

Documentum Who? A Peek Into EMC's New ECM



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It's been a long time coming, but EMC's new Enterprise Content Management (ECM) solution is within sight.

What's still being called "Project Horizon" for now isn't like anything you've ever seen before, according to Rohit Ghai, president of EMC's Enterprise Content Division (ECD). It breaks the existing mold for today's ECM offerings to approach content management in an entirely new way.

"Sometimes you have to shape the market rather than to be shaped by it," said Ghai.

Shaking Things Up

That's a bold statement to make, and a brave one as well, especially when you consider that EMC's current ECM offering, Documentum, is a market frontrunner according to Forrester, Gartner, Ovum and just about any analyst you want to ask. It's generally thought that market leaders can't innovate the way startups can because they have to protect their existing products and market share.

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Yet even though Documentum license revenues continue to grow, Ghai somehow convinced EMC CEO Joe Tucci and EMC President David Goulden to let ECD build something brand new, completely from scratch, that aims to disrupt the market, and therefore itself. That's not say that existing Documentum users will — or should — dump their existing investments. Documentum and the products that emerge for Project Horizon will be “better together” according to Ghai.

But if you're starting from ground zero ... ?

Let's Take a Look at Project Horizon

All of that being said, what did we learn about Project Horizon?

1. It consists of two components: Apps and a Platform. Some Apps will be ready by EMC World in May (but we'll point you to one you can check out today, so read on).
2. Its platform will be Cloud Foundry based. For those who aren't familiar with Cloud Foundry, it's an open source Platform as a Service (PaaS) offering that some, like Constellation Research analyst Holger Mueller, say will be (or already is) the de facto PaaS standard. Another way of thinking about it is [Cloud 2.0](#), where platform-as-a-service offerings work across multiple vendors and clouds.
3. It's at the edge of innovation. This we heard not from Ghai, but from Sam Ramji, CEO of the [vendor independent Cloud Foundry Foundation](#), which envisions a world of computing that is ubiquitous and flexible (in other words, that supports public, private, and hybrid application environments); portable and interoperable (enables users to move their applications wherever they need to go); and vibrant and growing (underlying a massive ecosystem of applications and developers based on an efficient marketplace).
4. It's not designed as a file repository or a place to keep your content in the cloud. Instead you'll be able to work with your content in place whether it's in Documentum, One Drive, Box ... you name it.
5. It's hybrid.
6. It's content-centric. EMC isn't flying the buzzy collaboration flag here. “We don't want to confuse the market,” said Ghai.
7. It's user-centric vs. Documentum which was, at least originally, built for IT. “The design point is the business” said Ghai. User experience comes first, even if some functionality has to be sacrificed.
8. The initial apps are vertical and were built for easy configuration. Though their names could still be changed, here's what's currently on deck: SNAP for distribution and capture; JAZZ for collaboration and authoring; ASCENT for review and Approval; and [EXCHANGE](#) for sharing content with external parties. (Notice the link on EXCHANGE? It's in beta right now).

A Market Maker for the Digital Era?

When Project Horizon is officially unveiled, it will be the newest ECM offering on the market and one that has been built specifically for the digital era. Whether it will impact the modern enterprise the same way that Documentum did a quarter of a century ago has yet to be seen, but Ghai certainly seems bullish.

“We know the market and we’re innovating on our own axis,” said Ghai.

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