Gartner

Research

Publication Date: 23 March 2009 **ID Number: G00166575**

Key Issues for Enterprise Content Management Initiatives, 2009

Karen M. Shegda, Mark R. Gilbert

ECM drives business efficiency by streamlining processes, reducing costs and unlocking their information value. Gartner has identified the key issues that planners should consider as they execute their content management strategies in 2009.

ANALYSIS

The explosive growth of Microsoft's SharePoint may remind information management leaders of the early 2000s. During that time, individual departments implemented their own content management systems, and, now — many years later — the IT organization still has not finished consolidating all these applications and repositories so that users across the enterprise can find and efficiently exploit relevant content. The many departmental implementations of SharePoint have created more silos of content. In the future, other technologies may emerge and cause the same kinds of problems. Enterprises need an ongoing initiative and management discipline (which may cover many individual projects) for managing content across the organization.

Enterprise content management (ECM) consists of a vision and framework for integrating a broad range of content management technologies and content formats across the enterprise. ECM suites represent one part of the solution. They combine a number of different technologies, including document management and imaging, records management, Web content management (WCM), information access and search, content analytics, e-discovery, and XML-aware content processing. However, technology alone won't suffice to deliver business value. An ECM initiative needs to extend content governance and best practices across the enterprise. It needs to link content with business processes and outcomes.

Within the ECM initiative, Gartner will write about eight individual projects in 2009:

- What should be your road map for ECM in 2009 (see "Build Your 2009 ECM Project Road Map to Avoid Failure Trend").
- Shared services for ECM, approaches, service-level agreement (SLA), funding and related projects.
- Content in the "cloud": Managing highly virtualized content architecture projects.
- E-discovery projects.
- Legacy information management projects (see "Overview for Legacy Information Management Projects, 2009" [forthcoming]).
- Content metadata projects.
- Content analytics projects (see "Overview of Content Analytics Projects, 2009").
- Digital asset management projects (see "Digital Asset Media 2009 Projects Overview").

ECM-specific tasks are embedded within each of the phases of the activity cycle that support specific projects, such as designing your ECM business road map, implementing content management infrastructure and managing e-discovery risks (see "Activity Cycle Overview: Business Intelligence and Information Management").

The phases are:

- Vision: What are the business problems that ECM can address?
- Plan: What are the major issues to tackle and how will you go about it?
- Build: Who is implementing the system, what must it integrate with and in what architectural framework?
- Operate: How can we keep this system running with a modest cost footprint?

- Use: As the system ages, what is the strategy for ongoing support, renewal or replacement?

The economic crisis may make it more difficult to convince executives to invest in a full ECM effort. However, ECM can bring benefits even when implemented in a selective approach (see "Enterprise Content Management Cost Optimization Through a Selective Deployment Approach"). ECM can drive process efficiencies and compliance efforts, as well as support collaboration. It can also enable organizations to optimize costs. Gartner's research is organized around five key issues that will help application managers and leaders of ECM projects navigate the ECM landscape in 2009.

Key Issues for Enterprise Content Management in 2009

What best practices can users follow to maximize their success with content management?

Background: Most of the enterprise's experience with content management comes from departmental implementations. These small projects offer limited scope for IT workers and others to develop expertise. Many bad practices have taken root and best practices are followed in small pockets within the enterprise. An ECM initiative requires that information management leaders gather best practices from across the organization and seek out best practices from outside. Planners and architects have to turn these best practices into methods and apply them across the enterprise on content projects. Successful governance strategies are critical and must strike a balance between allowing sufficient user autonomy and flexibility versus strict IT control of systems. Likewise, efforts at taxonomies must balance what is effective and practical for a department versus what is realistic to attempt for an enterprise.

Impact: A small, departmental project costs relatively little, so the risks from failure are relatively small. But a typical ECM project involves considerable time (nine to 18 months to deployment) and cost (often more than $1 million, including software and services, for a large deal). The risk of failure must be managed and watched closely so phased rollouts and pilot projects become critical.

Research Planned for 2009: We will provide a number of tools to help enterprises with implementations. We'll publish case studies on ECM, software as a service (SaaS), content-enabled vertical applications (CEVAs) and records management. We will create toolkits, including model requests for proposals (RFPs), that information management leaders can adapt and use to evaluate and implement products. We will also provide some tutorials on key topics that IT leaders are wrestling with this year, including SharePoint implementations, governing content and dealing with vendors in financial difficulty.

Related Reading:

"Build Your 2009 ECM Project Road Map to Avoid Failure Trend"

"Tactical Guidelines for Getting Web Content Management Right This Time Around"

"First 100 Days: Enterprise Content Management Initiatives"

What ECM applications will drive the biggest benefit for information management?

Background: Content management used to operate on its own, managing a microcosm of documents. Today, executives will fund content management only if it improves business directly. In some cases, circumstances make well established technologies, such as WCM, information

access and records management, particularly valuable as enterprises want to make their Web sites more competitive, boost workers' productivity or improve e-discovery. In other cases, taking a sequential approach to ECM by implementing only specific functions and basic applications in smaller steps can allow the organization to see benefits faster and prove success in stages rather than going for a full-blown ECM deployment. This step-wise approach, as well as trying alternative delivery models, such as SaaS, can lower costs — a top priority during the economic crisis. Some new technologies offer better ways of doing business; for example, XML publishing or CEVAs, which link content management with business processes.

Impact: ECM technologies can cut costs while helping enterprises maintain agility, reduce the IT organization's management load for on-site applications and preserve oversight. Content management systems will still deliver strong value in cases that demand broad and deep functions and scalability. For instance, CEVAs deliver very high return on investment (ROI), because these targeted, refined applications typically focus on a critical business process. CEVAs can speed up processes and improve accountability and rigor — they are, by their nature, best practices.

Research Planned for 2009: In 2009, we will continue to write about putting together a business case for ECM. This research theme will include toolkits for calculating ROI for WCM, a resurgent area, and estimating the impact of SharePoint on your operations. We will pay special attention to cost optimization by showing both how to save money on ECM software and how to use ECM to save the enterprise money. In addition, we will address several diverse topics, such as valuing content, content analytics, XML and CEVAs, and explore how to use them to maximize value.

Related Reading:

"How to Ensure That Your CEVA Delivers Business Value"

"Too Much, Too Old: Information Access Technology Enables Valuation and Reduction of Legacy Data"

"Eight Reasons to Use XML-Aware Content Applications"

What emerging technologies and architectures will play an important role in the evolution of content management toward broader information management?

Background: Enterprises that want to get the most value from their content will manage their information across the enterprise. The ECM technologies and repositories represent one part of the total picture. ECM will have to interoperate with the other components of information infrastructure, including applications, data services, metadata and all forms of content. ECM technologies are becoming more capable of integrating with, or handling some aspects of, structured data. At the same time, enterprises will have to integrate the various repositories via content integration middleware, federated search, composite applications and other methods. Some content applications may span enterprise boundaries, as companies deal increasingly with partners, suppliers, consultants and so on. In the future, ECM must play a central role in the overall information architecture.

Impact: Information management can differentiate enterprises from competitors. Companies that pursue information management during this economic crisis will emerge stronger. They will provide better customer service by feeding better information to call center workers and customers, develop products at lower cost by reusing content and linking in new systems more easily, or exercise some other competitive advantage. ECM technologies address the 80% of enterprise information that is unstructured, so enterprise information management won't achieve its goals unless it includes ECM.

Research Planned for 2009: A key piece of research will describe a hybrid content architecture — a priority for enterprises that need to operate in a heterogeneous environment. We will also analyze hot technologies, including basic content services (BCSs), cloud computing (including SharePoint in the cloud) and XML publishing. And we won't forget the basics: we will publish a Hype Cycle for tracking the maturity of technologies and some notes on the critical capabilities of ECM platforms and BCS.

Related Reading:

"Information Infrastructure Drives Business Efficiency"

"Ten Starting Points for Integrating Unstructured Content"

"Hype Cycle for Content Management, 2008"

What key market trends are changing the landscape of content management?

Background: Key trends include:

- Consolidation within the ECM market has made content management part of the technology infrastructure available from the major stack vendors.
- Commoditization at the low-end of the market by Microsoft and other providers of BCSs forces many traditional ECM vendors to move further toward solutions and industry-specific offerings — or risk loss of revenue.
- Workers have adopted consumer technologies such as instant messaging, blogs and wikis in the enterprise.
- Rich, Web 2.0 clients are becoming the user interface for content management systems. They foster real-time content sharing and deliver content to users in the context of their role or business process.
- Open Source CM is picking up traction. Alfresco has become a significant OEM play — embedded in Adobe's LiveCycle, Intalio's BPM suite and Quark's DPS platform.
- WCM is undergoing some transformation as it becomes focused on Web channel technologies and broadening further into analytics.
- ECM is splitting into three tiers as vendor competencies and solutions delivery stratify the market into: collaborative, transactional and contextual.

Impact: These trends put more pressure on the IT organization but also provide more options. For example, the proliferation of consumer technologies raises workers' expectations for applications' ease of use, and people will reject new ECM deployments that fall too far short. The emergence of SharePoint and other BCS enables the IT organization to provide content management functions to more people at lower cost. The success of ECM in an enterprise overall depends on how well information management leaders can gain user acceptance and adoption, provision applications in a cost-effective manner, and handle coexistence of multiple CM systems in a way which creates benefits from diversity rather than chaos.

Research Planned for 2009: Cloud computing is beginning to change the ECM market landscape in 2009 — based on potential cost savings as well as technology benefits. Our research will explore these drivers as well as inhibitors to content integration in the cloud as well as the influence of the three big cloud vendors, Google, IBM and Microsoft, on the ECM market. We'll

also continue to examine the linking of content management with business process management. And we'll look into the changing nature of ECM repositories.

Related Reading:

"A Guide to Research and Toolkits for Leaders of Enterprise Content Management Initiatives"

"Get Ready for Content in the Cloud"

Which are the leading ECM vendors, what are their strategies, and what pitfalls must users beware of?

Background: Infrastructure vendors such as Microsoft and IBM have increased their focus on content management, and the ECM market has consolidated to only four or five significant vendors for enterprisewide deployments. This shift means fewer choices for enterprises and less opportunity for innovation. For example, stack vendors may lack best-of-breed functions, and enterprises have to worry more about vendor lock-in. But infrastructure vendors are generally more financially stable than pure-play vendors — although all vendors face risks in this economy. They offer technologies to manage both structured and unstructured data and to link ECM with business intelligence and other applications. Many smaller vendors still play important roles — often adding value where a major vendor's offering falls short.

Impact: Planners and IT architects need to understand how major acquisitions will impact the market strategies of the leading vendors. Ultimately, many vendors will reduce their product portfolios and will stop supporting some products. Migration from one product to another will likely cause disruptions and increased costs for enterprises.

Research Planned for 2009: This year we will publish our usual tools for helping to evaluate vendors, including Magic Quadrants, MarketScopes and Cool Vendor reports. We will also write research about major vendors, their strategies and products. We will cover all the markets within ECM, including WCM, information access, records management, content management and e-discovery as well as ECM as a whole.

Related Reading:

"Magic Quadrant for Enterprise Content Management"

"Cool Vendors in Content Management, 2009"

"The State of Google Apps"

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS

Corporate Headquarters
56 Top Gallant Road
Stamford, CT 06902-7700
U.S.A.
+1 203 964 0096

European Headquarters
Tamesis
The Glanty
Egham
Surrey, TW20 9AW
UNITED KINGDOM
+44 1784 431611

Asia/Pacific Headquarters
Gartner Australasia Pty. Ltd.
Level 9, 141 Walker Street
North Sydney
New South Wales 2060
AUSTRALIA
+61 2 9459 4600

Japan Headquarters
Gartner Japan Ltd.
Aobadai Hills, 6F
7-7, Aobadai, 4-chome
Meguro-ku, Tokyo 153-0042
JAPAN
+81 3 3481 3670

Latin America Headquarters
Gartner do Brazil
Av. das Nações Unidas, 12551
9° andar—World Trade Center
04578-903—São Paulo SP
BRAZIL
+55 11 3443 1509

Gartner