenText Application Governance & Archiving for Microsoft® SharePoint®

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GERRY VAN MEIJEL, HEAD OF DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT, EVIDES WATERBEDRIJF

With a greater number of vendors, the potential for future incompatibilities was seen as too risky, especially within a strategy intended to reduce and consolidate vendors, not increase them.

The second option of using OpenText alone would not meet users' requests for a Microsoft user interface, so was not viewed as optimal, leaving the third, and final, option.

“The third option, and the one we have selected, is a solution taking the best of both worlds, i.e. the functionality and capability of OpenText, with the familiar look and feel of the Microsoft user interface,” added Gerry van Meijel.

Working on the recommendation of I.R.I.S., a long-time OpenText partner, Evides undertook a pilot with OpenText Content Server providing the core foundation of the solution and Microsoft SharePoint. To provide the connection required between SharePoint and Content Server, OpenText Application Governance & Archiving for Microsoft SharePoint is used to provide records management, long-term content archival, and to help reduce storage costs. Also, by keeping OpenText, this eliminates any costly content migration, contributing to the overall lower total cost of ownership.

The best of both worlds, benefitting from a strategic OpenText and Microsoft partnership for future security

One of Evides key concerns surrounding a SharePoint only approach was the reliance on add-on components. There would be no guarantees of future compatibility, or even availability. A joint meeting with Microsoft was held at the OpenText offices to present their future plans.

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Using highly specialized product consultants in both the technical and functional domains, I.R.I.S. helps organizations implement OpenText Enterprise Information Management (EIM) solutions. I.R.I.S. has undertaken dozens of OpenText projects worldwide. As well as implementation and management services, I.R.I.S. is very experienced in developing EIM-related modules for OpenText. More information: www.irisecm.com

Evides wanted to validate the recommendations of I.R.I.S. and OpenText by talking with other organizations using similar solutions. Reference calls were organized with customers using both Content Server and Application Governance & Archiving for Microsoft SharePoint.

“As a part of our research, we spoke with Hydro One in Canada and Anglian Water in the UK, both of whom have successfully implemented and are live with their solutions. This helped us reaffirm that we selected the most appropriate solution for Evides,” added Gerry van Meijel.

Lower storage costs and rationalized vendor relationships

The solution is being deployed enterprise-wide to around 650 internal users, and up to 900 users in total. Everyone in the organization will utilize it on a daily basis to some degree. All content, from correspondence and reports to engineering drawings and employee files, will be stored. To date, over four million documents are being managed by OpenText and this is set to grow.

Physically storing such a large number of items carries a significant cost overhead. Keeping costs down is a key objective for Evides. “OpenText helps us keep our storage costs down through its efficient single instance storage capabilities, something that would not be available to us otherwise,” added Gerry van Meijel.

Evides IT department, which also uses the solution for storing content, has a goal to reduce the number of vendors they work with. This helps reduce support and maintenance costs and reduces the risks inherent with working with many different vendors across a single solution.

A clear vision of the future: enterprise search, greater collaboration, and knowledge capture

Feedback from users has shown they want a faster, Google®-style search covering a range of systems. Evides is working towards implementing a unique search experience that uses Microsoft FAST search with OpenText content.

For comprehensive search results, Evides is turning to I.R.I.S. and OpenText to ensure that knowledge is captured, categorized, and available for retrieval as their workforce ages and many retire. With all users across the organization due to use the newly deployed solution, greater collaboration will be possible too.

“The pilot project for 80 users has been a resounding success. We're pressing ahead with the current solution and also looking at other ways that we can benefit from using OpenText. This includes OpenText Tempo™ for secure content sharing outside Evides, and how to make greater use of mobile devices as part of our 'Bring Your Own Device' (BYOD) strategy,” concluded Gerry van Meijel.

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