



Success story

Distell Group

Industry

- Beverages

Solutions

- OpenText™ Content Server
- OpenText™ Extended Collaboration
- OpenText™ Document Management
- OpenText™ Contract Management
- OpenText™ Tempo™ Box

Partner Support

- iFuture

Results



Improved **corporate productivity**



Empowered employees



Provided faster and more consistent adoption of innovation



Distell supports business growth through improved information management

OpenText partners with South African beverage business as 10-year ECM journey transforms corporate collaboration, governance and productivity

"The biggest benefit of Enterprise Content Management (ECM) is productivity. You can now work anywhere—from your laptop, tablet or mobile phone."

Wouter van den Heever
ECM manager
Distell

Distell is Africa's leading producer and marketer of spirits, fine wines, ciders and ready-to-drinks (RTDs). It employs nearly 5,000 people and has an annual turnover in excess of R12,3 billion.

When Distell was formed in 2000 it had 1,700 information workers but due to mainly organic growth and the acquisitions of Bisquit, a French cognac company, and Burn Stewart Distillers, a Scottish whisky producer, that has now grown to 3,000 users spread across over 80 offices, mainly in Southern Africa, but also in eight international locations.

This significant growth resulted in an explosion of unstructured data. More and more information was stored in multiple places creating unconnected silos. Email mailboxes and PST files were used as file storage systems and the situation was soon to become even more complex with Distell's plans to expand its global footprint.

Today, there more than 13 million information assets in the Distell Enterprise Content Management (ECM) platform or repository; with tens of thousands of items being added weekly. Helping make sense of this wealth of corporate intellectual property are OpenText ECM solutions, from archiving to document management and secure file sharing in the cloud. This collaborative, searchable, secure repository enables marketing, sales, operations, production and service functions in one continent to access information from peers across the globe. It has helped create a global business with world class information systems and has fostered a culture of collaboration, innovation and inclusion.

Protecting vital company knowledge

Such strong collaboration was not always the case. Ten years ago, content management in Distell was in disarray. There was little way to collaborate and exchange information across territories, share project

management, market information and innovation, other than through email. Staff moved on from the company, leaving with no proper handover of information, and corporate knowledge was gone forever.

Distell had a growing amount of decentralized data, and specialist teams in remote locations had developed silo cultures. As a business with more than 100 brands, there was little opportunity to share best practices between teams. This impaired the company's efficiency because the knowledge of experienced marketing and brand managers, sales managers and wine makers was not being shared.

Aware of these issues, Distell created an ECM project team in 2004. In the words of Wouter van den Heever, Distell's ECM manager, the department's vision was, as it is today, to ensure ***"Distell's information and knowledge is valued, managed, and shared across the enterprise as a corporate asset."***

Their first task was to create a business case for ECM, and to find business units willing to take part in trials. Distell then needed a technology partner to plan and execute the journey.

OpenText: the only provider to offer a comprehensive solution

Five solution providers were considered, says van den Heever, with OpenText chosen to demonstrate functionality during a technical proof of concept. ***"OpenText was the best option for integrating with our core solutions—SAP and Microsoft,"*** he explained. ***"They also had the clearest vision and their solution was the only one comprehensive enough to include document management collaboration, contract management, email management and archiving."***

"You can easily see where any delays occur where previously they had to phone around to request a status update."

Wouter van den Heever
ECM manager
Distell



The project kicked off with the purchase of 1,700 OpenText Livelink (now OpenText Content Server) licenses through a trusted OpenText partner in South Africa. This initiative would tackle document management, workflow, collaboration and email archiving.

"We didn't go for a 'Big Bang' approach across the whole business. We found departments that wanted to digitize their paper-based processes, or prove good governance, or log ongoing innovations. Quality Management & Research, New Product Development, and the Quality Management departments 'got it'. They didn't need to be sold on the idea."

Threefold process improvement leads to more efficiency

Success in the three pilot departments provided the early impetus. They proved useful advocates in spreading the adoption of ECM throughout the business.

The efficiency of the process that manages the changes to existing products was improved dramatically by means of an electronic workflow. ***"It went from 10% on time to 95% on time,"*** said Sandra Stevenson, the Product Development Process Manager.

"That created attention," said Van den Heever. ***"The whole process is electronically managed, notifications are sent to the next person in line, it's visible and you can generate reports. You can easily see where any delays occur where previously they had to phone around to request a status update."***

For the Operational functions, an electronic solution was developed within OpenText™ Content Server to replace the manual innovations system. Ideas are now electronically logged, reviewed and tracked, where previously they were siloed and untraceable. ***"Each business unit has teams incentivized to come up with new ideas, large or small,"*** he explained.

"Previously these ideas might have been written on a blackboard; now they're in the system. It means a warehouse or production line manager in Johannesburg, for example, can look for ideas used by a similar business unit in Cape Town. Teams are learning from one another."

Secure file sharing in the cloud

Distell has now doubled the number of users collaborating and sharing information. Back in 2004, van den Heever thought this might be a three-year project. It has turned out to be an ongoing journey, now in its tenth year, having grown to include OpenText™ Contract Management, OpenText™ Document Access for SAP® Solutions and, most recently, OpenText™ Tempo™ Box. There are millions of emails archived which are now all accessible and searchable. The system sees 500,000 daily activities, up from 40,000 in 2007.

"As long as the internet evolves, so shall the ECM solution," explained van der Heever. The most recent OpenText initiative, Tempo Box, is a response to such evolution. Concerned that employees were using unsecure third-party applications to store data, Distell wanted to bring them back into the corporate fold for secure file sharing.

"We have a corporate policy, but we also need to recognize user's individual requirements. They want a cloud-based storage application capable of being accessed from any device, anywhere. OpenText Tempo Box is a solution to the Dropbox issue. For security reasons we don't want any Distell business document to be shared through a third-party cloud solution. That's the bottom line."

"Users can go to any knowledge repository they have access to, subscribe to news alerts or follow social feeds. They're not reliant on somebody else mailing them information."

Wouter van den Heever
ECM manager
Distell

Areas for future projects include mobility and eLearning. Distell is testing the OpenText mobile ECM solution and OpenText ECM Everywhere, with plans for sales staff to begin trials on tablets within six months. ***“And, with approximately 30 new staff joining the company each month, there is a pressing need for an eLearning solution too,”*** he added.

Boost to staff productivity

The biggest benefit of ECM, said van den Heever, is productivity. ***“You can now work anywhere and access your information from any device—from your laptop, tablet or mobile phone. Since we upgraded to OpenText Content Server version 10 in 2012, the quality of our search facility has improved dramatically. You can now search by document type, by user, by subject, and narrow it down to specific locations.”***

In business terms, this provides continuity for brand management teams, best practice is disseminated quickly, and there is a readily available library of corporate documentation for any topic. ***“If you want a business plan for the launch of a Two Oceans wine into Canada, it’s there. We have it. No need to phone around.”***

Another big benefit, he said, is the sense of employee empowerment and this ability to share and access useful information enables staff to work more effectively for the good of the business. ***“Users can make the ECM solution their own. They can go to any knowledge repository they have access to, subscribe to news alerts or follow social feeds. They’re not reliant on somebody else mailing them information.”***

About iFuture

iFuture Consulting is a focused IT consulting company that specialises in Enterprise Content Management (ECM) services, as well as SAP-related services for the South African market. Founded in 2007 and with a vision to become the most respected information management partner in Southern Africa, iFuture Consulting forms part of the iFuture Group of companies. iFuture is an official member of the OpenText Partner Program for SAP Competence.



About OpenText

OpenText, The Information Company, enables organizations to gain insight through market leading information management solutions, on-premises or in the cloud. For more information about OpenText (NASDAQ: OTEX, TSX: OTEX) visit opentext.com.

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