



Macmillan Publishing

**Enterprise Content
Management with Alfresco**



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Seed Case Study: Macmillan

Business Overview

Macmillan is one of the largest and best known international publishing houses in the world, characterised by academic and professional, educational, fiction and non-fiction publishing of the highest quality. Well-known brands owned by Macmillan include Macmillan Education, Nature, Palgrave Macmillan, Pan and Picador. Macmillan chose Seed to implement content management within the Australian group. This included Web Content Management for Flexibooks, Macmillan Educations custom publishing solution and Document Management for Pan author contracts and IT documents. “We had an obvious problem with information management due to the large number of individual publishing businesses within the group. We needed a central information repository for documents and a more efficient way of managing website changes” said Angela Scully, IT Manager at Macmillan Australia.

The Challenge

Macmillan Publishing is made up of many smaller publishing businesses all operating under the parent structure but independently of one another for management and financials. The parent group needed to find an ECM solution that had a low TCO but also could meet the many different requirements and processes the group had. It was also important that the solution could be rolled out seamlessly to one business at a time with minimum change management required.

It was determined that the Flexibooks group website would be implemented as the first cab off the rank for Web Content Management. This had to be achieved in a 6 week timeframe due to the upcoming start of the new academic year. The solution had to allow Flexibooks publishers to create sample books taken from their library of curriculum units and present them on their website as an embedded sample book for customer review. Reuse was an imperative with the intention of building a web parts library for inclusion in other Macmillan sites.

In parallel a Document Management project was also undertaken within Pan Macmillan for author contract management. This required that contracts could be managed as a whole for an author during the lifetime of the relationship with Macmillan, in some cases up to 50 years. A contract had to be treated as a virtual document with the ability to associate all amendments and attachments to the contract during its lifecycle. Another important aspect was document find-ability through enhanced searching using metadata, tagging and full text.

Why Seed was Chosen

Seed were introduced to Macmillan by Ingres who were providing the database layer for the Alfresco solution. Seed were chosen following a number of presentations to Macmillan. “Seed were chosen for a number of reasons, they obviously knew a lot about Alfresco, were both Ingres and Alfresco partners and most importantly proved to us that they had had a well defined delivery methodology” said Angela Scully, IT Manager, Macmillan Australia. Another important consideration was that Macmillan were looking for someone who understood the business challenge when implementing ECM within the organization. In an ever increasingly tough publishing environment Macmillan recognized that there were lots of productivity gains to be made by using standard ECM functions but needed help in understanding their application. “We needed a trusted advisor as well as an implementation partner which is why we chose Seed” said Angela Scully, IT Manager Macmillan Publishing.

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Project Highlights

The project was broken down into three distinct deliverables, the implementation of Alfresco within the Macmillan environment, a WCM managed website for Flexibooks and a contract management solution for Pan.

The implementation needed to include the Web Content Management suite, Document Management suite and also access for users to content from a simple shared drive and Microsoft Office. FTP access was also necessary for web developers. The system was installed and configured to enable these services. The security subsystem was also configured to allow single-sign-on from all interfaces using chaining of NTLM and Alfresco authentication for authentication and ldap for user management. This gave all users access to alfresco without having to enter passwords. It also ensured that Macmillan users could continue to use network drives but the information would now be stored in a central repository with all of the power of ECM functions such as versioning, archiving ,etc, taking place unbeknownst to the users.

The WCM project was delivered using SCRUM with the full participation of Flexibooks to drive requirements and prioritise deliverables. This worked really well, with Tess Maloney, the Publisher from Flexibooks, paying particular attention to the delivery methodology in order to apply it back into her own business. The solution used Alfresco forms to allow Flexibook Editors to create and edit all pages on the website and manage the publishing process using an approval workflow. The solution also ensured that Flexibooks could roll back to a snapshot of the website at a particular time. The website was developed using SpringMVC in order to handle the feedback forms, such as Contact Us, submitted by interested bodies. Seed also set up the Web application infrastructure for Macmillan so that Macmillan could start to delivery websites from its own servers rather than relying on hosted services.

The Author Contracts solution used Alfresco Document Management to allow Pan users to manage author contracts. Following a series of requirements workshops a solution was designed that relied heavily on metadata. Aspects were modeled for classification of documents using properties while associations were used to relate documents to a master contract. Alfresco Share and Explorer were changed to allow users to apply property values to documents and associate them together. An advanced search was developed to allow users to find Pan contracts using custom metatdata, fulltext or tags.

Benefits and Outcomes

Macmillan now have an enterprise level ECM in place that allows them to manage their Documents and Websites. “Now that we have a templated wcm solution with Flexibooks we can move more of our websites into Alfresco” said Angela Scully, IT Manager, Macmillan Publishing. The Author Management solution allows Pan to administer the author contracts more effectively. Seed has also helped the IT department to manage all of their documents within Alfresco. Now that the platform is solidly in place Macmillan are looking to capitalize on it. Seed have been working with the Finance department to help them manage all customer contracts and are carrying out analysis on the Flexibooks book publishing process to automate it where possible using Alfresco workflow. “Seed are a valued and effective service provider that we will continue to use as we push Alfresco ECM into the rest of the business” said Angela Scully, IT Manager Macmillan Publishing.