



CASE STUDY | E.ON IT GmbH

A Safe DMS Version Upgrade Thanks to migration-center

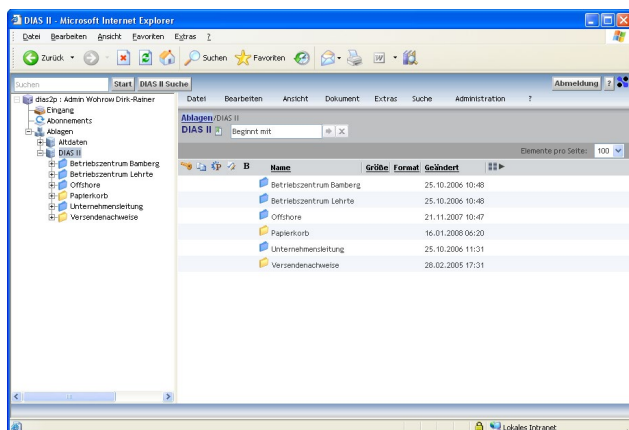
E.ON IT GmbH needed to upgrade the repository of a Document Management System (DMS) to the most recent release level and to migrate all documents contained within the system as safely and with as little effort as possible, while at the same time extending and modernising the existing DMS application. To best meet these goals, fme's migration-center was chosen.

The Modernisation of a DMS Application

For the E.ON Netz GmbH as customer, E.ON IT operates the »Digital Information and Archiving System« (DIAS), handling the archiving, editing, search and display of technical documentation. DIAS manages more than 700,000 documents inside 160,000 folders with over 2 million relations. 1,500 users access 30 different document formats such as TIFF, Excel, Word or AutoCAD, some of them quite complex, as f.e. the AutoCAD constructs of many interconnected files.

The project was motivated by the desire of DIAS users to work with an improved and modernised version of this historically grown application. Three challenges presented themselves in this undertaking:

- DIAS still ran on the old 5.2.5. version of Documentum, no longer supported by its vendor EMC. The aim therefore was to upgrade Documentum in a single step to the latest release level. At the same time all 700,000 documents, including attributes and complex relations, had to be migrated without incurring loss of integrity or data.



More than 700,000 documents inside 160,000 folders with 2 million relations had to be migrated with no data loss and only minor operational interruptions.

E.ON IT GmbH

E.ON is one of the world's largest privately held power and gas companies, and E.ON IT GmbH, with headquarters in Hannover, Germany, manages all of the corporation's IT activities through nine European subsidiaries located in Bulgaria, Great Britain, Italy, the Netherlands, Rumania, Sweden, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Hungary.

- DIAS was functionally no longer up-to-date. In total 60 new functional requirements, such as order management and a better search function, had to be implemented.
- The large document volume maintained in DIAS had over time led to performance degradations. Response times for navigation and search tasks needed to be improved by at least a factor of two.

What's more, the modernisation and migration of the application had to be carried out with minimal disturbances to the production system. This led to call on fme AG, a document management specialist with extensive Documentum experience and proven software such as migration-center for mass document migrations.

Safely Migrating Large Document Volumes

The system change-over required the adaptation and test of 100 individualised components and many more specific business rules. A modernised Client based on the latest Documentum version provided improved usability.

»The toughest challenges were the migration of all existing documents and the demand to keep the production system running undisturbed while the migration was taking place«, says Udo Runiello, project leader at E.ON IT.

The key element for a successful migration was fme's migration-center, assuring a largely automated, safe and error free import of all documents including attributes and relations. Special attention had to be given to the import of AutoCAD files which during the migration continued to be worked on and shared with external service providers.

No Disturbance of Ongoing Operations

The solution for avoiding interruptions of the daily operations of DIAS was the so-called delta migration. While document migrations are typically undertaken in one giant step during which the system remains offline, fme's migration-center uses a different method. Document migrations are done in a number of small incremental steps without having to shut down the original system. In this fashion the users continued to work with the system while the bulk of the data was being transferred. The modification of documents which have already been transferred does not represent a problem as migration-center recognises any content or attribute modifications automatically. Successive migration runs identify automatically changes to the repository since the previous run and thus import only those changes, so that in time continued migration runs become ever shorter. In the end, for a brief three day period of final system change-over, DIAS users were restricted to read-only access. Any documents edited during this interval were temporarily stored locally and checked into the new system right after going live. »The delta migration proved to be the right approach, and the migration-center the right tool«, says Udo Runiello. »We managed to import all documents without loss or corruption of data. Also the required extensions of the DIAS application were implemented by the fme team with speed and flexibility.«

60 Functional Additions

A survey among DIAS users had unearthed the need for an extensive modernisation of the application. The resulting requirement specifications identified a multitude of adaptations or even complete new functions such as the order processing function and the search function. The aim of the order processing function was to render document sharing with external service providers simpler and less time consuming. Now, complete folders and their document content can be transferred to third parties and checked back in. DIAS assures that they are restored at the right folder location. The addition of a full text search, extended search criteria and performance optimisations made the new search function more powerful as well as faster.

Improved performance was a major issue in all application functions. Just to navigate through the enormously grown document content and quantity of folders had severely tested the user's patience. Access speed had to be at least doubled, a goal which was reached as project leader Runiello confirmed.

Good Project Management Was a Key to Success

»Project results were right on target«, summarises Udo Runiello. »Every goal was met and the project was implemented on time and within the budgeted man-days, fully meeting the expected quality standards. This was due to the fme team's expertise, but also because of their flexibility and our very close collaboration.« Whenever an envisaged solution proved to be impossible to implement, fme reacted quickly and came up with workable alternatives. Other success factors were the intensive communication and timely resolution of all outstanding issues.

Preview

Due to the restructuring within E.ON, another follow-up project has already been realised: the data separation of two now distinct business operations needing to run each their own application and content server. Further plans foresee the replacement of a tool for the check-in, check-out and addition of references to AutoCAD files. The new tool is meant to be more tightly integrated with the DMS application.

Technology

- Documentum Content Server 6.5 SP2
- Documentum Fast 6.5 SP2
- Documentum Administrator 6.5 SP2
- Documentum Import Manager 5.3
- Documentum Desktop Client 5.3
- BTM Drawbridge for Desktop
- McLaren RenderCenter
- IBM WebSphere
- AutoCAD 2008 (incl. BTM AutoCAD Integration)