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Real challenges, real solutions, technology for the real world

Dow Corning Improves Accuracy, Customer Satisfaction with EMC's Documentum Software

Keeping documentation current for more than 7,000 products is no small feat, especially if you're dealing with multiple language versions and instructions that differ depending on where a product is manufactured. As recently as the late 1990s, silicon-based technology manufacturer Dow Corning had this exact unenviable problem with a twist: the company also had to meet government material safety regulations, adding to the gravity of the situation.

The company's solution at the time was manual document management. Product literature was stored in giant file cabinets as well as a select few that were on the Web. Those files on the Web had to be

"This adds tremendous value and it frees up human hands for priceless things like adding value to content and analyzing it."

Indeed, the Documentum integration has completely transformed the way Dow Corning employees do their jobs, as well as the entire customer experience. Previously, when orders came in, procurement specialists needed to manually pull product documentation and instructions from file cabinets. This was time consuming and inefficient. Today, orders come in and procurement specialists go to an online repository for the most up-to-date digitized documentation. This information is integrated with the customer order.

"The speed is important, but so is improved accuracy," says Horcher.

> **Every time we needed to make a change to the Web site it took two weeks. Using EMC's Documentum software, a change hits the Web site in less than ten minutes.**
> —Ann-Marie Horcher, Information Specialist, Dow Corning

updated manually one-by-one when changes occurred. This process often took up to two weeks.

Looking to automate and streamline document management as well as improve customer satisfaction, Dow Corning implemented an EMC® Documentum® Enterprise Content Management solution that includes Web content management and eRoom® collaboration software. The software enabled the creation of 22 worldwide document repositories that store and disseminate HTML, XML, graphics, and traditional documents, while its workflow capabilities make routing and approvals automated so changes and updates happen quickly and accurately. This means that documents that go out to customers or onto the Web site are the most recent versions available.

"We sold our management by putting together proof-of-concept," says Ann-Marie Horcher, an Information Specialist with Dow Corning. "They said, 'Show us an error on the site.' We found one, corrected it, and the corrected content appeared on the Web site ten minutes later," she says.

"Equipment configurations can change depending on which plant a product is manufactured in. Some plants make big batches, some make small. The instructions, then, would change just like they would change if you're baking a cake in one big pan versus two smaller pans."

Self-service is another benefit. Previously, customers would call in to request data and product sheets. Those sheets were pulled from the repository and either faxed or mailed to customers. This meant it could take anywhere from four hours to several days for them to receive their requests. Today, everything lives on the Web site, so customers can search for and download product sheets whenever they are needed.

"We've really eliminated a lot of non-value steps. Managing documents is easier, and it pays off for our customers, who can now figure out quickly which product is right for them, speeding up the order and fulfillment process as well," says Horcher. "Delivery times have shrunk while customer satisfaction has improved."

DOW CORNING AT-A-GLANCE

Dow Corning, with 10,000 employees worldwide, is a global manufacturer of more than 7,000 products and services including performance-enhancing silicon-based products.

Business Challenge

Updating content on two Web sites as well as streamlining internal processes and access—for employees and customers—to the most up-to-date product information and specification sheets.

Technology Solution

EMC's Documentum Enterprise Content Management.

Payoff

Customers have self-service options; in the past it took four hours before documents were emailed or faxed. Product delivery times have shrunk and at the same time the company doesn't need to keep as much inventory in stock. Finally, changes to the Web site can happen in ten minutes rather than two weeks.

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