

Province of British Columbia

Automating and Streamlining News Release Management from Creation to Distribution

Benefits

- Greater control and productivity through automated workflow
- Maintaining consistency and high standards of quality
- Central, searchable repository
- Automated, timed distribution of information

Business Overview

As with all Canadian provinces and territories, the Province of British Columbia (B.C.) has a Queen's Printer, an organization which dates back to 1859 when Captain E. Hammond King was appointed by Queen Victoria I to represent her interest in printing for Her Majesty's Colonial Government. Today the Queen's Printer operation is part of the Ministry of Management Services' Product Sales & Services (PS&S) organization and provides the majority of printing and publishing requirements for the B.C. Government, which includes the Office of the Premier, 20 ministries, and a number of independent organizations and agencies.

The Queen's Printer also provides Internet services, such as operation of the Legislative Assemblies Web site. According to Vern Burkhardt, executive director of PS&S and bearer of the official title of Queen's Printer for British Columbia, "Ministries were coming to us more and more frequently with requests and wish lists related to managing content. For instance, they wanted to standardize the creation of complicated documents, have versioning and audit trails, and be able to distribute content more easily via print or the Web."

Burkhardt continued, "It wasn't until we investigated how to meet these requests that we began to truly appreciate the underlying need — namely, to automate the back-end processes involved in content creation. Once we made this realization, we knew we needed a full-featured, Web-enabled content management system to meet current and future business needs."

Challenges

After identifying the need, the first step was to determine which business functions would stand to benefit the most in the near term by implementing such a system. Queen's Printer identified five such business functions and, from these, chose news release management as the first business function to transform.

Inconsistent Processes

Every year, the government of British Columbia issues anywhere from 1,000 to 2,500 news releases, some with accompanying fact sheets, media kits, and other information. After originating within a government ministry or agency, a typical news release was approved at the ministry level, then passed to Public Affairs Bureau (PAB) for editing, then returned to the ministry for incorporating edits, then passed back to PAB for distribution by e-mail, fax, and regular mail to media outlets, the Web, and other destinations.

Business profile

Customer Name

Province of British Columbia -
Queen's Printer

Industry

Government/Publishing

Locations

Headquarters in Victoria,
British Columbia, Canada

Business Focus

Intranet, WCM, EDM

EMC Documentum Products

EMC Documentum ECM Platform,
Content Rendition Services, Site
Caching Services

EMC Documentum

Signature Partner

Xerox Global Services

Deployment summary

News release management
system in production on October
28, 2002. Approximately 100 users
in 20 ministries to use system.
Curriculum management system
for the Ministry of Education
under consideration next.

However, since these procedures were not enforceable and often encountered bottlenecks, exceptions occurred and news releases were occasionally issued that had not been approved by PAB. Even if PAB had provided edits, there was no mechanism to ensure that these edits made their way into the final version of the news release or that the ministry did not duplicate some of PAB's distribution efforts.

Processes Too Reliant on a Few Key Personnel

As it stood, the processes for managing news releases relied heavily on the unique knowledge of a few workers. Should these key participants be unavailable, the process could stall or fail, resulting in work-arounds by the various ministries that could result in delays or quality issues.

Need to Maintain Integrity, Convey Consistent Image

"Even if Public Affairs Bureau had reviewed and approved the document's messaging content," noted Burkhardt, "the news releases originating from the 20 different ministries all looked a little different — different line spacing, different fonts." To maintain its integrity and official image, the Government of B.C. needed a way to not only verify content for quality and accuracy but present news releases and related information in a consistent manner, with standardized templates and formatting.

Disparate Repositories Made Searching Difficult

In addition, every ministry had its own Web site and method of posting Web content, which resulted in inconsistent rendering of news release content into HTML and different, disparate storage, search, and retrieval systems for news releases. Consequently, searching for a particular news release or all releases about a given topic was extremely difficult.

EMC Documentum/Xerox Global Services Solution

After creating the initial list of business functions that would benefit from an enterprise-level content management system, the Queen's Printer issued a public Request For Proposal (RFP) for solutions intended to meet the requirements for all these functions. After evaluating proposals from systems integrators using a variety of leading content management products, the Queen's Printer chose Xerox Global Services, a EMC Documentum® Signature Partner based in Calgary, and its Documentum-based content management solution.

"The Xerox/Documentum proposal met or exceeded every point on our extensive list of requirements," said Burkhardt. These requirements included the flexibility to handle complex, changing relationships between content, authors, and organizations; the capability to provide auditable, secure, centralized control of distributed processes for the creation, modification, reuse, access, and storage of content; scalability in hardware, software, network, repository size, search functionality, and number of users; and the ability to automatically distribute content to the Web and other channels.

Central, Easily Searchable Government News Repository

The Documentum-based news release management system developed and delivered by Xerox Global Services went into production on October 28, 2002. All B.C. Government news releases and related content will be accessible via the Web and stored in a central repository, enabling easy searching by government employees, members of the media, or the general public.

Greater Control through Automated Workflow

Leveraging the automated workflow capabilities of Documentum, Xerox created distinct lifecycles for different types of news releases. A “normal” news release has a specific five-step lifecycle; a template news release used to create multiple releases has a different lifecycle; and a news release originating from an external agency has yet another lifecycle. According to Shay Code, managing principal, Xerox Global Services, “Thanks to Documentum capabilities such as versioning, check in/check out, audit trails, and automatic e-mail notification, we were able to make the news release creation, review, and approval processes much more secure and controlled, as well as more streamlined and efficient. The process no longer relies on the knowledge of just a few employees.”



“With the full-featured, Web-enabled enterprise content management solutions provided by Documentum and Xerox Global Services, we can enable the Government of British Columbia to streamline workflow — from creation, editing, and approval, through production and distribution — of numerous complex documents. News release management is an excellent example.”

Vern Burkhardt, Queen’s Printer for British Columbia and Executive Director,
Product Sales & Services, Ministry of Management Services

Automated, Timed Distribution of Information to Multiple Channels

All releases need to be posted to the Web and routed internally within the government via print and e-mail, but internal distribution lists and media outlets vary by release. Using Documentum Content Rendition Services, Xerox built into the system the capability to automatically render news releases into HTML and post them to the Web. (At the click of a button, authors working in Microsoft Word can instantly see what the news release will look like on the Web.)

Xerox also enhanced the system by building in the flexibility to choose, with a click of a mouse, different distribution options for each news release. Choosing one distribution code, for instance, will automatically send a text rendition of the news release via e-mail and a PDF rendition via fax server to all local media outlets. Another distribution code allows the sender to choose the type of rendition.

Using Documentum Site Caching Services, which will allow PDF and HTML renditions of the news releases to reside outside the firewall, Xerox also built into the system the ability to schedule automatic distribution of a news release at a specific time. This feature will help Public Affairs Bureau when they have an embargoed release — for instance, details of a new budget that cannot be released until the Minister of Finance announces them, or news that must be posted to the Web at exactly 12:01 pm.

Maintaining Quality Image, Consistent Presentation

The new system helps the Government of British Columbia present a consistent, top quality image in all its news releases, whether in print or on the Web. Thanks to XML-based templates, news releases distributed to the Web will have the same look and feel, regardless of which ministry issues them.

Summary

Thanks to the powerful content management capabilities of the Documentum solution, enhanced by the development and integration expertise of Xerox Global Services, the Queen's Printer for British Columbia is able to meet the specialized needs of its customers. Anticipating the success of the news release management application, the Queen's Printer, in partnership with the Ministry of Education, is considering development of the next content management application: automating the workflow associated with the creation and publication of educational curriculum materials for kindergarten through twelfth grades.

About Documentum software from EMC

Documentum software from EMC Corporation includes enterprise content management solutions that enable organizations to unite teams, content, and associated business processes. With a single platform, EMC Documentum software enables people to collaboratively create, manage, deliver, and archive the content that drives business operations, from documents and discussions to e-mail, web pages, records, and rich media. With Documentum enterprise content management, organizations improve their competitive advantage by accelerating time to market, increasing customer satisfaction, and reducing operating costs. For more information, visit www.EMC.com/documentum or call **800.607.9546** (outside the U.S.: +1.925.600.5802).

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