

Background

Land O'Lakes, Inc. is a national farmer-owned food and agricultural cooperative with annual sales of more than \$6 billion. While Land O'Lakes' information technology (IT) infrastructure is expansive and diverse, finding new ways to effectively leverage it across the enterprise is an ongoing process. One critical component of this infrastructure that continues to expand is content management.

Since the late-1990s, Land O'Lakes has partnered with Stellent to tackle a variety of content management challenges. In 1998, the company recognized a Web-based document management solution could help them more efficiently manage the vast amount of content created and shared internally. In 2001, Land O'Lakes decided the manual process for updating its growing number of internal and external Web sites was no longer satisfactory. Consequently, the company implemented a Web content management solution to reduce IT bottlenecks; keep company-wide information up-to-date; portray a consistent look and feel across Web properties; and enhance business-to-business communication.

By 2003, the Land O'Lakes' business groups that most often worked with paper-based documentation (i.e. accounts payable, fixed assets, credit and human resources) found it nearly impossible to quickly search for and retrieve microfilmed and hard-copy business-process documents — prompting the recruitment of **Stellent partner AMI Imaging Systems, Inc. (www.ami-imaging.com) of Bloomington, Minn.** to launch an electronic document imaging initiative to improve employee productivity, easily facilitate audit requests, and reduce microfilming and hard-copy storage costs.

CASE SUMMARY

Location: Arden Hills, Minn.

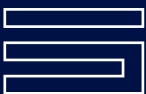
Services: National farmer-owned food and agricultural cooperative.

Critical needs: Rapid deployment. Content contribution rights for company staff from native file formats with automatic conversion and publishing to multiple Web formats. Integration with PeopleSoft EnterpriseOne. Records storage, retrieval, security and disaster recovery. Standard Web publishing tools.

“Stellent technology enables Land O'Lakes to effectively manage all types of information, including documents, Web content and business process/transaction-related content within one system across our enterprise. This functionality allows us to increase employee productivity, have timely access to knowledge and reduce costs. Stellent has been part of our IT infrastructure for years, and its highly scalable nature permits Land O'Lakes to continuously expand and roll out new business applications across our many divisions.”
— Curt Doble, Land O'Lakes' director of corporate application services

Land O'Lakes leveraged Stellent® Universal Content Management to meet all of these content-related needs. “Content management was in its infancy when we first partnered with Stellent,” said Curt Doble, director of corporate application services for Land O'Lakes. “At first, we didn't know what to expect and thought we'd quickly outgrow Stellent's capabilities. Yet, here we are today; our Stellent implementation is scaled across our enterprise with tremendous success and vast potential for the future.”

Six-billion-dollar food and agricultural cooperative leverages Stellent Universal Content Management across its enterprise to increase productivity and reduce costs.



Land O'Lakes currently utilizes the document management, Web content management and imaging components of Stellent's Universal Content Management architecture, which also includes digital asset management functionality. These components are supported by collaboration, records management and business process management services, which Land O'Lakes is considering as part of upcoming content management initiatives.

Stellent Universal Content Management is now leveraged across many business applications at Land O'Lakes, serving as a central, Web-based repository for content such as project documentation; intranet, extranet and public Web site content; and accounts payable, credit and human resources information.

Land O'Lakes stores all content in the Stellent system in its native format, meaning employees can create and update content using tools already familiar to them—such as Microsoft Office applications, Visio process maps or scanned documents. When employees submit content via their Web browsers into the Stellent system, they assign metadata to it, making the content easily searchable. In the case of Web site publishing, when significant new content is added, metadata assignments prompt the Stellent system to dynamically create new navigation tabs on the correlating Web site.

Once an employee submits content into the system, Stellent automatically converts content from its native format to HTML, PDF or other Web-viewable formats. This process ensures all documents and Web content can easily be viewed across the company's Web properties (i.e. intranets, extranets or public-facing Web sites), and alleviates manual publishing bottlenecks that previously hampered productivity and the ability to provide Land O'Lakes' constituents with information in a timely manner.

For all content management initiatives, Land O'Lakes taps Stellent's version control functionality, which identifies the most current versions of a piece of content, while archiving previous drafts for later reference. In the future, Land O'Lakes plans on using Stellent's workflow capabilities to route content through the appropriate divisions for review and approval.

Document management

The Dairy Foods division of Land O'Lakes is one of the heaviest users of Stellent Document Management. Instead of circulating project documentation, charts, status reports and requirements in hard-copy formats or via e-mail (which ties up the e-mail system and network server), all content is easily accessible in Stellent Content Server from any computer with Web access. Land O'Lakes' Information Services (IS) group also uses Stellent's document management capabilities for disaster recovery purposes, building a Web-based library full of business-continuation information.

"Our document management projects are steadily increasing. We now have an internal user group that periodically meets to discuss current activities and areas where document management could have significant business benefits," Doble said. "Activities of this type have led to some innovative applications of Stellent's technology. For example, Land O'Lakes' Research Library and Test Kitchens Recipe Inquiry System take advantage of a customized 'check-in' form with specific metadata fields identified for the business users. These systems then leverage Stellent's full-text searching, indexing and retrieval of content to simplify and enhance the user experience for the business."

Web content management

The Stellent Web Content Management application at Land O'Lakes is one of the most extensive Stellent implementations. In 2002, the company decided to re-launch its intranet to provide employees with tools that increase productivity and enhance internal communications. Today, Stellent technology drives the majority of Land O'Lakes' intranet content, including the publishing of company and industry news, and information resources tailored to employee roles within the organization.

According to Doble, the IT department now has minimal involvement with updating Web content on a daily basis. The Stellent system facilitates this process by allowing Land O'Lakes to create libraries of Web site components—such as templates, navigation, graphics and code, which enable the IT staff to quickly build Web solutions for business needs. In conjunction with automatic content conversion capabilities, the Web site component libraries limit or remove the need for IT assistance when it comes to creating or updating new Web content.

Stellent Web Content Management also powers Land O'Lakes' Test Kitchens, where Stellent is used to manage approximately 10,000 recipes and their revisions. These recipes and images may appear on the consumer Web site and may be published in recipe books. In addition, Land O'Lakes uses Stellent technology to update weekly price lists on a secure extranet accessed by employees, partners and brokers. Through Stellent's subscription services, subscribers receive automatic updates via e-mail when the prices of specific Land O'Lakes' products change.

Furthermore, Land O'Lakes uses Stellent Universal Content Management to power a business-to-business (B2B) exchange or extranet. Named Ag2Ag, this B2B exchange is a business portal that serves approximately 7,000 employees and customers. Specifically, Ag2Ag uses Stellent technology to manage all content found in the exchange and to provide identity-driven and personalized content to the business users. This technology allows Ag2Ag to target specific marketing campaigns to specific users on the site.

Imaging

With Stellent Image Management, business process "chokepoints" have been alleviated across four major Land O'Lakes functions—including accounts payable (A/P), fixed assets, credit and human resources. These chokepoints include the responsibility of managing an increasing amount of content; inefficient storage of documents in filing cabinets, at offsite locations or on microfilm; and limited data security, back-up or recovery capabilities.

Most business groups within Land O'Lakes typically follow a similar two-step process for submitting information into the Stellent system. First, staff gather and prepare a batch of documents—such as vendor invoices, capital expenditure documentation or employee records. Then, employees scan the batch of documents into the Stellent system where they are indexed and available for retrieval from any desktop computer.

Stellent Image Management works in tandem with Land O'Lakes' PeopleSoft and Oracle enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems. For example, after the corporate A/P group scans a batch of documents into the Stellent system, payable transactions are manually entered into the Oracle ERP system using the images as source documents. At the same time, the images are automatically indexed to several key fields within the corresponding transaction. This process links the two systems and ensures all related information can easily be identified from either system at a later date.

With solution analysis, application design, implementation, training services and on-going support from AMI Imaging Systems, Land O'Lakes now has a flexible and robust Stellent-powered imaging solution that allows all users—internal or remote—to capture, store and manage on the Web all of the documents and data associated with common business transactions. During the second phase of its document imaging project, Land O'Lakes will utilize Stellent Business Process Management to automate the flow of information throughout the various departments utilizing document imaging. In addition, the use of Stellent Business Process Management will ensure all transactions can be fully tracked and audited during the entire business flow.

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Future plans

Land O'Lakes plans to continue scaling the Stellent system across its enterprise in the future. As with the document and Web content management solutions, Stellent Image Management will be used to further automate the A/P process, using workflow to route scanned documents through the appropriate approval and transaction entry processes. Success with the imaging system also has prompted Land O'Lakes to consider using Stellent technology for law, finance and fleet applications, and potentially for international projects. Additionally, Land O'Lakes is discussing the utilization of Stellent's records management and collaboration services.

Benefits of using Stellent Universal Content Management

Land O'Lakes has reaped significant benefits from its Stellent Universal Content Management implementations, including increased employee productivity and access to knowledge, along with reduced costs and improved business processes.

"Even after six years of use, Land O'Lakes is only beginning to scratch the surface of Stellent's document management capabilities," Doble commented. "Individuals who use the system rave about its ability to greatly enhance productivity and access to knowledge, which is driven in large part by its capability to integrate into daily work patterns."

Land O'Lakes' enhanced Web content management capabilities also highlight many of the business benefits Stellent provides. For example, instead of submitting content to the IT department for coding prior to publishing, divisions now have the know-how and authority to publish content to their own sites æ increasing productivity and timely access to company information. In return, this functionality frees up IT staff to work on more sophisticated IT applications.

Land O'Lakes' document imaging implementation, although just beginning, already is producing tangible business benefits. For example, the Land O'Lakes Ag Services division has deployed an extensive document imaging application for its A/P function. On average, this division scans, stores and manages more than 180,000 documents per month. After one year using Stellent Image Management, Land O'Lakes believes it has saved approximately \$250,000 related to improved efficiencies and reduced staffing. In addition, instead of replacing and expanding its stand-alone microfilm operation for approximately \$125,000, Land O'Lakes was able to invest in the scalable Stellent system, which goes far beyond supporting one division and one application.

Qualitatively, Stellent Image Management also provides Land O'Lakes with: immediate desktop access to high-quality images — enabling employees responding to inquiries to provide more efficient service; sharable electronic images, e.g., through annotation and email — reducing the need for making extra copies and the risk of documents being passed around and lost; and a permanent record of documents that are backed-up — eliminating the need for hard-copy document storage and providing disaster recovery capabilities.

"When we first began our content management initiative, we primarily focused on line-of-business activities. Although they are still important, we now leverage Stellent applications across the entire enterprise," Doble noted. "With Stellent Universal Content Management's broad product set and powerful functionality, we have the ability to manage all unstructured content across our organization, a challenge we look forward to conquering."

Stellent, Inc. is a global provider of content management software solutions that drive rapid success for customers by enabling fast implementations and generating quick, broad user adoption. With Stellent, customers can easily deploy multiple line-of-business applications — such as Web sites, call centers, dealer extranets, compliance initiatives, accounts payable imaging and claims processing — and also scale the technology to support enterprise-wide content management needs.

Stellent operates through an extensive network of direct sales, resellers and system integrators. Please check www.stellent.com for a complete listing of these locations.

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