



The Winding Road to Getting it Right: One Customer's Perspective on Migrating from Lotus Document Manager (LDDM)



Company Profile

European Tire Manufacturer

- Based in the Netherlands
- 1600 employees

Industry

B2C Manufacturing - Automotive

“The more I evaluated Docova, the more I liked it ...”

Apollo Vredestein® B.V. had a “light” document management solution to store documents on the network and limited basic metadata in a database. While the solution supported versioning and workflow, it lacked search capabilities and was time consuming to maintain. As requests for modifications and additions for ‘basic’ items began to pile up, it became obvious it was time for a change.

The chosen solution would have to satisfy some unique requirements: be Terminal Server based and integrate with both Microsoft® Outlook® & Microsoft Office® 2000. Not too many solutions could or would meet those requirements. Two options were short listed by the European Tire Manufacturer: IBM® Lotus® Document Manager and Microsoft Sharepoint®. After a 12 month evaluation and testing period, Lotus Document Manager (LDDM) won for its rich functionality, range of customization and low cost.

After having completed the extensive customization, the company was ready to roll-out LDDM. However, there was one big problem: IBM had just announced the discontinuation of LDDM, effective May 2009. Not exactly the fresh start that was envisioned. The project was halted, as it was deemed a ‘pointless’ exercise to continue forward with something that was ‘essentially dead’.

Senior leadership was prepared to walk away from the whole project and return to the status quo, as they were unwilling to spend more money and another 12 months on a new option. The project could only be saved if the right solution could be found quickly within a (now) tighter budget. The IT group jumped right into ‘restarting’ the process by evaluating the leading Document and Content Management options for a Lotus Document Manager migration: IBM FileNet™, IBM Lotus Quickr®, Alfresco®, and Docova® Document Manager.

Only FileNet, Alfresco, and Docova passed the functionality test. In the end, Docova Document Manager was simply the better choice as the Lotus Document Manager replacement because of Docova’s (i) Technical Support, (ii) Platform Flexibility, (iii), Ease of Use, and (iv) Value.

What follows is Patrick Goossens of Apollo Vredestein providing his perspective on “Why Docova is the Better Choice”, as well as his thoughts on the overall evaluation process.

Thoughts On

“Why Docova is the Better Choice”

“The more I evaluated Docova, the more I liked it. It had all the features we needed that FileNet & Alfresco provided. Over our evaluation process, four (4) elements clearly separated Docova from the rest: Technical Support, Platform Flexibility, Ease of Use and Value.”

On Support (Technical)

“Hands down, Docova had the better support system in place and was the easiest to learn. The combination of the online Video Library (of short training videos) and high-touch personal support was much more effective than hunting for answers through forums or reading the manual.”

On Flexibility

“I could see I was able to do more of the customizations and development on my own – I wouldn't necessarily need a 3rd party consultant for every change or modification that was required. This will allow us to increase the scope and usage of Docova with only a limited amount of resources.”

“We also appreciate we will not have to change how we do things. Docova works with our processes, not the other way around, further decreasing the potential learning curve for users.”

On Ease of Use

“When I showed Docova to our End Users, they got excited. They simply ‘got it’ the first time. Extensive training on how to use Docova would not be required. For us, this would mean:

- More time spent by Users working on their job. (They would become more efficient), and
- Less time spent on support calls. We (IT) could become more effective.”

“This was in complete contrast to the initial User reaction we got for LDDM – one of sheer fright. It looked hard, felt hard to use. We were anticipating extensive and lengthy End User training (an additional cost to us) for our initial rollout.”

On Value – Low Total Cost

“In the end, Docova proved to be a very powerful ECM solution with robust, unique features, at a total cost point that the others simply could not equal.”

“When I showed Docova to our End Users, they got excited. They simply ‘got it’ the first time....”

Thoughts on IBM FileNet

“FileNet was discussed theoretically. We felt FileNet was simply too big for our needs and would become too costly in the short and long term. IBM did offer a ‘light’ version of FileNet, but it would only be accessible from Quickr. This was something we did not like.”

Thoughts on Lotus Quickr

“Lotus Quickr had the same challenges with our document management needs as did Sharepoint. Both products did not possess the deep document management functionality we were seeking, so Quickr alone was not a migration option for us.”

Thoughts on Alfresco

“My initial impression of Alfresco was that it looked really nice. The UI looked modern – I initially liked Alfresco over the two other choices. However, as I dove into Alfresco deeper, I began to see customizing would not be so easy – in fact, it was harder than expected. Support was not easy to come by – while the answer was located somewhere in a forum, finding that answer took way too long.”

