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4 Things You Need to Know About the Real World of Multiple ECM Repositories

Accessing what you need when you need it remains a challenge

> 22% of ECM adopters consider their ECM project to be somewhat stalled, and 21% say they have user adoption issues.

Say what? Why is this? What went wrong along the way?

Here are 4 things you need to know about the real world of multiple ECM repositories.

1 **Like it or not, the multi-repository world is here and it's not going away.**

Both AIIM and Forrester surveys reveal the failure of the "single repository" dream. According to Forrester, 70% of organizations are using two or more ECM solutions, and 29% are using four or more solutions.

AIIM reports that 52% of organizations have three or more ECM/DM/RM systems and 22% have five or more systems. The problem is even more challenging at the largest organizations, with 38% reporting more than five ECM/DM/RM systems in operation. Of course, the information that is *officially* in ECM/DM/RM systems is only *part* of the information management story in most organizations.

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2 **No matter how much we wish it was not so, most work is *still* done in an email client.**

According to Radicati, the average worker sends or receives 122 emails per day. The [Washington Post](#) notes, "Any cubicle drone with a corporate email address knows this well already, of course, but a new report from Adobe describes the problem with some pretty startling numbers. According to its data, which is sourced from a self-reported survey of more than 1,000 white-collar workers in the country, we spend an average of 4.1 hours checking our work email each day. That's 20.5 hours each week, more than 1,000 hours each year, more than *47,000 hours* over a career."

In the real world, the intersection (or more accurately, *the lack thereof*) between point 1(many unconnected repositories) and point 2 (lots of work in the real world is done in an email client) is the source of a lot of the frustration with many ECM systems – and one of the reasons why file shares remain so prevalent.

Almost every knowledge worker has experienced the "two screen" phenomenon – working in email or a business application on one screen, while viewing the information you need from an ECM system on the other. According to AIIM research, file shares are still in widespread use among 52% of companies with at least one ECM system in place.

3 **Lack of a consistent strategy for accessing information in multiple repositories is one reason e-mail remains a key source of risk for many companies.**

Truth be told, "e-mail management" is still an oxymoron for many companies – like "jumbo shrimp." One of the reasons for this is the chaotic way in which knowledge workers access the files and documents that are outside of their email client in order to get work done – and the tendency to embrace shadow IT collaborative solutions because of this lack of access.

Ironically, at the same time that a rising percentage of organizations (increasing from 38% to 59% in the past year) say that compliance and risk are the largest driver for an information management strategy, 39% describe their email management as "chaotic," including the largest organizations. *55% say that email is their big untagged, ungoverned, high-risk content type.*

4 **Part of the reason so much unnecessary *time* is spent *in* e-mail is because it is so difficult to access outside repositories from *within* the e-mail client.**

Poor content management practices result in taking too long to find content (62%), duplicated efforts (52%) and insufficient re-use (46%). 49% of organizations report too many round-robin emails and 40% cite unnecessary printing. All of this is tied to how balkanized access is to core information resources that are needed in order to get work done. Multiple, non-compatible content management environments create significant productivity problems. Most knowledge workers lack a consistent, easy to use, interface for their day-to-day document management embedded in their most frequently used applications.

Most organizations recognize that improved access to their ECM platforms is a key priority – in fact, most organizations have a greater dependency on these ECM systems than is generally recognized. A recent AIIM survey asked, "What proportion of the office/knowledge workers in your organization depend on your collaboration/ECM/workflow systems to do their everyday jobs?" In 24% of organizations *almost all office staff* rely on collaboration/ECM/workflow systems to do their jobs. In 60% of organizations, half or more of employees are reliant.

Lack of integration with other core business systems – especially email – is a key priority for many organizations. In fact, AIIM notes that only 38% of organizations with ECM systems have integrated them with email. The negative impact gets significantly worse as the number of ECM repositories multiples.

Figure 25: Is your ECM/DM system integrated with the following enterprise applications? (N=163)