



CONTENT MIGRATION PART I THE STRATEGY

Why Content is The Next Stop in Your Digital Journey

Introduction

Since the onset of the IT revolution, what has mesmerized us above all else is the ‘Technology bit’ of IT. This is hardly surprising: the pace of change was so rapid, we barely had time to catch our breath. Technology destroyed and created jobs and trampled over famous brands as start-ups launched by nerds and hippies became multi-billion dollar businesses. Overnight, products we did not know we needed became indispensable to our lives.

All the while, however, we were creating, sharing, copying, storing and consuming content – the ‘Information bit’ of IT. Solutions for organizing and archiving this content were created on the fly, and everyone seemed cool with that. It is as if we fooled ourselves into believing that just because we weren’t stuffing real files into real folders into real filing cabinets we could not possibly be making a mess.

How times have changed – and changed so fast, like everything in IT. We now know that we were wrong to think of Information as somehow playing second fiddle to Technology. The crucial role that content plays in our lives – socially, politically and economically – looms larger every day. As individuals, we have some tricky decisions to make regarding where we draw the line between our ‘real’ selves and our lives as digital content. But for organizations, there are no blurred lines; content is as much a part of who they are as the service they offer or the products they make. Organizations that fail to come to terms with this – and act on it – will fast render themselves uncompetitive and obsolete.

Fortunately, most organizations are taking action. As part of their Digital Transformation, they are beginning to think strategically about their content. This whitepaper wants to explore the role of content migration in that process of re-thinking, re-positioning and re-invigorating what is one of the valuable assets of any organization: its content.

Free, Fix and Know your content

Your thinking around content should be framed by three basic questions. Is your content standing in your way? Is your content (still) relevant? Are you making the most of your content? We need to look at these core questions in more detail.

Free your content

There is a tipping point in every organization where content fragmentation begins to hamper the operation of every part of the business. Stored in different systems, apps or business processes, content becomes a roadblock to business initiatives that call for agility of execution. Content stored in silos perpetuates silo thinking, and you want to see a cultural change. Business needs to be able to (re)use content without restraints; content can never be the limiting factor. You need to free your content.

Fix your content

There is no point having fast and unimpeded access to content that you no longer need or

want. Systems are polluted with duplicate content, irrelevant content, draft versions of relevant content and so on – your suffering from ROT (Redundant, Obsolete, Trivial) content. For most organizations, a big cloud of content pollution hangs over their content landscape. Cleaning your content makes the content landscape easier to oversee and navigate, increasing its value and applicability. If you want your agile business to be supported by a lean content environment, you need to fix your content.


Know your content

Content fragmentation and pollution *hide* content from the business. This is a commercial hindrance, obviously, but it also interferes with compliance and governance. In other words, content has strategic ramifications. A lean and clear content landscape allows business to make sound long-term decisions based on the value of its content, and help it define and execute a content roadmap for its digital transformation. Most organizations need to pro-actively *reacquaint* themselves with their content because you cannot drive your business forward if you do not know your content.

FREE 
YOUR CONTENT

-  Launch business initiatives without restraints
-  Bridge content silos

FIX 
YOUR CONTENT

-  Reduce content pollution
-  Increase value and applicability of content

KNOW 
YOUR CONTENT

-  Increase compliance and governance
-  Create a lean content landscape

Understanding the ‘why’: the case for content migration

Content migration is one of the ways you have to Free, Fix and Know your content, and stop content pollution. There are different drivers though for content migration as an indispensable step towards achieving a coherent content landscape. We list the main ones below:

1. *Content is fragmented, inaccessible.* There is no point having great content if it cannot be easily retrieved. Processes and content that are tucked away in silos need to be unlocked and made accessible in a variety of ways. In some cases, this means integrating different applications, in other cases it means moving content from a silo into a more open environment.
2. *You updated your systems.* You have invested in a new, more sophisticated system to keep pace with your ambitions for the organization. Or the new system was more or less imposed upon you by users who hated the clumsy and outdated experience you were offering them. Whatever the background to this new system, you have to get your content and data into it. Migration projects can be long and tedious, and risk derailing your implementations. Making migration part of your implementation plan is crucial to business success.
3. *Compliance.* Regulations change all the time, triggering changing needs for storing and securing content. This, in turn, causes the need for migrations (of subsets) of content to different systems that are more compliant. Maintaining compliance data while moving your content is critical, and losing content or its associated metadata will immediately break compliance rules. Managing a migration project in these circumstances is not simple, and requires good support, best practice and reporting.
4. *Mergers and acquisitions.* A newly merged organization cannot reasonably work with two sets of business systems. This means some of the existing systems will eventually be decommissioned, and the content stored in them migrated to the lead platform. Saving what is of value in these old systems, and getting rid of what is not is critical to maintaining a lean and clean business environment.

Part I The Strategy

5. *Declutter.* With the best will in the world, if your organization has been around for a while, your content landscape will be more like a jungle. The all-too-common fragmentation of where content is stored and duplicated – many, many times over – slows down your business and irritates your users. A migration is a great opportunity to declutter your content.
6. *IT needs to replace legacy systems.* Most organizations are lumbered with legacy systems that IT has to replace sooner or later – and the sooner the better! But maintaining business continuity and not losing the valuable content stored in those outdated systems means you will need to start a migration project.
7. *IT consolidation.* All organization accumulate different versions of the same software, different applications for the same task and software licenses that no one uses. Consolidation of your application stack is probably pretty high on your agenda. For such a project to be successful, you need to have a sound strategy in place to migrate content to the right systems while cleaning up some of the mess created by the sprawl of applications.
8. *Modernizing IT.* The speed of innovation in IT shows no signs of slowing down. While this opens up many new opportunities for Business and IT alike, it means you need to keep up with the Joneses, move into the cloud and get rid of that old hardware and software. While there is plenty of advice on how to make the cloud part of your enterprise infrastructure, making sure your content scales up and down as easily as your server infrastructure is something easily overlooked, yet at least as important.

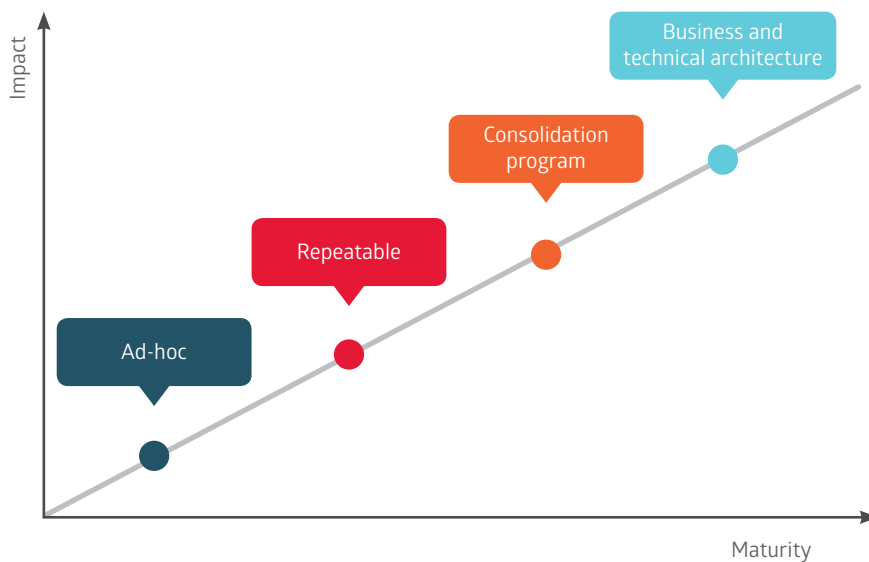
For most organizations, these issues will sound familiar, and often, they will have been around for a long time. Organizational inertia may have set in. Is change really necessary? With your content trapped in a maze of systems and processes, you know it is. And calling out the underlying business drivers will help you build the business case to achieve that change.

Understanding the ‘what next’: take stock of where you stand

After calling out the business drivers for our content strategy, we need to start building a content-specific Digital Transformation roadmap. A roadmap helps us to determine how we get From Here To There. So let’s look at what Here and There look like.

How close are you to content maturity? Some organizations are just embarking on this journey and sit near the bottom of the graph shown below. For organizations in what we have termed the Ad Hoc phase, content has a negative business value – in other words, the polluted content, its fragmentation and the misalignment between Business and IT are costing you money. Content is a “profit disabler”, you might say. Clearly, we are a long way removed from the mature

Content maturity model



Business value
Operational
Content is raw data
Burden/cost

Organisation
No alignment business - IT
Reactive
Incidental project

Technology
Ad-hoc tools or manual
Polluted content

Business value
Tactical
Content is raw data
Standardized purchase

Organisation
Partial alignment business - IT
Reactive
Incidental project

Technology
Preferred tools
Clean content

Business value
Tactical
Content is value
Investment

Organisation
Partial alignment business - IT
Proactive
Roadmap

Technology
Fixed toolset
Unified content

Business value
Strategic
Content is business asset
Profit enabler

Organisation
Full alignment business - IT
Best Practice
Policies and governance

Technology
Content services
Smart content

Part I The Strategy

state where content drives profitability. What needs to happen in order for you to get there?

In the Repeatable phase of the journey, the thinking about content has started. You see the value of clean content, Business and IT are in dialogue and you have addressed your haphazard approach to content technology. However, this still falls well short of Consolidation; you have still not made the all-important step where you insist that content is valuable. Two crucial decisions flow from this pro-active premise: you commit to investing in change and you have a roadmap for this change. Your project will enable you, finally, to convert your vast reserves of content into a business asset, that will drive productivity and profit.

What this project might look like for your organization is the subject of our next section.

Understanding the 'how': what is the best content intervention for your organization?

Now that we've called out the business drivers for our change project, and have assessed where we are and where we need to go, the next step is figuring out how to get there. There are several roads you can take.

Content migration

In the use cases, we saw a lot of scenarios where **content migration** was the best option. This involves a one-to-one migration of content from one system to another, although some migration projects are considerably more complex.

There are many ways to carry out a **content migration**. Many organizations do this manually, or semi-manually with the help of a third-party solution. Bolder – some might say, more foolhardy – organizations build their own migration tool, but such projects have a way of spiralling out of control. If you want to use a third-party solution but feel you may need help using it, there are many consultants out there who offer that help. Organizations need to weight their options carefully. Many are going for Migration-as-a-Service (MaaS),

where a vendor takes care of all the aspects of the project, often at a fixed price with a guaranteed result. The list of source systems supported by your MaaS vendor will of course be finite, but should include OpenText Content Server, OpenText Documentum, OpenText eDOCS, IBM FileNet, Oracle WCC, HP Trim, SharePoint 2003-2016, Meridio, Objective, Alfresco and Files share.

*If you would like to know more about the content migration options available to you, download our whitepaper **Five Approaches to Consolidate and Transfer Content**. For detailed information on MaaS, download our whitepaper **What to Expect from a Migration-as-a-Service Project***

Content integration

Content migration is indispensable for most organizations, but migrating all content to just *one* standardized repository will in all likelihood never happen – although many developers have tried and failed. The reality is that every organization has valuable content stored in multiple repositories (cloud applications, legacy ECM systems, WCM, collaboration tools, PIM and DAM) and that the path to all this content involves searching and launching many different applications. This is frustrating for you, and often translates into a maddening experience for your users and customers.

But what if you could optimize your content by having access to it – all of it – from any application? This is called **content integration**.

Such an integration solution ought to be intuitive and easy to read and guarantee a single consistent and maintainable API across all systems. You want an API that can be used on multiple levels within your business application: the UI layer, the business layer, and the data layer. This gives you the flexibility to add content services in multiple ways to your application, creating better customer experiences.

Federated migration

A hybrid option is **federated migration**, which combines content integration with migration. This is ideal for organizations with a complex IT landscape and business processes that require zero interruption. You simply start by integrating legacy content repositories into your business applications. There is no downtime for systems and end-users can start working with the new architecture from day one. This gives you time to slowly phase out legacy content systems and migrate relevant content.

Not all vendors have the technology to offer federated migration, but we leverage our integration solution to enable real-time access from the new environment to the content that in reality still sits in the old repositories. The advantage of this approach is zero business interruption; lengthy migrations are taken off the critical path of your project.

Content clean up

As we saw on our Content Maturity graph, one of the first things you have to do if you want to unlock the potential of your content is to clean it up. Systems are clogged up with duplicate content, irrelevant content, draft versions of relevant content and so on. Cleaning up your content helps you to see the forest for the trees, which helps you to create a clear line of sight for your digital transformation project.

You may clean up before you do anything else. Frequently, organizations **declutter** their contents as part of a migration project. This makes perfect sense: who wants to spend time and money rehousing content that belongs in the trashcan?

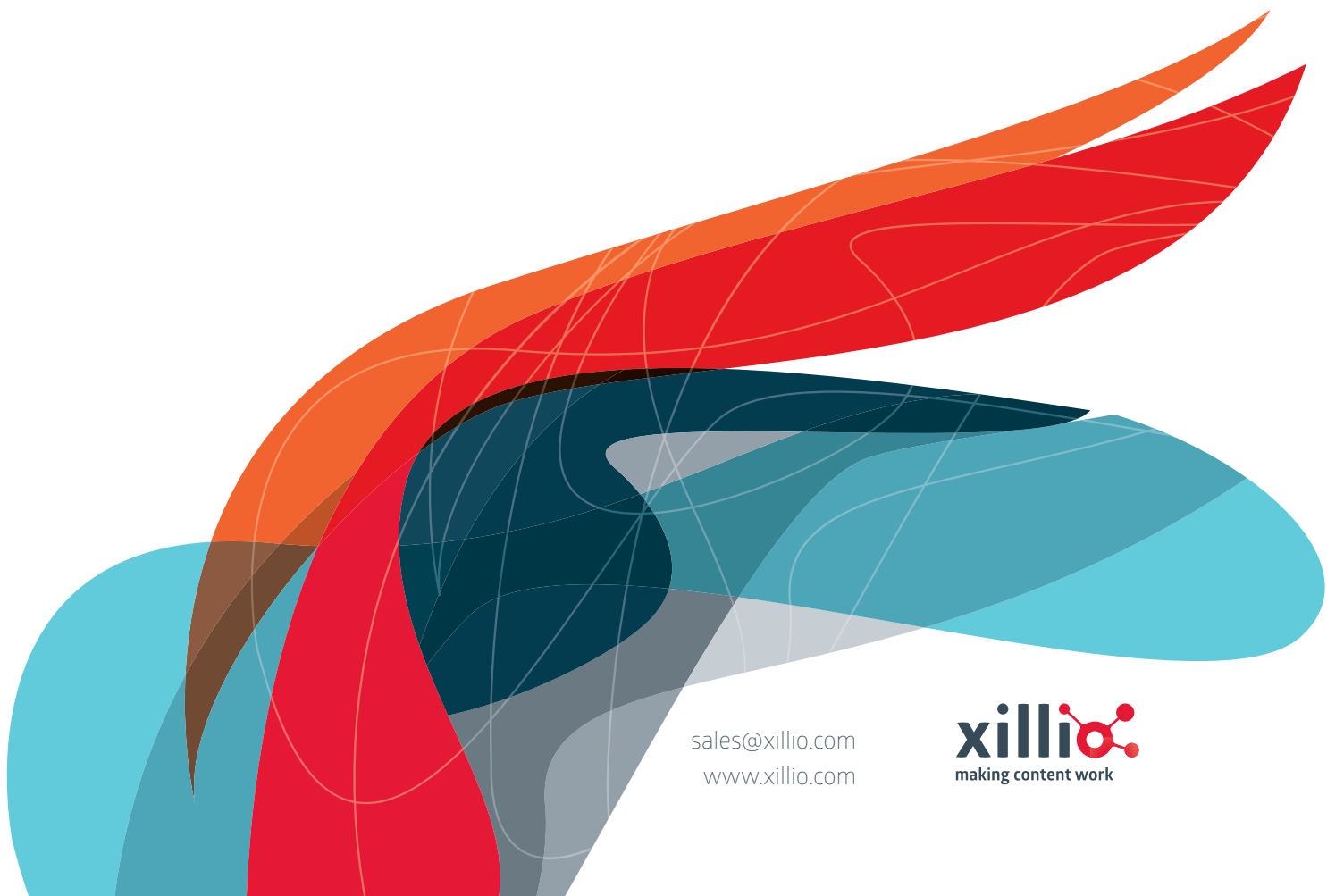
Understanding your project: do you go it alone?

Content is a resource almost as invaluable to an organization as its human capital and it is the contention of this whitepaper that a very large majority of organizations has not yet acted on this fact. We discover every day that most organizations are still underestimating the power of their content. “If IBM knew what it knows, it could rule the world” – this insight is relevant not just to IBM, but to all organizations. It also informs all our thinking and technology around content.

We believe the business case for content is irrefutable. Knowing what content you have, knowing what is valuable (and what is not) and knowing you can access it securely and without constraint is a profound enabler. Many organizations have grasped the nettle and are embarking on content projects under their own steam. Many abandon such projects half-way, having found them more challenging than they had anticipated. Others have decided that our vision for content aligns with theirs, and are taking us along with them on their journey to content maturity.

As we saw above, we have broken down our approach into three core ambitions: free your content, fix your content, know your content. Whether you go it alone or get help re-structuring your content, these overlapping ambitions ought to be what guides you on your way.

In our next whitepaper, ***Five Approaches to Consolidate and Transfer Content***, we explore what type of content migration is the best fit for your organization



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xillio 
making content work