

case study

The Royal Australasian College of Physicians educates members with the help of Alfresco Software

Industry
Education

Solution
Document Management

Challenge

The Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) is a diverse and energetic organisation. The RACP trains, educates and advocates on behalf of more than 13,500 physicians — often referred to as medical specialists — and 5,000 trainees, across Australia and New Zealand.

The RACP is committed to the training and assessment of doctors who have completed both a medical degree and an internship at a hospital, and who wish to practise as physicians by undergoing further training in order to specialise in a specific area of medicine. The RACP oversees their training, including placements in hospitals, and written and clinical examinations as well as providing a program of continuing professional development for Fellows of the RACP.

With an immensely valuable collection of data to be shared with members, from professional training to conference materials, case studies and multimedia, the RACP needed to ensure this information could be efficiently organised, stored and shared across its membership base. The organisation also faced another challenge — a significant proportion of its members were somewhat technology-averse, so it needed to find a content management solution that would gain the support of its members.

Solution

The RACP's first experience with Alfresco was to assist with the loading and storing of a number of conference videos, but that quickly evolved into working with Alfresco as a collaborative tool with the potential to enable its 200 plus committees to conveniently access videos and session notes for their meetings.

After trialling Alfresco's Community Edition for nearly 12 months, the RACP deployed the supported Alfresco Enterprise Edition 3.3.4, and today the RACP uses Alfresco to support a number of key business applications, including Video Management, My Resource Management and Collaboration.

Delivering training lectures to members on a weekly basis using video conferencing, the RACP is able to record the content from these live sessions and load them into



The Royal Australasian
College of Physicians

Benefits

- Consolidated data that can be accessed easily and conveniently
Well received by users, even those previously technology averse
- Ease of use and ease of management
- Ongoing support — expertise and assistance to fix any problems that might arise
- Opportunity to further evolve — build a solid document management strategy that will see College resources leveraged to their full potential

Alfresco for management throughout their lifecycle. These video resources, along with supporting content such as slide packs and podcasts, are also made available on the RACP's website served directly from Alfresco using WebDav, one of the many file sharing protocols supported by Alfresco.

Through the My Resources Gateway portal, Alfresco also serves as a content repository for educational resources developed by the RACP. These are added to Alfresco and made available through the My Resources Gateway web pages on the RACP portal. Any content in the repository can be flagged to be displayed on the Gateway. Additionally, RACP categorises content into a medical taxonomy and adds tags and keywords to the content. Alfresco's CMIS REST services are then used to present the content to the users on the Gateway and allow physicians to find relevant content by searching keywords, tags or through the taxonomy hierarchy.

RACP committees are also able to use Alfresco Share, Alfresco's team collaboration product, to collaborate and share information via a site for the interest area in question. Created by the RACP's IT department, the sites each have a dedicated business administrator and, where possible, site members are added by inviting a group that has been mapped from LDAP into Alfresco. This allows the RACP to manage the membership of a site via eDirectory and Active Directory.

Each site is configured with the pages that are deemed important for the site. For example, for those sites focused on retaining documents from meetings, they may contain a Document Library and Wiki page only.

There are currently over 100 sites at RACP and the number is growing rapidly as RACP users increasingly find Alfresco Share Collaboration a highly valuable and easy to use tool.

To manage the effective integration of Alfresco Enterprise into the business, the RACP enlisted the help of Seed Information Management, a boutique consultancy providing services for the implementation of Information Management systems and specialising in open source solutions. The RACP acknowledges that working with Seed helped to ensure the project's success and it maintains a strong ongoing relationship with the Alfresco partner.

Conclusion

Through Alfresco, each and every one of the RACPs members and trainees has an opportunity to access an extremely valuable bank of knowledge, expertise and insights.

Gaining the support of less technology savvy members was made easier by Alfresco's ease of use. Once introduced to the technology, and with little training, RACP members were easily able to learn how to use the solution, and the software is now servicing more requests than ever.

"Our goal was always to encourage greater collaboration based on sharing the combined knowledge, expertise and insights of our members. Now that we've been able to capture that, our focus is very much about efficiently managing it so that College resources — our most valuable assets - can be leveraged by members to their full potential," said Debra Adams, IT Transition Manager, Finance & Support Services for The Royal Australasian College of Physicians.

The RACP recognises that its all well and good retaining information and documents and filing them away, but their true value lies in the ability to access, share and utilise that collateral effectively and efficiently. As such, the next challenge for the College is to work with Seed to implement a solid document management strategy that will enable users to work even 'smarter'. Eventually this will also incorporate iPhone and iPad applications currently in development.

"Overall, Alfresco Enterprise has been well received by management and members of the RACP because it better enables access to professional development resources, which is in the end what the College is all about. Key internal stakeholders, including the CEO and leadership team, and our body of members have all been very impressed by its features and capabilities," said Adams.

“ We are all about striving for excellence in health and medical care and promoting an industry culture around lifelong learning and quality performance, for the benefit of our members, and ultimately the patients they care for. Alfresco is actively helping us to achieve this goal. ”

— Debra Adams, IT Transition Manager, Finance & Support Services for The Royal Australasian College of Physicians