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Micro Focus is using content management and AI data analytics to help enterprises manage new work practices

Omdia view

Summary

Micro Focus held its Universe digital event in March 2022. As a very large company with multiple product lines, Micro Focus had separate keynote presentations for each technology area it plays in. The information management and governance (IM&G) keynote was presented by Scott Richards, General Manager of the IM&G business unit. He used his presentation to talk about some of the ways in which customers have been using Micro Focus IM&G technologies to help remote workers during the difficult times caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The IM&G business unit comprises six portfolios, including 75 products with more than \$400 million in revenue. Its focus is AI powered unstructured analytics, data protection, and backup, content management, unified endpoint management, and collaboration solutions.

Micro Focus IDOL is helping enterprises to gain insights from content as working practices change

Omdia IT Enterprise Insights, 2022, shows that artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML), when embedded in data analytics solutions, are important to organizations, with 66.8% putting it in the highest two categories. These are technologies that are required to help organizations derive value from content and data. AI and ML data analytics is an important area for Micro Focus, through IDOL, its AI-powered search and analytics engine, which is embedded throughout its IM&G portfolio.

Richards named a number of areas where AI and ML data analytics have been used, including law enforcement, media analysis, government intelligence, chat bots, natural language processing, and dark data insights. He acknowledged that the market changes created by the pandemic have created opportunities across the portfolios as employees are working differently, and data needs to be utilized and accessed in new ways.

Examples of how companies are using IDOL include Bloomberg, who connects the world's decision makers to accurate information about financial markets. IDOL analyses 200 billion messages per day, including news articles, emails, and trading alerts across 2.1 million taxonomy nodes with a guaranteed two second alert response. Additionally, it provides Bloomberg with real-time messaging across 350,000 multilingual user terminals, taxonomic data categorization search and alert, and conceptual cluster and data heat maps. Another example is a use case with Jaguar TCS racing where video and speech analytics is one way in which IDOL is being used across a range of data sources including those generated within the race car capture as well as analysis of all aspects of the media and communications that surround the race. The gathered data provides valuable insights.

IDOL is one of the most advanced AI and ML data analytics tools, and Micro Focus has a team dedicated to finding new and innovative ways in which AI and ML can be applied to provide organizations with valuable insights. The technology has always been associated as being a technology working in the background, rather than an application with a fancy UI, and as such it has been embedded in a large number of applications across a wide range of use cases where it is being used in areas such as content analytics, e-discovery, facial recognition, audio fingerprinting, audio image analysis, auto tagging, and chat bots. Micro Focus is continuously developing new use cases for IDOL, which will increase and expand the ways in which AI can be applied and should ensure that IDOL remains a leading AI and ML data analytics tool.

Micro Focus helps with the secure management of content through its large portfolio of content management-related products

One of the most effective ways of showcasing products is through use cases and Richards used a number to highlight some of the applications within the IM&G portfolio that are related to content. One of these, Filr, which is an enterprise file sync and share product, is used by a G7 parliament to securely share documentation and commissions between its elected members. A European media organization is in the process of implementing Filr to enable remote employees and third parties to securely share files. In healthcare, an EU nation's capital city health system uses Filr to securely share documents with patients. The international criminal court, The Hague, uses ControlPoint for classification and analysis of unstructured data. The data is then managed and archived throughout its lifecycle via Micro Focus Content Manager.

April sees the release of the next generation Content Manager solution, which provides a compliance and privacy companion to Microsoft 365. Included is Teams integration and a new mobile app with a modernized user interface and a cloud ready platform, with support for the in-place management of Microsoft 365, SharePoint, and Teams. Also included in the set of Microsoft 365 enhancements is One Drive integration, which supports multi-user collaboration in real-time. Other enhancements include SharePoint integration improvements such as the import and export of management settings to help accelerate multiple site configuration, and a Content Manager statistics overview page for all sites and subsites, which shows metrics on SharePoint items that are managed or archived for each site. Another new release, Filr 5.0, provides new features around security, such as multi-factor authentication (MFA) for external users, data loss prevention (DLP) policies, and user experience improvements in the web client.

Integration with Microsoft 365 and SharePoint are vital for any content management vendor, as they are products that are used by a majority of enterprises. Microsoft is a competitor as SharePoint and Office 365 can be used as a content services platform, however; this is typically at a divisional level within enterprises and only generally as the corporate content management system within mid-market and smaller companies. SharePoint is often used as a starter content management system, with organizations migrating to a specialist platform, such as Micro Focus Content Manager, as their requirements grow. By providing tight integration with, and features that support Microsoft 365 and SharePoint, Micro Focus is strengthening its own position as an alternative for organizations that outgrow the Microsoft offerings, particularly with its focus on security, compliance, and privacy.

Micro Focus has enhanced its cloud offering with Content Manager Cloud

The keynote also included an announcement of the new software-as-a-service (SaaS)-based content management solution called Content Manager Select, which serves as a one-stop cloud-based managed tool. This new offering includes content management software and a SaaS model that lowers the TCO, offers flexibility, and is part of Micro Focus's cloud-first strategy. It provides a cloud-based fully managed environment with a subscription model. Micro Focus has partnered with Citadel, a leader in cloud-hosted managed services to provide the SaaS solution worldwide.

Content Manager Cloud pricing and licensing have been simplified. It is a single all-in-one product with add-on modules and management tools bundled with it, which means that enterprises no longer need to rip and replace an entire enterprise content management platform if they are upgrading. It should also remove some of the complexity involved in implementing an extensive platform. By offering many of the features as add-ons, organizations can deploy just the modules they require, and retain existing products that continue to address their requirements. Pricing is based on three levels, depending on the required service, which are Gold, Platinum, and Titanium. Each provide a different level of service provision in terms of supported users and service level commitments on response time and up-time.

Micro Focus is playing catch-up to many other content management vendors that have already adopted a SaaS model, and it is a move that the vendor needed to make. Although its customers are typically large enterprises that are perhaps more reluctant to adopt public cloud solutions and are more likely to still be embracing on-premises solutions, Omdia IT Enterprise Insights, 2022, shows that only 15.58% of organizations are still using legacy on-premises systems. All other organizations have some form of cloud delivery strategy now or are planning to do so in the next 18 months. The figures also show that just 8.75% of organizations are using SaaS for content management solutions, which suggests that other vendors are not too far ahead of Micro Focus, and there are plenty of opportunities for the vendor to increase the adoption of its cloud offering.

As Micro Focus has adopted a content services platform architecture for its content management capabilities, it means that many of the complementary technologies are available as content services and these are typically offered as SaaS solutions. This means there are plenty of opportunities for Micro Focus to expand its SaaS offerings. It also provides an opportunity to expand its customer base to the mid-market if it wishes to expand beyond its traditional large enterprise market.

Appendix

Further reading

[*Fundamentals of Content Services Platforms 2021*](#), (January 2021)

[*Omdia Universe: Selecting a Content Services Platform Solution, 2021*](#), (April 2021)

[*Omdia Universe: Selecting a Digital Asset Management Solution, 2021–22*](#) (October 2021)

[*Fundamentals of Digital Asset Management, 2021-22*](#), (December 2021)

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