CASE STUDY

Harvard Business Publishing Uses Open Source ECM to Transform into a Digital Media Enterprise

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Using Alfresco, Rivet Logic and Harvard Business Publishing (HBP) implemented an enterprise content management (ECM) solution that unlocked content across all publishing divisions. The agile solution deployed by Rivet Logic enabled HBP to broaden and accelerate its digital publishing activities by making content easily searchable and manageable for all business end-users.

**For Harvard Business Publishing, open source ECM is the key to unlocking content across the enterprise**

In today’s rapidly evolving media landscape, Harvard Business Publishing (HBP) is constantly spearheading change and adapting to meet the needs of its customers. The organization understands that a flexible and scalable approach to content management will ultimately serve to help realize its vision to develop new and innovative products, foster community around existing products and services, and attract new audiences. To accomplish these goals, HBP recognized that it must transform the way it manages and deploys content across all business units.

Since its inception in 1994, Harvard Business Publishing (HBP), a wholly owned subsidiary of Harvard University, has been improving the practice of management through a wide range of publications and a global reach strategy that targets academic, enterprise and individual manager markets. Key to the success of HBP is the ability to quickly and easily leverage content across all publishing divisions and develop new digital products. To accomplish this, HBP business end-users must be able to harness enterprise content from disparate divisional sources, including Harvard Business Review, Harvard Business Press, Harvard Business School Cases, Corporate Learning and Harvard Business Digital.

To facilitate access to its high-value content across all divisions, HBP saw that it needed to transition from its existing collection of disparate systems—the main one being a rigid, proprietary closed source ECM system, which housed most of the digital enterprise content—to a flexible and scalable open source model that offered the agility HBP required to unlock content across the enterprise.

For HBP, the legacy approach to content management provided limited access to only a few trained power-users, which routinely resulted in productivity bottlenecks across all units. To further challenge workflow and production of HBP products, files also resided on various shared drives across the enterprise.

**CASE HIGHLIGHTS**

Rivet Logic deploys an open source, Alfresco-based enterprise content management system that eases search, retrieval and management of all digital assets.

- **Organization** - Since its inception in 1994, Harvard Business Publishing (HBP), a wholly owned subsidiary of Harvard University, has been improving the practice of management through a wide range of publications and a global reach strategy that targets academic, enterprise and individual manager markets.

- **Challenge** - HBP sought a way to cost-effectively leverage content from disparate sources across all publishing divisions. Relying mainly on a proprietary, closed source ECM system, HBP needed to more effectively unlock content so that business end-users could develop new and innovative digital products with greater ease.

- **Solution** - HBP selected Rivet Logic to implement an Alfresco-based ECM solution, which resulted in a robust, flexible and scalable platform from which to manage, access and repurpose all types of digital assets, and quickly publish them to the Web among other delivery channels.

- **Results** - The new ECM solution enabled HBP to better leverage the value of its branded content—including articles, books and book chapters, blogs, podcasts and videos—easily, quickly and securely. Uniting all content across the enterprise led to the rapid development of new digital media products and richer content on HBP’s revenue-generating Web properties.
With all departments creating siloed content—either on shared drives or locked up in the proprietary system—HBP found it increasingly difficult to repurpose existing content into new digital media products. As Martha Stephenson, Senior Project Manager with HPB described it, “Only a few people would upload content into the system and then if any content had to be retrieved these users would have to get the content out, which made business end-user searching difficult.”

A flexible and user-friendly Alfresco-based solution by Rivet Logic designed to expand and accelerate digital publishing. To gain the flexibility and ease of use needed to open content up to all business end-users, HBP opted for an open source approach using Alfresco, which provides a broad-based capability to manage both enterprise and Web content. Alfresco would enable HBP to unlock content via the enterprise content management (ECM) solution and, ultimately, accelerate Web publishing.
through a Web content management (WCM) approach. As an enterprise-grade content management platform, Alfresco also provided HBP with the integrity and stability it needed to ensure high availability, robust navigation, search and retrieval, a user-friendly interface, and configurable user authorization supporting various roles and privileges tailored to the organization. HBP selected Rivet Logic as its implementation partner based on its extensive Alfresco expertise and its ability to craft both ECM and WCM solutions that focus on the needs of the business end-user. Said Stephenson, “We selected Rivet Logic because their level of technical knowledge was highly regarded throughout the Alfresco community.”

Rivet Logic’s Alfresco-based ECM solution focused on three primary elements: a robust content model, user interface design and functionality, and seamless integration with other enterprise IT systems. Rivet Logic designed a solution based on a rich content model that incorporated enterprise-wide content types and metadata, content relationships, and a multifaceted taxonomy. With about one million content items locked up in the proprietary, closed source ECM system and scattered around in shared drives, Rivet Logic created a sophisticated content model that characterized the full breadth of HBP’s assets. Rivet Logic first reviewed content across all divisions and, through in-depth discussions, assessed all current content as well as plans for future content. The results of those conversations drove rich content modeling activity for the ECM architecture. “Rivet Logic captured the metadata requirements and then developed a comprehensive enterprise-wide content model that they configured in Alfresco to support the full breadth of our content,” said Stephenson. This model now serves as the underpinning of HBP’s ongoing transformation from a more traditional print publishing company to a 21st century digital media enterprise.

The main criterion for the user interface design was ease of use. Rivet Logic needed to eliminate the limited access issue—the primary constraint of the legacy, closed source ECM system implementation—and create a system that was accessible to all end-users. After gathering use cases and user stories, Rivet Logic developed a custom, browser-based interface that leveraged Alfresco’s programmatic interfaces and one of Rivet Logic’s own open source contributions to the Alfresco community—an API that supports sophisticated access to, and queries against, Alfresco’s content repository. The custom user interface enables users to:

- Navigate, search, find and retrieve relevant content quickly through a combination of full-text search, metadata search and content relationship browsing
- Create and enter new content and associated metadata and relationships
- Highlight rights management issues through a color-
Case Study

RivetLogic is an award-winning consulting and systems integration firm that helps organizations better engage with customers, improve collaboration and streamline business operations. Through a full suite of solutions for content management, collaboration and community, Rivet Logic enables organizations to fully leverage the power of industry leading open source software. With deep expertise in Alfresco, Liferay, JBoss and Drupal, Rivet Logic crafts content-rich solutions that power next-generation Web properties, Enterprise 2.0 applications and collaborative communities. With offices in Reston, Virginia and Cambridge, Massachusetts, Rivet Logic serves clients across a wide range of industries. Rivet Logic—Artisans of Open Source.